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Local Businesses Across America - Third in Series

Saturday, January 3, 2009 by [WebVisible Team](#)



-- Contributed by Kevin Ryan,
guest blogger

Entry 3: Day One

New York to Branchville New Jersey; 2,750 miles to Irvine, CA

I had the unique pleasure to meet Chris Aidala an artist that creates all kinds of things with glass and ceramics. Here's a shot of Chris in her kitchen although she also has an amazing home studio.

Chris doesn't have a Web site. She noted a couple of reasons for that. One, she doesn't have the time. Something we often forget in the Internet marketing world is that people who are doing business and creating have little time to set up multi-level ecommerce solutions. For those who don't spend every day with it, the Internet world can be a way to disconnect from human aspects of commerce and turn potential customers into simple transactions.

The second reason Chris doesn't have a Web site lies in the highly competitive nature of her creations. Chris doesn't want to make it easy for competitors to borrow (read; theft) her amazing designs. The third reason is that many of her designs are unique and personal. She invests a great deal of time in getting to know her clients to create something unique.

Take a look at some of Chris's work; she has an amazing technique for creating glass and ceramic cheese plates.



While you might think these plates are out of reach many of Chris's items are reasonably priced. These are \$30.00 and \$35 left to right.



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Will Chris have a Web site in the future? You bet, and we plan to follow up with her to see what effect it has on her business. In the mean time, the only way to get your hands on Chris's work is drop her an email or give her a call. Chris can be reached at (973) 948-4420 or by email.

5 Comments »

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Small Business Online Marketing Tips for 2009

Tuesday, December 30, 2008 by WebVisible Team

It's hard to believe that 2009 is here. As a New Year's gift, WebVisible has developed nine simple tips that can help you develop an effective online marketing strategy for 2009. Snippets below. For the full article, check out the Orange County Register.

1. Do Some Sleuthing

When doing your own shopping, use Internet search engines to find local businesses. See what comes up and use your own shopping behavior as an indicator of what a consumer is likely to do when looking for a business like yours...

2. Look Beyond Online Directory Listings

Having a listing in the search engine's local maps section or in the online Yellow Pages is a good start, but it's not enough...

3. Understand the Relationship Between Online and Offline

Offline advertising, such as print, local cable TV, radio and direct mail, helps drive awareness and interest. But when in need, consumers use search engines to research and find solutions...

4. Pay Attention to Your Competition

You probably know your local competition well. Or do you? The Internet has broken down many geographic competitive barriers, and there are probably many competitors outside of your area that you can learn from. What are they doing online?...

5. Make Your Web Site Compelling

First impressions are critical, especially on the Web. Use your Web site to not only display your qualifications, but also as a way to capture the attention of the visitor. Put yourself in your customers' shoes. Think solutions, testimonials, advice, discounts, offers – capture their attention and help them through the purchase cycle...

6. Optimize Your Web Site for Search Engines

Optimizing your Web site so that it can be found more easily on search engines can be a formidable and ongoing task. But there are some simple things you can do to help...

7. Understand Search Engine Marketing

Paid search engine marketing (SEM) is one of the best things business owners can do to gain an immediate Internet presence to promote their local businesses...

8. Marketing is an Investment – Demand ROI

Marketing should be an investment, not an expense. An investment means a return. Whether it's search marketing, a Yellow Pages ad or door hangers, demand to know how a return on your investment will be determined...

9. Let Experts Help

Do you know how to create the most effective search engine ads to attract the right customers for your business? As a small business owner, how much free time do you have? If you do have extra time, do you want to spend it learning the complexities of Internet marketing (that's what online advertising agencies are for!)...

-- Submitted by Jeff Werner

1 Comments »

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Good Reminders From A Progressive Chamber of Commerce

Tuesday, December 30, 2008 by WebVisible Team

Some good reminders from our local Chamber, the Irvine Chamber of Commerce, about why membership in the Chamber is a good investment. This list describes any good Chamber of Commerce, and how being an active member is a strong local marketing opportunity for any business. Below is their top 10 list, and my comments under each relating to how online advertising, social media and adopting Internet marketing approaches relate.

