

What an Online Sales Engine Can Do

National and global businesses are moving beyond the basics of paid search advertising and keyword optimization to develop and enhance their Internet marketing programs. All of these organizations are met with an incredible optimization challenge, however, after they've successfully tackled the basics. The online marketing world is full of very specific, tactical approaches for using Twitter, social media, whiz-bang paid search accounts, advanced SEO, and the next great thing coming down the road.

To build true competitive advantage in today's online marketplace requires going beyond these tactical approaches to address your entire customer-acquisition process—from the first ad click to the final purchase which may occur hours, months, or even years later. Adopting Your Online Sales Engine can help you turn a handful of individual tactics into a strategic advantage.

What Is an Online Sales Engine?

Addressing the entire customer acquisition process requires bridging fields of expertise that have often existed within silos (marketing, sales, operations). It also forces tough conversations about goals and trade-offs on a scale that companies may have never needed to broach before. Each division, distributor, or department can no longer do their own thing when Google flattens the world and puts companies both large and small all on equal footing in one marketplace.

An “online sales engine” provides the missing road map to maximizing online sales, as your business and marketing decisions will be based on accurate data. This book guides you through the initial strategic decisions, shows you how integrating various disciplines can measurably improve your results over time, and teaches you how to track back through the data to determine the point of online contact to inform your future Internet marketing purchasing decisions.

Why Adopt the Online Sales Engine?

Treating your online presence as an online sales engine ultimately enables you to increase sales, whether you have an e-commerce website or use your website to generate leads. An online sales engine combines sound strategy, effective promotion, as well as accurate and complete data about the effectiveness of your efforts. Armed with this system, you will be able to make sound strategic decisions and get ahead of your competition.

With an iterative, measurable, and repeatable approach to Internet marketing, the marketing team can learn *which* online strategies bring *results*; at the same time the sales team benefits from better-qualified leads; while the whole company gains through increased sales.

The new paradigm of web-based business and the ability to measure the effectiveness of advertising and the progression of a prospect through the *entire* buying process means that marketers are no longer tied to “Return on Objective” (ROO). Instead of tracking project goals and whether or not they were met, marketers today can directly measure their efforts in terms of impact on the top line.

The goal of any company who chooses to adopt this online sales engine should be to generate measurable, repeatable sales. Adoption involves several iterations of strategic analysis, project execution, measurement and analysis, on each online sales engine component in turn, as shown in Figure 2.1.

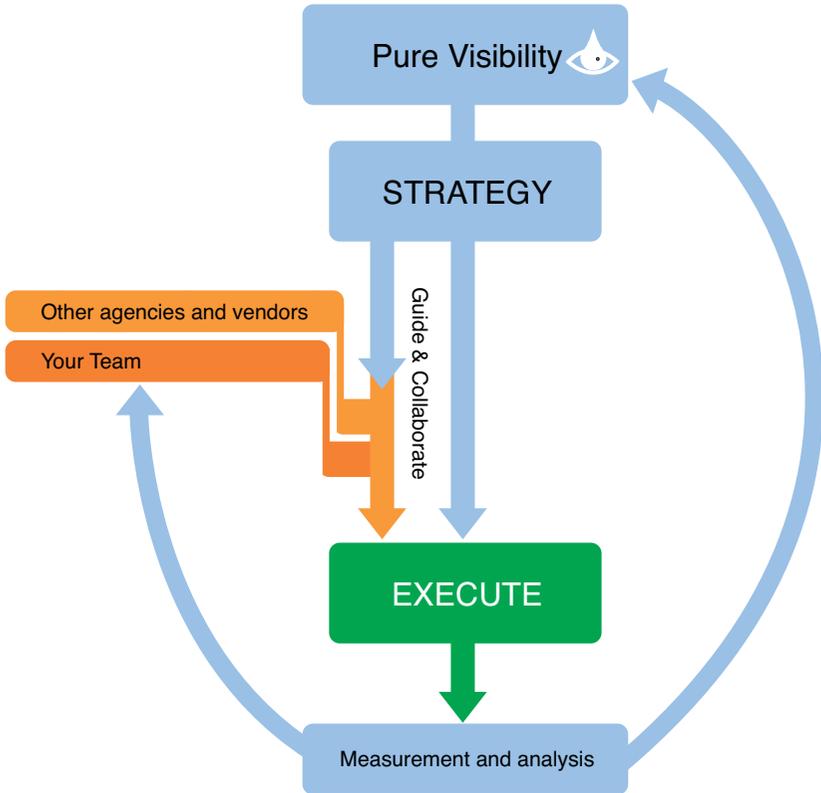


Figure 2.1 *Measurement and analysis drive each iteration of the adoption cycle.*

