

How The Internet Works For Business In 2010



In this day and age, it's not enough to have a website that is a brochure of information about what you think of your business. To be competitive and successful online, you need an online business plan that is feasible to implement, so your website becomes a part of or 100% completes your marketing and/or sales funnel.

Before You Even Think About Building Your Website, You Must...

1. Do an Internet Marketing Strategy & Asset and Liability Audit

Your website, just like your business did, needs an online business plan to succeed! To do this you will need to create a 100% complete Internet Marketing Strategy from start to finish – which is your road map to take the website you're about to build to the business level you want to get it to. This will add value to your business and this is not for those wanting to make a website as a hobby.

The following are some basics of best business practices in 2010 in order to develop a 100% Complete Online Strategy:

Your Starting Point...

There are 3 ways to use a website for business:

1. **Lead Generation Site** – people find your website through Google and ring you. Google is great for the Business to Consumer (B2C) market, but not so great for the Business to Business (B2B) market.
2. **Authoritative Website** – is like a brochure of every aspect of your business, so people that find out about you from referrals or you send them there, can check out who you are before they do business with you.
3. **e-Commerce Site** – selling your offline products online through a website that processes payment via credit cards or paypal.

Now you have figured out what sort of site you are building, these are the questions you need to answer in order to design your online strategy and business plan.

1. Designing A Lead Generation Site

Website Elements

- Identify all your core products/services
- Research your competition on Google for all your core products to see who you are marketing against
- What is your existing lead to client conversion rate?

Traffic Elements

- How much monthly traffic volume is there for your core products/keywords on Google?
- There are 2 types of traffic costs:
 1. For Search Engine Marketing (SEM) traffic (right hand side of Google), how much is your average cost per click on adwords for your core products/keywords in order to determine this monthly marketing budget?
 2. For Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), how easy, difficult or impossible it is to get on page 1 of Google (as it does not magically happen) for your profitable 'buy' keywords, how long it will take to get these page one results and what is the monthly cost to outsource this work?

2. Designing An Authoritative Site

Website Elements

- How many marketing elements do you have to publish on your website? This part is expanded upon in the section Direct Response Marketing Elements.

Traffic Elements

- No consideration is needed, as people are finding your site via offline methods

3. Designing An e-Commerce Site

Website Elements

- Identify all your core products/services
- Research your competition on Google for all your core products to see who you are marketing against

Traffic Elements

- How much monthly traffic volume is there for your core products/keywords on Google?

- There are 2 types of traffic costs:
 1. For Search Engine Marketing (SEM) traffic (paid ads appearing on the right hand side of Google), how much is your average cost per click on Adwords for your core products/keywords in order to determine this monthly marketing budget ?
 2. For Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), how easy, difficult or impossible it is to get on page 1 of Google (as it does not magically happen) for your profitable buy keywords, how long it will take to get these page one results, what is the monthly cost to outsource this work

If you have an existing website:

- How much traffic do you get now?
- What is the current website conversion rate: leads/traffic or sales/traffic?

2. KNOW HOW TO MAXIMIZE YOUR WEBSITE LEAD CONVERSIONS

You need to out market your competitors or reposition yourself by stating what you do better than anyone else, and then make it easy for your visitors to browse around for your information about your products and/or services.

In order to do that, you need to create a Direct Response Website that simply portrays all of your businesses marketing assets on the home page using an up to date website style.

What are the Direct Response Marketing Elements?

Below are 10 elements of a direct response website. Together these elements create a direct response website that engages your visitors to turn them into leads. Your direct response website may use a random mix of these elements. These elements then create a market match and connection with your visitor. They are designed to engage the visitor to make them feel like they are in the right place with your service. Once they feel they are in the right place, they will engage with your business over any other website because your website connects or speaks to them clearer/better than your competitor.

1. Benefit: What is the single biggest benefit of your product or service?

By telling a little story of how, what, why or when your customer uses your product, they will understand what benefit it is for them to do so by appealing to their “emotions” – whether that “emotion” is happiness, status, fear etc – and attach your product to that emotion.