1) INCREASE YOUR VISIBILITY IN THE COMMUNITY

Make sure people know you're a local business - when they are on a local website or searching locally, they should find you!

2) RELATIONSHIP BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES

Make friends online (and offline) with other local businesses and share ideas and business opportunities with each other.

3) REFERRALS FROM THE CHAMBER AND THE CHAMBER WEB SITE

If local customers are using local sites like a Chamber Web site, make sure you are there. Chamber of Commerce sites provide high quality links for SEO as well!

4) ACCESS TO MEMBERSHIP DATABASE OF MORE THAN 1,000 BUSINESSES

If your potential customers are other local businesses, then the Chamber provides you a list of companies that are willing to invest in their businesses as Chamber members.

5) ACCESS TO COMMUNITY LEADERS AND ELECTED OFFICIALS

If you want to grow, try new things or need help, having the best network (online and offline) always helps. It's not what you know, it's who you know, and who they know.

6) DEVELOPMENT, WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS

Find ways to get exposed to new ideas for your business. Use the new year to learn about something new and decide whether to do it yourself or hire an expert. As an example, we provide online advertising seminars to educate business owners about the power of Internet marketing, and give them the tools to decide how involved they want to be in their advertising.

7) DIRECTORY AND SPECIALTY GUIDE LISTINGS

Find the niches and seasonal opportunities for your business. When can you be most relevant to potential local consumers, and launch specific marketing campaigns during those periods.

8) COST EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING

Focus your advertising dollars on the most accountable and transparent marketing channels. In most cases, local search engine marketing is the highest performing and most measurable investment you can make.

9) MEMBERS ONLY SERVICES

You only get the benefits if you participate. If you want to drive more performance from your advertising in 2009, join up with the experts who can provide that service.

10) MEMBER ADVOCACY

When you're a member, you'll find that there are people there to help you, and many who want to help you. Join the community, network, Chamber and be an active participant, and you'll find positive word of mouth marketing results, which the Internet continues to drive through sites like Facebook, Twitter and others.

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Why Should a Plumber Be on Facebook?

Wednesday, December 24, 2008 by WebVisible Team

Once considered a social network for teens and tweens, Facebook has quickly become a viable tool for businesses to connect with customers, network and generate awareness of their products or services. Today, more than half of the visitors to social networking sites are 35 and older, according to a recent industry report issued by comScore. Facebook reports 140 million active users, with 25 and older as the fastest growing demographic.

So other than that, why should a plumber, or any other small business, add Facebook to their local Internet marketing effort?

**People Buy from People**

It's not just about sharing with your friends or following your favorite singer or athlete anymore. Social media sites offer innovative ways to engage in a dialog with new and prospective customers. You can build connections and loyalty among your customer base and support your marketing efforts using content such as photos, testimonials and feeds.

Be Where your Customers Are

Social networks are one of fastest growing online trends. According to Forrester Research, 75% of Internet users now participate in some form of social networking – up 56% over 2007. And eMarketer reports that nearly six out of 10 Americans who use social media interact with companies on social media sites (Opinion Research Corporation September 2008 study). 85% of social media users thought companies should interact with their consumers through social media, at least when needed.

Give your Company a 'Personality'

60 of the top 100 retailers are on Facebook according to eMarketer. In addition to their branding and image building efforts, these leading companies are using social networking to create a 'personality' for their organization – something consumers can identify and interact with. A few more cutting edge examples are Red Bull and Papa John's.

Be in the "Now"

For certain professions that require laws, regulations, techniques or best practices, having a 'new media' presence conveys staying current with technology, popular culture and trends. Would you want to buy consulting services or purchase legal council from someone with a modern Internet presence, or from the old school codger described here?

How to Get Started

Facebook is about personal relationships, or "friends." People may want to befriend you, but probably don't to be friends with your company. (Did you ever have a chat with "General Electric?") So, first:

Create your Personal Profile

- Upload personal information (you can set privacy levels), interests, photos, etc. You can also add daily messages

or RSS feeds from your Web site.