The core concept behind the online sales engine is that social media, search engine optimization, paid search campaigns and user experience improvements are merely tactical components of the same iterative Internet marketing process. To optimize the process you need to track back to the original point of contact for each new customer. Metrics are a crucial component.

We want to give you the tools to develop a more cohesive and concerted approach to broader corporate Internet marketing programs. This helps you to move away from independent island-like projects, corporate silo thinking, and haphazard internal efforts with no metrics to back them up.

The Online Sales Engine Components

The pieces and parts of this online sales engine begin to form one of two different processes when you adopt the engine at your company.

The online sales engine components are

- Speaking to your audience, analyzing keywords and developing user personas
- Making websites that work, either from scratch or through improving what you have in place already
- Getting visible with organic and paid search
- Selling online, including landing page design and conversion rate improvement
- Reviewing metrics that matter, and revising the other online sales engine components based on sound business analysis

The essential components of the online sales engine are shown in Figure 2.2.



Figure 2.2 *The basic online sales engine components.*

The chapters in this book describe the practical application of adopting each of the online sales engine components at your company. Table 2.1 lists the chapter where each component is discussed in detail.

Table 2.1 Where to Find the Online Sales Engine Components in This Book

Online Sales Engine Component	Chapter(s) in This Book
Speaking to your audience, analyzing keywords, and developing user personas.	Chapter 5, “The Audience Is Listening (What Will You Say?).”

Online Sales Engine Component	Chapter(s) in This Book
Making websites that work, or deploying an improved website.	Chapter 7, “Making Websites that Work.”
Making your message visible with organic and paid search.	Chapter 8, “It’s All About Visibility.”
Selling online, including landing page design and conversion rate improvement.	Chapter 6, “Putting It All Together and Selling Online.”
Working with metrics that matter, and revising the other online sales engine components based on sound business analysis.	Chapter 3, “Building a Metrics-Driven Practice,” Chapter 4, “Breaking Down Silos to Get the Metrics You Need” and Chapter 9, “Running the Feedback Loop.”

The Components Form a Process

The methodology to apply each of the components is a little trickier to codify. There are actually two ways you can adopt the components of an online sales engine:

- **Customer-driven**, which ensures that you start with defining your market and audience analysis activities first.
- **ROI-driven**, which ensures that you start saving money in paid search sooner and using those funds to drive implementation of additional components.

The structure of this book follows the customer-driven process, as each chapter looks at a different component (or aspect) of the online sales engine in a logical order, but you are welcome to apply the ROI-driven process if it makes more sense for your business situation.

Avoid “Dangerous Data” Nightmares

The major difference between this online sales engine and traditional media planning approaches is that metrics are at the heart of the process. While data analysis and traditional marketing sometimes seem worlds apart, a well-executed Internet marketing approach brings them together, gaining a strategic advantage.

Internet marketing, by its very nature, provides greater trackability over traditional marketing methods. A concerted, thoughtful approach will deliver results, over time.

But sometimes, having and acting on a little bit of data is more dangerous than having no data at all. Without the full picture, you can think that something is working, when in fact it’s not. You could be optimizing your marketing efforts on the wrong elements altogether.

We're trying to avoid the nightmare where we have an incomplete picture of a company's marketing data and we actually turn off an ad or ad group that appears to be underperforming (perhaps it's not driving contact forms being filled out). It seems logical... but then the phone stops ringing, because that ad group instead was driving phone calls that no one had any way of knowing about!

The last thing any of us wants to do is to inadvertently make the phone **stop** ringing! Implement an online sales engine at your company, with a complete picture of your data, and you avoid these dangerous data nightmare scenarios.

Case Study: Identifying Junk Leads

Attendance On Demand, Inc., a company that has developed several employee time and labor tracking solutions, tracks their sales leads acquired from landing pages directly into their Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software.