For example, say you’re selling a BBQ. The benefit of having a BBQ could be conveyed like:

Imagine being able to share a cold beer with a good old mate as the smell of the steak and the sound of the sizzle fills the air in your backyard on any day of the week whilst talking about the weekend’s footy match.

By doing this, you create market match which connects to your target market.

2. Features: What are the functions or technical aspects of your product or service?

Whilst people buy into emotion, they “justify” their purchase through logic. Listing your product features provide that “logic” to your customers. What are the features of your product/service that are used to create or give the benefits to your customers?

Details such as technical features of your product or transparency of the process of your services demonstrate to your target market that you are the expert in your field or industry by demonstrating what your product does, and perhaps what your competitors don't. For certain people, knowing the features of your products or services can win your visitor over if they are inclined to wanting to know what they will get with your product or service.

3. Call to Action: What Do You Want Them To Do?

The majority of websites are lead generation websites in which the primary action is to have your lead on the phone with you over an email to you.

Other call to actions could include having your market buy into a low ticket item or introductory offer and then up sell them at a later stage. Another example could be to have them complete an online form to pre-qualify your visitors to see if they are a promising prospect to follow up.

4. Irresistible Offers: Build Your Database for Your Marketing Funnel

What can you offer or give to your potential customers that would be easy or free for you but highly valuable to the customer? An example could be a free report, a white paper article, an eBook, a coupon, discount or free trial.

This offer will be used as an exchange for their email and name to be used for your database... which brings us to our next point...

5. Keep Customers Coming Back: Email Marketing

Email marketing is a form of direct marketing using email as a means of communicating messages. The message is usually an offer used to create a data base specifically targeted for those people that are slightly interested in your product/service, want some information but not ready to make contact via phone or email just yet.

There are various ways email marketing is used, however the 2 most common are:

1. Offer based emails within 7-30 days of opting in: A series of automatic emails are set up to be sent out once a person has “opt-in” to your database via an online form or entered into your client relationship management (CRM) system. The emails are set up in a way to keep you top of mind over a period of 7-30 days so

2. Newsletter form: Informational based – used to demonstrate your expertise in your field, recommend other related complimentary products or services to your own product or service and at times to announce new offers, product/service launches, industry news etc.

6. Proof or Evidence: Provide your visitors trust and show you're credible

People need to feel that they can trust you. After your visitors have read about your benefits and features the next question a potential customer wants to know is does your product or service work or do what it says it does?

This element is designed to remove the doubt of the visitor for your product/service. This can be done through case studies, showing accreditations in your industry, letting people know you have appeared in trusted media sources such as newspapers, magazines and journals.

7. Testimonials: Have Your Customers As Raving Fans

Testimonials are social proof that your product/service works. The psychology is it's better for someone else to say how they benefited from your product/service opposed to you telling your customer how good your product or service is. For the internet, the best testimonials are video testimonials.

8. Guarantee: Address the Risks – and then decrease or eliminate them

On the internet some sort of guarantee is needed for a potential customer as the way they are judging and trusting you is by the information you are providing them. So for the potential customers that are on the fence of initiating contact, the guarantee will give them trust of the service that you will provide.

9. Market Match: If it looks like a duck, talks like a duck, and walks like a duck – it must be a duck!

This is the part that makes up the look or feel of the site and what most people think about in detail when about to build or re-design a website. You have to match the feel, style, look of your site to the market, so the visitor feels he is in the right place instantly. This is done with the right use of images, text and positioning on your website.

10. Copy Writing

Once the elements above are established, it tends to get easier to write out the copy needed for the rest of your website. You are usually the best person to write the copy for your own website – however if you don't feel confident in writing the copy then hire an expert.

Not all copy writers are equal. You want a copy writer who understands HOW to sell your product or service through words. Just like a good book – a copy writer will keep your visitor on the page from start to finish. It's always best to get a copywriter through recommendation.

Policies/Legals:

You cannot use text or graphics on your site that you haven't created unless you have permission of the copyright holder. You should also clarify with the developer who will own the copyright to the site itself. The fact that you are paying them to create it does not automatically mean that you own the copyright. Generally, in fact, the copyright remains with the person who does the creating.