- Connect with friends and acquaintances. Upload your contact database and ask those you want to “friend” to start building out your network.

Create a “Page” for your business

- Pages can be populated with company description, photos, videos, events, discussion forums and links.
- Facebook users can become “Fans” of your company. Like a subscriber base, a fan base is a great way to stay in touch with them and share information and advice. Ask your friends to become fans and tell their friends about your company.
- Pages are publicly available so search engines can find and index them!

-- Submitted by Jeff Werner

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Bringing Local Businesses to Online Advertising

Friday, December 19, 2008 by WebVisible Team

Beverly Crandon reacts to Microsoft's new survey results about small businesses and adoption of search engine marketing, but calling newspapers to act in providing the link for local advertisers to learn about the value and opportunity that Internet marketing offers.

I totally agree with Beverly, especially since we've worked with dozens of newspaper publishers of all sizes in the last few years. Local newspaper brands provide the entry point to start a conversation with local businesses about marketing and advertising. As print advertising has become less relevant in some local business owners' minds, the Internet has filled some of that void. Newspapers understand advertising and helping businesses build demand and brand for their companies. Print advertising is still effective for many businesses, and drives consumer behavior that in many cases involves the Internet. Bringing integrated marketing strategies that include search engine marketing is the evolving approach that the more forward-thinking newspapers are implementing, and we continue to partner with them to aid their efforts. Educating local businesses about local Internet advertising, providing them compelling and cost-effective solutions, and servicing and supporting them throughout their campaign will continue to be valued, and the kinds of services that local newspapers are well positioned to provide.

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To Do My Taxes... or Market My Business?

Thursday, December 18, 2008 by WebVisible Team

According to a survey of 400 small business owners by Microsoft, 73% would rather do their taxes than start a search engine marketing campaign! And I can't say I blame them. It's tedious and time-consuming. And one quarter of those surveyed admitted it was too complex. Maybe the rest lied! :) But seriously, the reality is that the small business owner is stressed for time and likely cannot dedicate the proper attention to a good local Internet marketing campaign. 35% agree, citing they would need an Internet advertising company to help set up a search marketing campaign.

Ninety percent also feared that keywords would become too expensive. That's the beauty of budget-based programs offered at WebVisible. You specify your budget and we deliver maximum, results-driven performance within that budget!

Finally, eighty-one percent questioned if paid search marketing is the best use of their marketing budgets. But, the small-business owners who use paid search marketing are very satisfied, as 72 percent reported an increase in sales inquiries and 68 percent consider their paid search marketing efforts successful.

-- Contributed by Jeff Werner

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Keep It Fresh

Thursday, December 18, 2008 by WebVisible Team

The search engine optimization side of your site is a favorite subject of mine for several reasons. In this important part of your overall local Internet marketing strategy, you are being graded by the search engines whether or not you really pay attention to your site content.

You have content on your site anyways, so it should be the most useful content you can make – it will do the most work in your benefit. And the results you get are yours to keep, free forever, as long as you host the site on the same domain name. You even get more credit for having a site that's been around longer, so get started NOW to make your site what you want it to be for you.

Clean up your site regularly by deleting all obsolete or outdated information. This extends to every page of your site – it's a good idea to scan each page, perhaps monthly, replacing any old events, expired offers, outdated content references, broken links, or tired information with updated current content.

Search engines reevaluate pages that are edited regularly, giving them higher relevancy than stale old pages. Search

engines will visit changed pages more frequently than unchanging pages.

Your customers and potential customers must feel like your site has new content, since there is so much stale undated content on the Web which is hard to separate or validate. Nothing makes me close a search faster than wasting five minutes reading an article that I discover to be outdated and obsolete by years only after I've started to really dig in to the content.