One employee at Attendance on Demand, Inc., nicknamed "Sherlock," decided to do a bit of follow-up on the leads her team was producing. Because they had captured the search terms along with their lead information, they discovered that some of the paid search terms they *thought* were a good source of well-priced leads were a good source of junk leads.

"Sherlock" discovered this by simply calling the leads in the database, discovering that most people searching for "fair labor standards act" or "FLSA" and "family medical leave act" or "FMLA" who signed up for their whitepaper on how to use Attendance on Demand Inc.'s services to comply with the law, were actually disgruntled folks looking to sue their employer, instead of the executives looking to automate their system to ensure fairness and compliance.

Now they are no longer transferring these poor quality leads into their CRM. They are also giving away the whitepaper for the FLSA and FLMA search terms, instead of putting it behind a contact form. Simply using the phone and a bit of tracking removed poor quality leads from the system, allowing the sales team to focus on leads that might become sales.

The Customer-Driven Process

The "logical" way to think about the online sales engine adoption process is to start at the beginning, with your business goals, setting up metrics to track, and identifying who your website visitors really are. The rest of the customer-driven methodology works through improving and optimizing various aspects of your website, then reviewing the metrics that you decided to track up front.

The specific phases of the customer-driven online sales engine process are

1. Define your goals.
2. Configure tracking and set goals for metrics.
3. Conduct research and improve the user experience.
4. Sell online.
5. Manage your website.
6. Increase visibility with search engine optimization and paid search.
7. Revisit the metrics.

This book is organized based on the customer-driven method of adopting the strategy and tactics of the online sales engine. The chapters relate to specific process phases, as shown in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Relating Each Phase of the Customer-Driven Process to Chapters in This Book

Process Phase	Chapter(s) in This Book
1. Define your goals.	Chapter 1, “Why Online Sales Matter.”
2. Configure tracking and set goals for metrics.	Chapter 3, “Building a Metrics-Driven Practice,” and Chapter 4, “Breaking Down Silos to Get the Metrics You Need.”
3. Conduct research and improve the user experience.	Chapter 5, “The Audience Is Listening (What Will You Say?).”
4. Sell online.	Chapter 6, “Putting It All Together and Selling Online.”
5. Manage your website.	Chapter 7, “Making Websites That Work.”
6. Increase visibility with search engine optimization and paid search.	Chapter 8, “It’s All About Visibility.”
7. Revisit the metrics.	Chapter 9, “Running the Feedback Loop.”

1. Define Your Goals

What defines success for your website? Is it improved quality of leads, or simply more leads in general, or increased profitability for products sold directly from the website? Perhaps you are looking to educate and inform potential customers as well, or need to impart specific information to them during the buying process.

How you define success for your website will impact your business, of course. But it will also inform the strategic decisions you’ll make while adopting the online sales

engine as an overarching process for your Internet marketing. Website goals are discussed in Chapter 1, “Why Online Sales Matter.”

2. Configure Tracking and Set Goals for Metrics

Let’s say it again: What defines success for your business? What part of that can you measure on your website? That defines what you’ll need to track.

To configure tracking and metrics for your website, you need to

- Choose a contact method.
- Determine what to measure.
- Define the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- Choose your basis for comparison.
- Begin to close the loop.
- Work with analytics tools.
- Don’t forget the phone.

Choose a Contact Method

The telephone or an online contact form... which do you prefer? Perhaps both, or even live chat? The pros and cons of choosing each method (and why you should avoid using only a simple email link) are discussed in “Choosing a Contact Method” in Chapter 3, “Building a Metrics-Driven Practice.”

Determine What to Measure

Look at each Internet marketing channel and determine what you need to measure, track, and analyze, over time. Every business needs to optimize both paid search (pay-per-click [PPC]) campaigns and search engine optimization (SEO) campaigns, to identify which keywords generate more interest and convert more visitors into customers.

You’ll find more information in the “What to Measure” section in Chapter 3, “Building a Metrics-Driven Practice.”

Define the Key Performance Indicators

Now, dig a little deeper and pinpoint exactly which primary and secondary Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) you want to measure for SEO, and do the same for paid search. Defining KPIs helps you measure the success of your marketing activities (either SEO or paid search).