If this is an important consideration for you now and it may be even more so down the track. You should insist that the developers 'assign' their rights in the site to you as a condition of the job. Make this clear at the outset though, not after the job is complete. Similarly, make sure it is you who controls the Domain Name (internet address for the site) if the developer is going to register that on your behalf.

Your site should also have a Privacy Policy. Most users these days are concerned about protecting their personal information, and you should too. A professional site these days always include a privacy statement. Have a look at some larger sites to get an idea of what is involved. You may also want to get some legal advice on this.

While you are at it, you should also consider the Terms and Conditions of your site and legal disclaimers to protect you from legal liability as far as you are able to do this. Again, look at what other sites have done and get some advice from a lawyer who knows about these things. It need not be expensive, but could save you money in the long run. The Terms and Conditions must be obvious enough that users will have adequate notice of them. Otherwise they may not be of much use to you in the event of a dispute.

3. THE IMPORTANCE OF SEO - SEO EXPLAINED

Getting on the first page on search engines such as Google, Yahoo or Bing is called SEO (Search Engine Optimization).

The general public misconception is, when someone searches on Google for a keyword the results shown are not random. First page results are the direct result of one of the following:

1. The site is extremely popular because the company or product is so good that people naturally talk about this site on blogs, forums and other websites because they like it so much.
2. The website owner implemented On-Page SEO and regular Off-Page SEO strategies over a period of 6-12 months either by themselves or hired a reliable SEO company to get first page results.

In the majority of cases it will be an SEO company that produced the first page results, as the business usually does not have the spare time needed to learn and then implement the work over the long period themselves.

The general internet search user has been trained that Google delivers trusted and quality sites when the reality is that it is the site that has implemented SEO correctly that ranks best. This is usually the result of using an SEO company when it comes to business, as the first page results for a company's keywords are vital to a business's leads.

So the misconception that Google only delivers trusted sites because the sites are good guys is wrong when in fact the site which has done a better SEO job on their website (either themselves or by an SEO company) that produces those page 1 results.

If you do not show up on the first page of any search result then you might as well not exist at all, as the modern internet search user does not look on page 2.

In order to explain SEO, it is broken into two components:

1. On Page SEO
2. Off Page SEO

Both On page and Off page SEO are needed in most commercial markets to get first page results in the modern competitive online landscape of Google.

Off Page SEO

Off Page SEO also known as One Way or Back links to your website are the backbone of a great search engine optimization campaign. Google usually looks at this factor more than any other over time to determine where you should be placed on Google. It is the credibility given to you by other sites that Google uses to measure your popularity. The higher the popularity, the higher your ranking.

One Way or Back links are links to your website placed on other websites, directories, blogs, web 2.0 sites, social bookmarking sites, RSS feeds, Video sites within your target industry that are popular themselves.

To get the first page results on highly profitable keywords with good search volume, you may need to obtain anywhere from 15 to 100 one way links over a prolonged amount of time. E.g. 6 – 12 months

On-Page SEO

On Page Optimization involves changing the front and back end of your website to improve your organic rankings.

Please Note: In order to understand the onsite website optimization section of this report, it is recommended that you open up your website in a web browser. Once you have done this, right click on the screen of your browser and go to “view source”:

Meta Keywords

Meta keywords are the keywords that are in the “back end” of your website. When search engine robots visit a page on your site they read these words to see what your page is all about. However, robots these days do not use keywords to rank a site anymore.

Title Tag

Your title tag should include your main keywords that describes the title of this page. This should be a max of 80 characters per page. This is the content that will be displayed as a thick blue font (the title) on the Google Search Engine Results Page (SERP's). Every title tag should be different for each page of your site.

Meta Description

A Meta description is for giving a description about this page. This should be less than 148 characters per page. This description will be displayed as a thin blue font under the title on the Google SERP's. Every Description tag should be different for each page of your site and should contain the keywords relevant to that page.

H1, H2 Tags

These are used as headings and sub headings in your websites content. Use the keywords in these Tags.

File Naming

The correct file naming of every page is important in order to allow Google robots to be able to read these files names as these URLs are placed all around the internet on other websites, directories, blogs, web 2.0 sites etc to make up the back links to your site aka Off Page SEO . Your keywords are to be used in these file names. The correct use of how to use underscores, hyphens, capitalisation and spacing in the file name to display your keywords is very important for correct SEO implementation.