Having a line that says "This page was last verified or updated on <date>" at the bottom of your content pages would not be unwise, to show your customers when the content was made. Unlike magazine ads with dates all over the magazine, your Web page will usually stand alone. It's good to give readers a firm point of reference as to when the content was made since there may not be any other way for them to know. It can also serve to remind you when it's getting to be time to refresh dates, change out ads, and so on. Let your repeat customers know that your site is pruned and maintained regularly.

-- Contributed by Dan Lozano

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"Project Management" Approach to Local Online Marketing

Wednesday, December 17, 2008 by WebVisible Team

As a Project Manager here at WebVisible, I help manage reseller implementations of Geneva (our advertising software platform) and other internal projects to help streamline our business processes and grow our business. So my work does not involve setting up local Internet marketing campaigns for our customers - at least not directly. But if it did - if I had a chance to work with small businesses and be their SEM consultant - I would follow a traditional project management approach, and guide them through the following phases:

1. Scope

A small business will need to determine the scope of its search engine marketing (SEM) campaign. What is it that we're trying to accomplish; what is the objective? Are we looking to market our entire product/service line, or just a select few? Do we want to target customers locally, regionally, and/or nationally? Are we looking to increase sales and profit, or is that second to getting our name out and promoting our brand?

2. Resources

After defining the scope, the small business will need to allocate the necessary people, funding, and any other resources needed to create, drive, and manage the local online marketing campaign. How much are we going to spend? Do we have resident experts in-house, or should we hire consultants?

3. Planning&Execution

The scope has been defined and our resources have been procured - everything is ready to go. But wait - not without a plan! We need to outline the steps for creating our campaign - complete with target completion dates, assigned resources, and all the appropriate task dependencies defined. The list of action items would include (but is certainly not limited to) the following: compile a list of keywords and geo-modifiers, evaluate and select what types of ads to use (text, image, video), develop landing page content, etc. Once the plan is in place, then we can go for it.

4. Monitoring

The beauty of SEM is that you can measure the effectiveness of your campaign through the many reporting tools that are available, such as Google Analytics or WebVisible's Merchant Center. So a small business can set up a campaign very quickly - then view and analyze the results after a couple months, and tweak as necessary.

5. Completion

A "project" is defined as having finite beginning and ending points. But one can argue that SEM campaigns are never truly finished - that they require constant updating. So the project of setting up the SEM campaign may be done, but managing it becomes an ongoing task.

I don't know the statistics on how many small businesses have embraced online advertising, only to give it up because of the daunting task of managing SEM campaigns. Ahhh....I guess that is why we (WebVisible) are in business - so we can take on the task of managing these "projects" to completion - while local businesses can focus on minding their own stores.

-- Contributed by Jonathan Danao

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Blogging, Online Marketing & Used Car Sales

Thursday, December 11, 2008 by WebVisible Team

MediaPost notes a recent Forrester research report that only 16% of consumers trust corporate blogs, and compares company blogs to the used car salesmen of media.

We re-launched our company blog a couple months ago with 1 primary goal - harness the collective knowledge and energy that is WebVisible, and share it with the marketplace. I've been so impressed and encouraged by the intelligence of our team around search engine marketing, and the candid suggestions, tips and ideas they've shared.



Whether a local business wants to pursue their own local search engine advertising, or wants to hire someone to do it for them, our team is encouraging and educating you!

As an Internet advertising agency, who harnesses technology to deliver the most effective online marketing campaigns for local businesses, we sometimes take for granted how much experience and knowledge exists here. Our blog has begun to unlock this energy, and we're just beginning.

We are passionate about local businesses. We have pictures of them up in our offices. Many of us grew up in local businesses, and our parents, grandparents and friends are the proprietors we strive to help every day. Some of those entrepreneurs who need local Internet marketing services are used car companies. Especially in this current economic downturn, more consumers are looking for used and certified cars. We're here to help those matches occur between local consumers and local businesses. We'll continue to share our knowledge and ideas, so you know the foundation of our organization. I hope more of you will join our ongoing conversations. We're happy to help used car salesmen, too.

