Lecture: Google Tools

Google is an Internet powerhouse. It's such an influential presence on the Web. Thankfully, Google offers a variety of tools to help you get the most from your online experience. Here is a list of Google tools and products that will help you make the most out of your business.

Google Trends

With Google Trends, you can compare the world's interest in your favorite topics. It's a powerful tool for doing market research; it lets you view what's *trending* online, which means what people are searching for online. What's also good about this tool is that you can view how a keyword's popularity has risen or declined over a period of time. This can be useful as it can help you make the decision whether to enter a certain market or not. Sometimes you can even make predictions by looking at the way a certain market is trending over a period of time. Certain markets may have consistent patterns, which mean that there are times during the year when they are booming and other times when they are completely dead.

Enter up to five topics and see how often they've been searched on Google over time. Google Trends also shows how frequently your topics have appeared in Google News stories and in which geographic regions people have searched for them most. Google Trends also lets you compare the volume of searches between two or more markets/items. This gives you the ability to see the popularity between them. This type of market research insight is very beneficial as you will be able to see the incline/decline of one against the others.

Google+ (Google+)

Simply put, Google+ is Google's official social network. Much like Facebook, you can create a personal profile, connect with others who create a Google+ profile, share multimedia links and engage with other users. To sign up, all you need to do is visit plus.google.com and type in some basic information about yourself. After clicking "Join"

Google+ will suggest some from friends who are already on Google+ to add to your network, or your "circles." Circles are one of the main elements of Google+. You can create as many circles as you want and organize them with labels. On the top navigation of your page, there should be an icon marked "Profile," which should appear once you roll your mouse over it. From there, you can start building your Google+ profile.

Google Places and Google Maps
Google Places (http://www.google.com/business/placesforbusiness/) is any business' way into a free listing on Google Maps, which gives a listing and small page to every business it can find, (whether you directly sign up for one or not). This is known as your Google Maps page or listing. You can enter a 200 character description as well as add ten images and five videos. You also select your categories and add a few more details as well. Things are always changing at Google and although you can still enter all this information, they do not display it all. Just know you will still want to fill everything out when you are getting set up.

Another thing you see with Google Places is online reviews. This is very important. If a consumer is looking for a business, he or she will base a large part of the decision regarding a particular business on reviews left by others who have used that product or service. Reviews come from online directories and review sites. Google looks to see what sites have reviews about your business and they display that right on your listing. Customers can also review your business straight through Google Places. It is very important to monitor your online reputation on Google Maps/Places—the reviews here can make or break your potential customers' decisions on whether to use your services or buy your products. What can you do about bad reviews? Answer them! Answer them in a positive, helpful way. Show the consumer you're sorry that he or she had a bad experience, offer to make it up to them, and maybe even give them the name of a manager that can hook them up with something extra on their next visit. Google Places can be one of the most powerful forces in your Internet marketing if you help it reach its full potential.

Google Tools

Google Places for Business not only secures your place on Google Maps but has now become increasingly married to Google+. If you do a search on Google Maps for a business and click on the link that lists the number of reviews, you will notice that you are actually taken to that business' Google+ page. Here are the features you will see on such a page:

- **Contact Information**
  This is the basic contact information for the business, such as address, phone number, website, and hours.
- **Review/Summary**
  If the business owner has written a summary about his or her business, it will appear here.
- **Reviews**
  These are reviews created by real people online about the business.
- **Photos**
  Photos can be added by the business itself or Google+ users.
- **Manage This Page Link**
  This link is for the business owner to use when managing his or her own page. In order to manage a Google+ page, you must prove that you are the business owner or at least an authorized representative of that business.

Google Keyword Planner
The purpose of this tool is to help you pick out keywords to use in an AdWords PPC campaign. It will display the number of searches for particular keywords over a monthly range as well as data for suggested bid, ad impression share, (if you're already running ads,) and Google's rating for competition.

You can type in keywords you feel are representative of your website's products or services and view Google's suggestions for related keywords, along with their data.

This tool has evolved slightly from Google's previous keyword tool in that some features have been eliminated or replaced. New features include the ability to easily specify

region and negative keywords. Features changed or eliminated from the old keyword tool include the ability to differentiate between exact and broad match for monthly search statistics as well as some changes to the ability to export a CSV of all chosen keywords.