Alt Tags

Google's robot spiders that visit your site cannot see images and so you need to label those images so they can see what they contain. Benefits of good ALT tags

- Visitors with slow connections may have images turned off. So your text Alt Tag tells them what your missing picture is about.
- Enhance the browsing experience of visitors with disabilities
- Increase your page's keyword density
- Provide valuable information to all your visitors with descriptive link titles

Keyword Density

Keyword density is how many times a particular keyword actually appear on each page of your website. This helps to tell the search engines robots what your site is about. The ideal percentage for each keyword for every page should be between 1% and 3%. Ensure that this occurs naturally within your normal use of language.

Content Keyword Placement

The word length per page should be around 250 – 500 words. There are correct placement positions of each keyword per page through out the content on this page. The placement of keywords is different to the keyword density number that is explained above.

Only a very small percentage of Web developers are able to professionally implement On Page and Off Page SEO for your keywords as well as identify what your "Buy" keywords as opposed to your "Research" keywords. The BIGGEST misconception and mistake a business owner will make is thinking a web developer will know how to build a site to get on the first page of Google or that the website will just appear on the first page of Google without any SEO work. To achieve page 1 position the website needs to be developed as only one part of the business marketing campaign.

Producing kick-butt SEO Results...

In regards to SEO companies, only a small amount of SEO companies are able to implement On Page SEO.

Most SEO companies focus only on creating one way or back links (Off Page SEO). It is time consuming and requires specialised skills and tools. However, this skill set is different to the HTML or coding needed to do On Page SEO work. In order to implement On Page SEO, they need to have web developers with the necessary expertise to do the coding to make these changes.

As most SEO companies do not have this resource in house to do the On Page SEO tasks they will recommend what needs to be changes in order for you to pass onto your web developer to make the changes. The developer may not fully understand what is required or why leading to more unproductive fragmentation and a less than optimum result for your business.

Note:

A website built using Flash animation is very very hard to get on the first page as Google cannot read the content in order to understand what the site is about.

4. BUILD YOUR WEBSITE YOURSELF VERSUS PROFESSIONAL WEBSITE BUILDERS

DO IT YOURSELF

If you are technical type of person, some of the most commonly used web building programs are FrontPage and Dreamweaver. In order to create graphics for the site, a program like Photoshop is used. Doing this yourself, you may not produce the quality of work needed for a professional looking site. These programs are expensive and learning any of these these programs takes time, training and practice.

Another popular form is using Wordpress websites. As an example, a Wordpress website template price ranges from free, low cost (\$25+) or fully customized (from \$400-\$2500+) with pages easily edited by anyone with minimum word-processing skills. Wordpress websites can be built to have free or low cost plug-ins and widgets installed by you or your web developer to enhance your website usability and functionality.

There are 1000's of resources, programs, software, templates and online tools to find using Google where you can learn to build a website yourself. However whilst building your website yourself will be a "cheaper" alternative, it is also will be the most TIME consuming, frustrating and confusing process to make it look right and work effectively.

Only a qualified professional web agency or web designer will eliminate the frustrations and save you time.

It's a balance of either using your time or money, one way or another. The more time you spend building your website yourself the less time you have available to build your business.

HIRING A PROFESSIONAL

It's important to know that while a web agency or web designer might build you a "pretty" looking site, chances are they will not be able to build you a website that will:

1. Get you on the 1st page of Google for your most searched for keywords, e.g. your profitable/buy keywords.
2. Convert your visitors (traffic) into leads with a high converting visitor to lead website, other wise known as a direct response website.

In order to achieve steps 1 and 2 above, a professional web agency or web designer will implement ALL 4 qualities to execute a successful internet marketing strategy:

1. **Website Construction:** This involves a programmer to build the technical aspects of the website using HTML, PHP or a CMS system that can be either an open source CMS or a proprietary CMS.

This process also involves graphic designer to create graphics using a mix of photos, logos, images and text for your marketing message to create attention grabbing graphics throughout the pages of the site.

Building a modern professional site requires a programmer and graphic designer per site.