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Good Navigation = Productive Site

Tuesday, December 9, 2008 by WebVisible Team

With reported average clickthrough rates of 1%, and conversion rates of 1-3% for local online advertising, you might be selling one searcher in a thousand – or worse. Ten thousand ad views at 1% CTR is 100 clicks coming to your site or landing page, which means 1 to 3 sales or leads per 10K impressions.

How can you make sure your Web site isn't slowing customers down? Make it easier for customers to get to the goods will increase the outcome of your Internet marketing and your whole business. Realistic planning is essential to your success.

Here are four simple modifications to help ease navigation woes:

Build simple navigation menus with a good top-down page structure – from general to specific. Run several helpers through your site to find specific items or accomplish tasks, watch closely to see where they get stuck, and fix your site flow.

Put a small search box on every page. Google offers a free "Search This Site" module at <http://www.google.com/sitesearch/> and there are others around as well. This is a fast and simple method of helping visitors find their goal.

Add a sitemap – it could be as simple as a list of the important links and pages of your site, or there are several online tools that help build a sitemap. This helps customers find things faster, and it also allows search engine spiders to capture a lot of links to your page at once.

Add subdomains for your biggest site sections. A subdomain is a 'friendly' address that points into a specific page on your site. You can set these up with your web host, often at no charge. (GoDaddy is a popular domain and web hosting company that offers free subdomain redirects on many plans.)

Customize your error page by adding a site map or a search tool to it – never abandon customers on an error page or a dead link when you can gently guide them to what they want.

– Contributed by Dan Lozano

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Building Your Local Online Tagline

Monday, December 8, 2008 by WebVisible Team

We're constantly inundated with brand marketing messages, and the strongest companies believe that economic downturns are a prime time to build brand share, as weaker competitors struggle and consumers look for safer, trusted choices.

A recently released study from Specific Media discusses the search activity increase that display advertising created, especially for certain categories like travel, health, finance and automotive. While they don't release a lot of detail in this article, they imply that most of the search queries are brand or advertised product line/service terms. As has been discussed by many, and Greg Sterling posts about it often, the volume of consumers who research online and buy offline is still the majority. Understanding where demand generating/brand advertising fits in the mix, as well as search engine marketing, is helping some companies walk with consumers through their process.

How does a local business employ some of these ideas in this environment?

1. Think both about how you build your local brand image, and for what key terms you should be locally known. If you are a plumber in Detroit who specializes in tankless water heaters, then you should make sure all your advertising reflects a term like "Detroit tankless water heaters", as well as your company name. If you are the Chicagoland area's local online marketing expert, make sure your ads in Crain's lead people to search for you by both your name and "Internet Marketing Chicago."

2. Run small online display ad and other media tests to determine if you can influence local search queries. Set up a targeted online display campaign, either through a local media property or display ad network with effective local targeting. Use some key messages that will drive search queries on your name or a prominent term (as mentioned in #1). Test search volume before, during and after your integrated campaign. Try this with radio, billboards, local

cable ads, too, if you want to see what works best.

3. Find the few local terms you should dominate and focus your organic search engine optimization around those terms. You want to show up on Google, Yahoo! and other search engines in both organic and sponsored ads around your core terms. For the Newport Beach dentist, it might be "whiter teeth Newport Beach". Be realistic about what terms you can win, and use them across your offline and online marketing.

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TANSTA AFL (BTSATAFSO)

Friday, December 5, 2008 by WebVisible Team

There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch (But There's Such A Thing As Free Software Online)

In keeping with my personal mission of sharing lots of useful free things, here are 3 different web tools for working with your various documents. You can do free image editing online, take web pages apart on the fly and edit them into a printable or save-able document, and convert files from any type into any other type, without even needing to pay a dime for any of it. All great tools to help turn your computer into an Internet marketing center for your businesses!

Printwhatyoulike.com

If you do lots of web research, here's a clever free tool for you. It helps de-clutter your notes or printouts by allowing you to edit any item on the page. You can remove any page element including images and backgrounds, make a specific column of text wider, combine multiple web pages into a single one, save as PDF or HTML, and change the fonts and sizes of text. It's extremely intuitive and easy to use. Cool features like Select More work exactly as I expected -- this is a very logically designed and simple web tool.