You're spending money to get visitors through these means, so you should track carefully here (no one wants to overspend!). While this does take some effort up front, the payoff is that you can analyze exactly which elements of your online marketing efforts work better than others, down the road.

Detailed information on SEO and paid search KPIs appears in "SEO Key Performance Indicators" and "Paid Search Key Performance Indicators" in Chapter 3, "Building a Metrics-Driven Practice."

Choose Your Basis for Comparison

What do you want to compare these KPIs against? Do you want to report trends before and after a website update? Or would you rather focus on comparing the data week over week, month over month, or year over year?

Consider your sales cycle and the seasonality of your business, to determine when you should take the measurements.

Follow the advice in the "Use Business Analysis to Define Your KPI Benchmarks and Goals" section, as well as the "When to Measure Matters" section, both found in Chapter 3, "Building a Metrics-Driven Practice."

Begin to Close the Loop

Now you know what you want to measure and when, so you need to capture the data and get it where you need it: into your Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software. From there, your sales team can work with the leads and record ongoing customer interactions. Over time, you'll be able to "close the loop," identifying which marketing channels for specific keywords or campaigns delivered better sales results.

But that analysis can't take place unless you bridge the gap between your website data and your CRM... and get your sales team on board to enter data about each lead as they work with potential customers, for analysis down the road.

See "Integrating Web KPI into Business Decision-Making" and "Web to Lead to CRM Analysis: Close that Loop!," both in Chapter 3, "Building a Metrics-Driven Practice." There is also additional information in "Lead Management: SFA/CRM Integration," in Chapter 4, "Breaking Down Silos to Get the Metrics You Need."

Work with Analytics Tools

Now's the time to get your feet wet in terms of analyzing the existing data hiding in your website. Start using web analytics tools (such as Google Analytics, Urchin, Yahoo! Web Analytics, Omniture SiteCatalyst, and others) and look under the hood. Choose between logfile analysis or script-based analytics tracking, and set up your analysis tools.

This is your starting point for comparison purposes; you can start to identify which Internet marketing channels are pulling in more leads and customers than others. But what you don't know at this point is what the quality of those leads is. For that, you'll have to wait for your sales cycle to close more sales and then analyze the data from your CRM software in conjunction with the web analytics tools.

At this point, you'll start to learn who is coming to your website, what they engaged with while there, and what actions they took.

For more information, look at “Web Analytics: Types, Purpose, Popular Tools for Each” in Chapter 4, “Breaking Down Silos to Get the Metrics You Need.”

Don't Forget the Phone

Your campaigns might spur a telephone call rather than a specific action on your website. If you value phone leads, make sure you are also tracking your telephone calls from your Internet marketing!

This can be as simple as getting an 800 number and using it exclusively as the call-to-action phone number throughout your website, or getting more granular and using multiple toll-free 800 numbers for different campaigns. You can even get to the level of individual keywords, assigning a different phone number for each.

You need to count calls before, during, and after marketing campaigns, and use your CRM system to provide a place for your sales group to log phone calls. These same tools can provide you with dashboards to measure the call volume.

Find more details about integrating telephone data with website data in “Call Tracking: Why It's Essential and How to Select the Granularity Needed,” in Chapter 4, “Breaking Down Silos to Get the Metrics You Need.”

3. Conduct Research and Improve the User Experience

The next few steps involve taking a look at your potential customers, and other members of the population looking at your website (such as job candidates, investors, etc.), to get to know them better. The research outcomes help you to define a better user experience for your website visitors.

To conduct research and improve the user experience for your website, you need to

- Define your audience.
- Develop website personas.
- Conduct user research.
- Conduct keyword research.

Define Your Audience

What are the goals of people visiting your website? Obviously a potential customer is looking for information on your product or service to evaluate making a purchase. But other people might be looking for a job with your company, or checking on an order, or any number of other tasks.

You can use several audience analysis tools to define the people visiting your website, many of which are outlined in “Start With the Tasks and Goals of Your Potential Audiences” in Chapter 5, “The Audience Is Listening (What Will You Say?).”

Develop Website Personas

Now that you’ve identified who’s coming to your website and why, you’re ready to develop website personas for each type of website visitor. The details and some sample website personas are available in “Develop Website Personas” in Chapter 5, “The Audience Is Listening (What Will You Say?).”