AdWords

Google AdWords is the system Google has developed to assist you in marketing your products or services in the Google Search Engine, and its affiliate sites, via the use of a placed text or image/media ad that appears when people search for phrases related to your offering, this appears as a "sponsored link". The system is a "pay per click" system. This means that you only pay up to the amount you have bid if someone clicks on your ad as a result of a web search. In addition to this, advertisers are able to drill down specifics governing the display of their ads, including time of day, region, and more. Once you have created an AdWords account, you then start creating campaigns, ad groups, and then ads.

Google AdWords is a different game than traditional/print advertising, but once you understand the basics, it's actually a much better return on investment for a skillfully run campaign. First, your reach on the Internet is far greater than in traditional forms such as display or print ads. Second, your ads are better targeted towards potential customers through relevant searches. Third, while tracking the reach of television or print advertising is difficult, advertisers on the Internet can track the number of impressions an ad gets (how many people see it) and how many visits their business web site receives from particular ads. And lastly, advertising on the Internet can be much cheaper, particularly in terms of entry-level fees. Google Adwords supports a number of countries and languages, so it is possible to advertise to a wide range of potential customers.

AdSense

AdSense is essentially the affiliate entrance point to AdWords. The program is designed for website publishers who want to display targeted text, video or image advertisements on their own website pages and earn money when site visitors click those ads.

Google AdSense is a free to sign up for. It is a simple way for website publishers of all sizes to earn money by displaying targeted Google ads on their websites and you earn money every time someone clicks on an ad. Essentially, a business owner can sign up for AdSense, place ad codes on his or her website, and earn money when one of the resulting ads is clicked on.

The advertisements displayed on such a website are controlled and managed by Google, and Web publishers simply need to create a free AdSense account and copy and paste provided code to display the ads. Revenue using AdSense is generated on a per-click basis.

How Does Google Know What Ads Interest My Audience?

From the day you start offering ads, the AdSense robot visits on a regular basis, reading through your pages with ads. The robot takes a look at the words you use, the frequency with which you use them, even some of your page structure and formatting (for example, bigger fonts usually signify something important). Then Google uses all this info to figure out which ads your readers will warm to. Even better, Google takes the language of your site and the location of your visitors into account, serving up language- specific, location-targeted ads for maximum impact. Another factor in the determination of ad media for display on any AdSense-enabled site is the user's browsing and search history, tracked through cookies. Google goes beyond simple keyword matching to understand the context and content of web pages. Based on a sophisticated algorithm that includes such factors as keyword analysis, word frequency, font size, and the overall link structure of the web, they know what a page is about, and can precisely match Google ads to each page.

Google Alerts

Want to keep up on the latest news in your industry, or keep tabs on a competitor? Google Alerts allows you to stay informed about whatever you want. Google Alerts will send you email pertaining to the search query that you want to stay informed about. This tool can help you keep on the edge your market and allow you to stay ahead of the competition. With this free service from Google, you can receive email updates of the latest relevant Google results (web, news, etc.) based on your queries. You should already have Google Alerts set up for your online store name, but it's important to set up alerts for your competition as well. You can use Google Alerts to monitor anything on the Web. Such as:

- Content Ideas
  Using Google Alerts, you keep up with your niche and find the latest news, trends, etc. regarding the subject you blog about. This can be a handy tool for bloggers who are strapped for content ideas, as monitoring what's going on in your niche can help you find topics to write about.

- Brand Monitoring
  Google Alerts can help you monitor what's being said about, your blog and/or your business. You can set up Google Alerts to monitor certain keywords, such as your blog name, your business name and your personal name, and they will e-mail you anytime they find those keywords in their search.

- Keep track of Competition
  Keeping track of the competition in your niche can help you be a better blogger, and ensure you're staying as up to date in your niche as your competitors are. You can set up Google Alerts to include specific keywords, like your biggest competitors' names, company names and blogs so you can see what they are doing and when they are doing it.

- Know when Others Link to your Blog
  Set up a Google Alert with your blog address. When people link to your blog via that address, Google Alerts will send you an e-mail. This is an easy way to keep track of how many people are linking to you. The more people linking to you, the more likely it is they're interested in what you are offering. This can help you forge new business relationships, acquire customers or increase your following.