Picnik.com

This free web-based photo editor doesn't help you create drawings or copy-paste one image into another, like a logo into a block of graphics. But it's simple and fast for touching up photos and tasks like resizing, color adjustment, cropping, sharpening (my favorite tool!), or image straightening. Picnik can connect to Flickr, Photobucket, Picasa, MySpace, Facebook, Freewebs, and Webshots automatically to load and save images directly, so this is a brilliant tool for editing web pages or posting images. The Premium version offers many more features and tools, but the Free version is great for my needs.

Zamzar.com

This tool allows you to convert files from one type to another. It supports a vast number of filetypes -- different formats of documents, images, music, video, and compressed storage filetypes are all well represented. They will convert images into 10 different target image types for instance, and the same holds true for other filetypes. I used this tool to go from Word to PDF before I obtained a full version of Adobe. You can even download and convert videos from streaming online services like YouTube thru this service now! They also have a paid version which offers larger filesize and secure conversion, as well as removing ads from the interface.

-- Contributed by Dan Lozano

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Improve Your Conversions

Wednesday, December 3, 2008 by WebVisible Team

Conversion ratio is often used to determine the success of local Internet advertising. There's not one set conversion ratio for everyone since businesses all operate in differing segments of various markets. Since different businesses perform differently, it's good to look at your own increase in your monthly sales, or number of new contacts filling out forms on your site, as a metric of performance. You will have to have a good solid understanding of your past performance to make this a meaningful number.

Tracking the performance of your site means being familiar with your web statistics package and Merchant Center for your web ad. Learn which search engines are driving traffic, which keywords people are using to find your site, and which pages they visit when they get there. When you understand your customers' browsing habits and learn what is holding their attention, you can work with that information to improve the site's 'stickiness' -- that which makes customers want to read deeper and stay on your site.

Your campaign's click-through ratio (or CTR) describes the effectiveness of your ads in drawing clicks from the searching public. It is expressed as a percentage of ad views divided by clicks -- if you drew 1 click for every 100 ad views your CTR would be 1%. This is the industry average return for web ads.

Your campaign's CTR performance will certainly change as the Geneva software platform develops a performance history and bid strategy for your campaign. This normally takes about 2 months and during that time period it's not unusual to see performance go up and down quite a bit. This is nothing to be overly concerned about. It's just one number of several we can use, along with your Merchant Center and other data, to assess your site's performance.

-- Contributed by Dan Lozano

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Local Black Friday Ads Online & Offline

Wednesday, December 3, 2008 by WebVisible Team

Mr. Local SEO Guide, Andrew Shotland, has a great observation about how a local business can anticipate demand spikes by putting content on their websites that is fresh and timely, such as Black Friday marketing specials. The same can be true for local retailers and their online marketing campaigns. As many local retail businesses that advertised in their local newspapers and on local radio stations in advance of the start of the holiday season, each should have also launched a specific search engine marketing campaign to align with the discounts, specials and products and services sought during this season. Whatever you are promoting in offline media, you should also be continuing that promotion online in ads and on your website. You can be assured that the inspired consumers who see newspaper ads or hear radio ads will comparison shop on the Internet to find the best local deals. Don't let them forget about your local business!

As we get down to the last days before Christmas, develop offers and campaigns for the last-minute crowd. And don't forget to build an Internet marketing campaign for the Local After Christmas Specials in Chicago or whatever market you're targeting.

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Expand Your Site

Monday, December 1, 2008 by WebVisible Team

For new sites especially, it's imperative to follow some good search engine optimization (SEO) techniques to help the search engines index your Web site efficiently and give it a good rank for the keywords you care about. It takes the search engines time to locate and index a new site, and you should make sure to cover the bases of optimizing your site in terms of meta tags, periodic updates of fresh content, and other basics of site design.