Conduct User Research

There are several ways to gather more feedback about your website, and that’s the focus of the next step in the process. Choose one or more usability research methods to apply, and focus on the user personas that are most important for your website (a potential customer, for example).

Additional details are in “Adapt Your Website to Your Persona’s Needs” in Chapter 5, “The Audience Is Listening (What Will You Say?).”

Conduct Keyword Research

One of the important considerations is to evaluate how they are getting to the content on your website. Look at all possible paths that people might use to get to your website content. Paths include everything from organic (natural) search to landing pages accessed via a paid search ad campaign.

Most of these online paths involve keywords or key phrases that a potential website visitor uses to reach your website. You need to do some keyword research to ensure that you are reflecting your target audience’s language in your online marketing. You’ll need to conduct what we refer to as a word market analysis to identify your target keywords.

Some companies also periodically use the Google Insights for Search tools (see Figure 2.3) to identify keyword trends, or use Google’s Keyword tools (see Figure 2.4) to look at keyword volume.

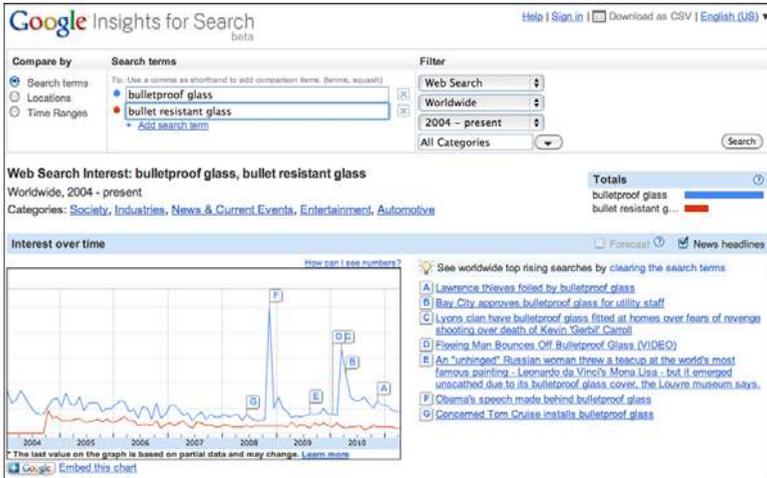


Figure 2.3 Google Insights for Search tool, with an example keyphrase.

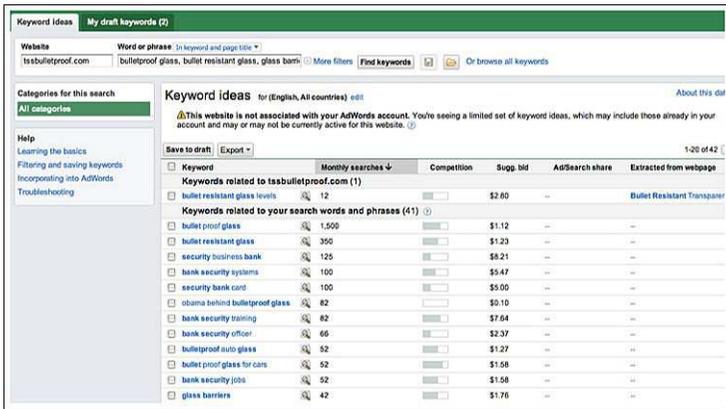


Figure 2.4 Google Keywords tool, showing potential keyword ideas.

Take a look at the additional information in “Speak Your Audience’s Language: The Real Search Engine Optimization” in Chapter 5, “The Audience Is Listening (What Will You Say?).”

4. Sell Online

The next phase in the process is to work on the aspects of actually selling online. In a website (or website update) project, you’ll need to optimize the user experience of the complete website. A critical but often overlooked aspect of most websites today is the landing pages that are part of a paid search campaign.

To sell online, you need to

- Design (or redesign) your website.
- Optimize landing pages.

Design (or Redesign) Your Website

Now that you have deeper insight into your website visitors and their needs, you can use the personas and user research to define a new information architecture for your website. You'll develop a website skeleton and define other paths people will use to get to your content.

Additional information architecture techniques help you to develop more detailed scenarios (using your user personas again) for each of the different goals you identified for your website visitors. The goal here is to avoid organizing the content of your website around your company's internal structure; the content should reflect how your potential customers think about your products and services, instead.