2. **Marketing Education:** For your web agency to deliver great results they need ot work with you to understand how you business deals with your:

1. Customer's Biggest Problem/s
2. Products Benefits And Features
3. Unique Selling Proposition
4. Primary Call To Action
5. Irresistible Offer
6. Products Proof or Evidence
7. Testimonials
8. Guarantee

- 3. Appearance and Quality:** Your web agency needs to be able to design a website that represents your image and brand to appeal to your target market with an accurate market match. This step is more than just having a “good looking” website (which usually produces low visitor to lead conversions). When a visitor comes to your website, they need to ‘feel’ they have come to the right place. What images you use should help a visitor visualize that you are the expert, you have the goods or services they want, you know and understand their pain/problem/issue, that you are trustworthy and that others have trusted you.

They should understand how to use the prime “real-estate” of your website (hint: this is anything “above the fold” – the area of the screen you see before you have to scroll down a page) using elements such as a call to action, unique selling point, credibility, offer and guarantee designed to create a “response” from your visitors. Only after you have generated a response from your visitors can your business engage with them to lead them through the process and towards the sale.

- 4. Keyword Optimized Pages For Google Ranking:** Your web agency must be able to SEO optimize your website with your most relevant Buy keywords for your business or industry. In order to do this, they will perform keyword research to identify your most searched for products using relevant Buy keywords ie profitable keywords. This process is called an SEO Competition Keyword Analysis. With these keywords each page of your website is optimized using all the On Page SEO techniques outlined previously.

SEO’ing your website professionally produces the following:

- Being found on the first page of Search Engines The relevant keywords in the right places on your website provide the destinations for inbound links that result from your Off Page campaign. Neither can work effectively without the other.
- Attracting only relevant visitors/traffic to your site. When this traffic is directed at a direct response website using the 10 elements outlined above, it dramatically increases website conversions of visitors into customers/clients. This is how the internet marketing plan works to make a website produce results.

Pricing

A Website can range from \$2,000 and upwards depending on the following:

1. **Functionality:** The website can either be a :
 - Lead generation website to make people ring the phone or email.
 - An ecommerce website in order to make an online sale (more expensive)

2. **Website Size:** How many pages are needed for your website

3. **Content Management System:** If you require that you need to control or frequently update your content yourself, your website can be built on a content management system which allows you to update your website or change content without the need of knowing HTML coding. If you can use Microsoft Word then you can use a CMS.

4. **On page SEO:** if you don't want to be found of Google for all your keywords, On Page SEO is not needed. If you do want to be found, then that is an additional component.

5. **Data Base:** Setting up data base with email autorepsnders

6. **Hosting:** Where you host your website also affects the results of your SEO campaign and load times of your website. There are 2 most common ways to host a website and these costs may or may not be included in your website price:
 1. Using web host servers in Australia – Usually the best option and can be reasonably priced (usually from \$20AUD+ per month depending on your plan). Having a website hosted with Australian servers means faster load time of your website. If you are planning SEO traffic, then host the site in Australia.

 2. Using web host servers overseas – you can find web hosting priced from \$5USD+ per month. The servers are still quite good but your website will take longer to load and is harder to SEO a website hosted overseas for Australian traffic.

FINAL THOUGHTS...

Your website is your business shop front to the world. Most potential clients/customers will check out your website to confirm your credibility, what you offer, and who you are before they make a substantial purchase from you. You want to make sure your business and products are well represented on your website, easy to navigate and portray your business market message accurately so your visitors will buy from you over your competitors.

When choosing your web designer/web agency the rule of thumb is: You get what you pay for – so don't always pick the cheapest price as chances are they will not be able to fulfill ALL 4 qualities outlined above to implement a successful internet marketing campaign with your website.

Ensure that your web designer is more than just a “tech head” (programmer) or “cool graphics” person (graphic designer), in that they know marketing principles and can implement On Page and Off Page SEO to your website during and after it is built.

When considering the importance of your online business objectives to your offline business you can see how much attention is needed in understanding how your website will reflect your business and more importantly how people will find you. Therefore your website should be treated as a direct extension of your business, and give it the time needed to make this part of the business work effectively and contribute to your business profits.



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