Add meta tags to your site -- this will help you get your pages properly indexed in the search engines for the most possible related traffic. Each page should have its meta tags changed so the title, meta keywords, and meta description all reflect the exact content of the page.

Meta tagging won't affect your PPC ads, but will influence your organic visits, meaning people who find you through the non-paid results section of the search engines. You should be able to learn how to do this from the control panel of your web hosting account or in their documentation. Definitely a required step for improving the site's overall clickthrough rate.

Adding fresh original content to your site regularly shows your customers and the search engines that you're a going concern. The search engines will pay more attention to a site that is growing than a site that hasn't changed in months. They'll be back more often to index your new content if you have new content more often, and your customers will be more interested if they have more to check out on your site. Use affiliate content if you must, don't copy someone else's site to avoid penalties from the search engines, and remember that original content is what makes your site unique and profitable. All will ultimately help your local Internet marketing efforts.

-- Contributed by Dan Lozano

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Data-Driven Advertising Decisions #3 of 3

Sunday, November 23, 2008 by WebVisible Team

In my 2 prior posts, I discussed data as an important part of the sales planning and sales process, as well as during the advertiser "health check" discussions. Data is also critical to recommend additional local Internet marketing investments by a business owner, based on the success the advertiser is having with a current online advertising campaign.

The primary metrics that can produce an effective up-sell discussion:

- How is the campaign pacing? As example, if the budget is exhausting early every day, then the ad spend vs. market demand could be too little, and the local advertiser may want to increase the budget
- What is the effective cost per call, lead or action? How does the number compare to other media, other similar businesses' costs per?
- How are the leads helping with new customers and lifetime value? Is the merchant getting the type of customers that are the highest value to the business?
- What is the competitive position and performance of the campaign vs. others? How does this Internet marketer compare to his/her biggest competitors?
- Are the number of leads/customers meeting with the numbers the business wants? Is there capacity to accept and manage more leads?

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Data-Driven Advertising Decisions #1 of 3

Friday, November 21, 2008 by WebVisible Team

Earlier this week I participated in a panel at Kelsey Group's Interactive Local Media conference titled "Analytics for Boosting Sales." In preparing for my presentation, I spent a fair bit of time thinking through what types of data are valuable at different stages in the Internet advertising company's interaction with clients. For both the online marketing consultant and the local business advertiser, data is critical for decision making. I see 3 primary stages, the first: the sales call.

When considering whether to adopt an online marketing strategy, a local business owner is typically thinking:

- Are my local customers in/around this type of online advertising and the content/context it supports? Is this where my customers actually are?
- How will they interact with my advertising?
- What is a reasonable Internet marketing investment I should make for my business type and market?
- What type of return on my advertising investment is likely? How is it calculated and what is my acceptable type of conversion?

At the first stage, it's critical for a salesperson to provide data to support that the target audience is there, that the advertising is effective and has worked for other similar businesses, and that success is possible and what expectations are reasonable.

Packaging this data into sales tools and materials to help facilitate these conversations is driving more productive online marketing decisions.

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SEM for Sale! (part 2 of 2)

Friday, November 21, 2008 by WebVisible Team

Here is the second half of a short list of what the small/medium size businesses need to consider when investing in a local Internet marketing campaign.

Pacing

How often will my ad appear? If I sign a 6 month contract, when will my "clicks" be used up? All SEM companies handle this differently. Some will commit you to a dollar amount. When that money is used up, you are taken off the engine. WebVisible uses an in-house, award-winning platform called "Geneva" that paces serving your ads in the Sponsored Links during your contract period. This is a very important element of SEM because a business needs to know leads are coming in at a fairly steady stream during their contract period.

Analytics

How do I know who is clicking on my ads? How many clicks am I getting? Most Internet advertising companies offer analytics that, at the very least, tell a business how many clicks they have received. But how cool would it be to know WHO is clicking? What is their phone number, name, email address? WebVisible superior analytics offer this type of comprehensive data. This is very important information for a business using SEM to attract new leads. What a great ROI!