When you've built multiple scenarios, you'll need to reconcile the overlap between them, and create a content map. This content map is often simply a whiteboard with sticky notes that you've been working with to get to the page detail level. Feel free to identify new pages for your website, you can never have too much content!

Finally, you'll define the navigation structure, rough out the page layout, and begin working with a graphic designer to get the look and feel right for the functional elements you've identified.

The section "Designing Your Website" in Chapter 6, "Putting It All Together and Selling Online" describes all of these information architecture tools in detail.

Optimize Landing Pages

Do not overlook the landing pages that people use to access your website (typically through a paid search campaign or email marketing). Although separate from your main website, these are critically important paths into your website and directly affect your conversion rate.

One of the most important aspects of a landing page is the call to action. Make sure it's not in the page header that scrolls out of sight when someone reads the content further down the page. It should be clear and prominent (and perhaps a bit reminiscent of a late night infomercial). For a good call to action, bigger is better.

The section "Designing Your Landing Pages" in Chapter 6, "Putting It All Together and Selling Online" provides additional best practices for landing page design,

examples, and granularity. It's also important to look at "Optimizing Your Landing Pages" in Chapter 6, "Putting It All Together and Selling Online" to ensure that you improve your conversion rate over time.

5. Manage Your Website

A critical component in the online sales engine is the project management piece, which covers everything from annual planning to specific deployment checklists and quality control.

To manage your website, you need to

- Conduct additional research.
- Maintain your website.

Conduct Additional Research

Now that you have a design to work with, even if it's just a paper prototype, it's time to do some additional testing. This step ensures that you both improve the user experience and optimize conversion rates (with tools such as A/B testing to compare the impact of two similar designs, for example). Apply both qualitative and quantitative research tools, if at all possible, to assemble a more complete picture.

See "Beyond Best Practices - User Research" in Chapter 7, "Making Websites That Work" for details on quantitative and qualitative usability and conversion rate test methods.

Maintain Your Website

We all know that a website is not a short-term or one-time project. After you've redesigned, analyzed, tested, and deployed your website, it's time to take a step back and make a maintenance plan. There are several website maintenance tasks that fall under annual, quarterly, monthly and weekly or daily planning and implementation.

Many search engine optimization tasks need to be addressed when planning a website update, as well as some often overlooked elements, such as handling 301 page redirects and 404 error pages.

More information can be found in "Website Planning and Maintenance" and "Planning a Website Refresh or Relaunch" in Chapter 7, "Making Websites That Work."

6. Increase Visibility with SEO and Paid Search

Next you'll need to monitor what is happening with your organic search and paid search campaigns. Update both using data from your web analytics tools over time, refining your keywords for both, as you go.

Don't forget that you are improving your website content for two main groups: website visitors, of course, but also the search engine spider (or crawler) programs as well. Optimize your pages, titles, and HTML tags to improve your search engine rankings. Improving your page content to more closely match your customer's search keywords also ensures that your potential customers will find your content more compelling as well.

Organic search and paid search advertising complement each other. Neither is free, even though you don't have to pay for organic visitors by the click, you do need to invest in website infrastructure and content to get organic visitors to find you at all. Some companies overlook the importance of location in their findability; don't forget to claim your listing in Google Places as well to boost organic search placement.

Figure 2.5 illustrates how you might target paid search campaign and search engine optimization (SEO) projects on different groups of key phrases.

Because the number of key phrases you can target with SEO is proportional to the size of your website, websites can target fewer terms with SEO than with paid search. Because it is a smaller list, organic search targets are typically more general search terms than paid search targets, but yield a higher number of searches per term.

Paid search keyword targets, by comparison, can be very specific terms, but individually lower volume.