Management Fee/Cost

So what's the Cost Per Click? Other fees? Ask! Every company charges differently. Most important for any size business is 'no surprises!' You can pay by the click. A business might choose to set a Budget Campaign which focuses on spending a set dollar amount a month on your campaign over a period of time.

Another option is a Guaranteed Click program. In this campaign, the business is guaranteed a set amount of clicks in a given contract period. Look out for companies that charge management fees. Do not fear! Ask! WebVisible offers Budget based and Guaranteed Click programs based on the customers' needs. The key is you choose the amount to spend from our list of campaigns and we don't go over!

So Why WebVisible?

You set the budget you want to spend. We serve up your business ads on the Tier 1 Engines like Google, Yahoo! and some on the Tier 2's like Dogpile. You choose the keywords that make sense for your business. We pace out your ads over your contract period and we NEVER spend more than your budget! Oh, and we provide you 24 hour access to your analytics!

How awesome is that?

-- Contributed by Carol Gerrard

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Too Many Customers for One Business?

Monday, November 17, 2008 by WebVisible Team

Increasing your campaign size is sometimes your best option, especially when your campaign is performing strongly. If you can handle the new business, you should make sure you are getting it.

Converting web searchers into buyers is your Web site's job; our advertising brings them to your site and phone, sending you as many readers as possible to convert. Make sure you are not wasting a single opportunity!

WebVisible offers different local Internet marketing packages, depending on your need. Our Guaranteed Clicks packages give an exact number of clicks at an exact budget. It will meet its click goal quite reliably by the end of its full term, with a better than 95% success rate. If not, we'll run the campaign for free until we meet the goal.

More aggressive competition in a customer-rich business segment generally indicates a move to our Guaranteed Budget campaigns – more expensive, more focused clicks at a higher volume. This package focuses tightly on a shorter list of specific keywords. There's no goal number of clicks, just as many clicks as possible. We offer different price points, including flexible budgets.

For overall stability that you would expect from an expert Internet advertising company, we don't allow any of our campaigns to work in 'burst mode', driving through your budget at top speed. It's better to let our system build a

sustainable bidding strategy and pursue that strategy, making the best possible use of your budget across all search engines, all ads, and all keywords, building for as long as you run it.

A stable campaign lets us build you a dependable service that can be paced, monitored, and modified to suit your business's changing needs. But in a situation where we have a 'deep well' of potential business, like cosmetic alterations in The O.C., the problem is too often not spending enough to capture as much traffic as you can use.

-- Contributed by Dan Lozano

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Give It Time to Work!

Thursday, November 13, 2008 by WebVisible Team

So you just started an ad campaign with us. You're eager to see the kind of skyrocketing results you've heard of in web marketing: 24/7/365 global advertising powerhouse, whirlwind profits in record time for almost no work, unlimited residual riches, and so on. "Set it and forget it."

It's good to be excited about your local Internet marketing program with WebVisible! You can get superb results, but it takes some work. We're your partner for that work. And as the expert of your own business you'll have many chances to utilize your knowledge. This is definitely NOT traditional advertising, where you can only choose once and are then stuck.



Our system gives you feedback too -- you get statistics on your clickers, callers, and site visitors in (nearly) real time. Compare that to the limited tracking from postcards, radio, billboards, television ads, and other traditional media. We give you insight into your targeted online advertising results that you just can't get elsewhere.

Call us today and we'll show you how to use your Merchant Center. Many customers learn how their site performance is measurably improving their business after a few short minutes.

Our software performs better after it has had time to learn about the search engines' responses to your unique keyword set, the response from your customers and many other factors. It is crucial to the overall success of the campaign to give the software enough time to work. It may take two months to get

stabilized, or it may take two weeks. But about 95% of the time the campaigns end on time, or a little early, with full clicks delivered, regardless of fluctuations. Wait it out, it does work!

So set it and DON'T forget it -- keep an eye on your progress, ask us your questions and tell us your concerns as they arise, and learn a bit more about what you bought, straight from the people who make it work for you.

-- Contributed by Dan Lozano

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