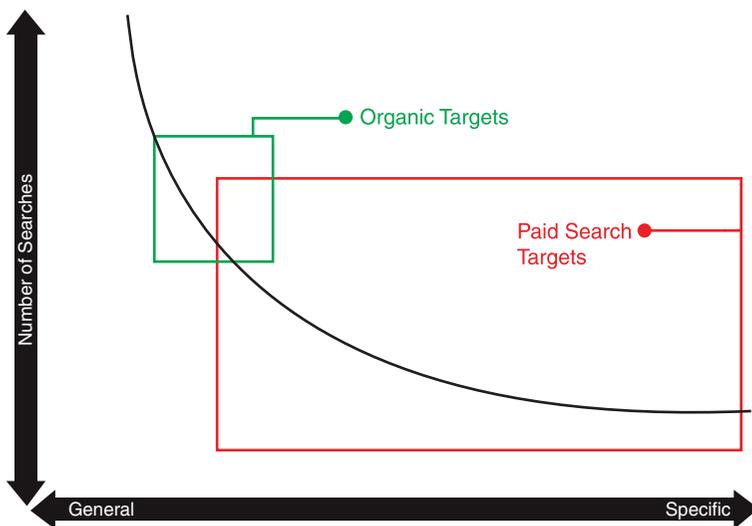


Figure 2.5 Paid search campaign optimization tends to focus on more specific words than organic search optimization.

Theoretically, using this approach, you can target your SEO and paid search efforts to complement each other, but keep your eye on the market and don't target too narrowly. Continue at least some advertising where your competition advertises... you don't want a qualified prospect to click on a competitor's ad because yours is no longer there.

Increase Findability with SEO

Search engine optimization (SEO), sometimes referred to as organic search, is the process of making a website more visible to people who use search engines such as Google, Yahoo!, or Bing to find what they need.

Because half of all Americans use search engines on a daily basis (according to the Pew Internet & American Life Project www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/258/report_display.asp), optimizing for organic search can have a huge impact on your overall traffic.

Search engine spiders crawl websites across the Internet to identify which websites to display in response to a search query. They then assess the content and display the websites that have content matching the words used in the search.

At a tactical level, SEO involves making sure that your website is properly configured to allow these crawlers to find your content and easily identify its theme (explored in Chapter 8, "It's All About Visibility"). The core of SEO is the website content. Search engine spiders (or crawlers) consider what words you use, where they are positioned, and whether or not they match the keywords that people actually use when searching.

Google, Yahoo!, and Bing then determine the rank of a website based on their assessment of how relevant it is to the particular goals of the person executing the search. The goal of SEO is to improve that rank, by making sure that your themes and keywords can be readily identified by both website visitors and the search engine spiders.

Details on improving organic search ranking can be found in almost all of Chapter 8, "It's All About Visibility."

Extend Your Reach with Paid Search Advertising

Just as organic search ranking needs to be improved to increase your ranking with search engine results pages, your paid search advertising campaigns also rely on constant tweaking over time to gain incremental improvements.

You'll need to define your market, which involves targeting the right audience, identifying keywords and ad groups (based on keyword themes), and setting the campaign's region and time period. Working with a paid search advertising campaign also means that you need to qualify your market with specific ad copy, convert visitors into customers, and continuously revisit and refine your campaigns.

All of this is discussed in greater detail in "Extending Your Reach with Pay-Per-Click Advertising" in Chapter 8, "It's All About Visibility." You'll also want to consider landing page optimization tactics presented in "Designing your Landing Pages" in Chapter 6, "Putting It All Together and Selling Online."

Apply Advanced Visibility Strategies

While the number one method that people use to find a website is search (and within that realm, Google is the number one search engine), experts predict that sharing, not searching, is the wave of the future. That means that social media and other advanced visibility strategies will take on more importance in the near future. You need to devote a portion of your time, energy, and budget to managing a social media presence (alongside your SEO and paid search efforts) for your company.

GOING SOCIAL

Extending your website's reach into social media means that you should consider marketing your company (both directly and indirectly) on some of these social media websites:

- Facebook
- Google+
- YouTube
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Tumblr
- Flickr
- Formspring.me
- MySpace

Don't overlook niche social media websites for connecting more directly with your customers. For example, a yarn importer should be active on www.ravelry.com, a knitting and crocheting community.

Figure 2.6 shows a variety of social media tools, which should be considered when enhancing your online presence.

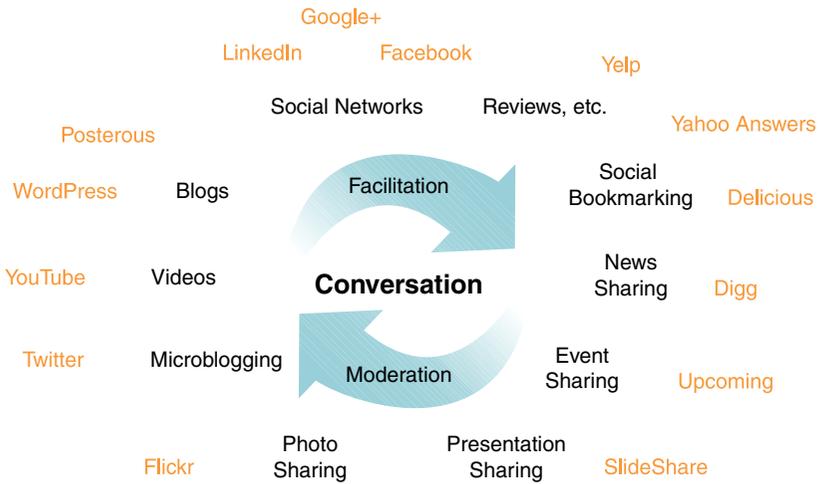


Figure 2.6 A sample of current social media websites.

Another advanced visibility strategy to consider pursuing is online display advertising, or banner (or pop-up) ads. While paid search ads are typically text-only ads, display ads are often animated or include media files. A display advertisement is meant to get you seen on a specific website. A paid search ad is meant to invite someone to take an action, such as clicking and visiting your website.

Both social media and display advertising are discussed in Chapter 8, “It’s All About Visibility,” in the sections “Advanced Visibility Strategies: Going Social” and “Advanced Visibility Strategies: Display Advertising.”

7. Revisit the Metrics

Change your focus on which metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) you measure, over time. Make changes to your website content and paid search accounts based on website visitor data.

Close the Loop with Metrics

The very last step, the gold mine actually, of the online sales engine, is where you have gathered enough data through multiple sales cycles over time (all captured in your web analytics tools as well as your customer relationship management software)

to “close the loop.” (To stretch this gold mine metaphor, you get a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, when you close the loop.)

Now you can generate customer acquisition reports in your CRM system and analyze the reports in conjunction with your search marketing plan. You can identify the most valuable paid search and organic search keywords for your business. Then look at both the quality and quantity of lead conversions. Measure your results, and tweak your website content, marketing, and advertising campaigns based on those results.

Finally, you’ll run the ROI numbers and calculate future projections based on past performance. Then adjust your marketing plan accordingly, armed with the new information.

Additional details on applying metrics to close the loop can be found in Chapter 9, “Running the Feedback Loop.”

Maintain Your Analytics

Like anything, your web metrics are subject to entropy, or “creeping” disorder. So make sure you include regular tracking inspections in your website maintenance! Do this to avoid loss of valuable data through incomplete tracking or loss of connection between your business systems.

The ROI-Driven Process

In this version of the online search engine methodology, you’ll use savings from your paid search campaign to drive the rest of the engine. Revenue is generated from improvements in this area early on, helping you see an early return on your investment.

After applying paid search campaign improvements, you move into the search engine optimization and keyword analysis areas, and then move on to improving the landing pages.

The final step in the ROI-driven model is to return to the beginning, which is audience analysis and improving the usability of your website. This important work often tends to bog a team down as it can be very time-consuming.

You might opt for this ROI-driven version of the online sales engine methodology to ensure that your company can get traction early on in the engine adoption process and get team buy-in for larger and more fundamental efforts.

The basic steps in the ROI-driven implementation process are

1. Configure tracking and set goals for metrics.
2. Improve the paid search advertising campaign:
 - “Weed out” underperforming keyphrases, ad copy, and landing pages (be careful if you only have data from web forms though, you might “optimize” and turn off phone calls or the seemingly underperforming group that lands large contracts).
 - Expand on good performers. Invest more of your budget here, constantly test and improve your ad copy, landing pages, and key phrases.
 - Focus on better calls to action and targeted usability updates to garner incremental increases in landing page conversion rates.
 - Lather, rinse, repeat.
3. Optimize the website for organic search.
4. Revisit the metrics.
5. Continue to implement the online sales engine by revisiting other components you skipped (such as audience analysis and usability) and make continuous improvements to your website.

Summary

Social media, paid search, SEO, and user experience improvements are the tactical components in an iterative Internet marketing process. Metrics tracking the improvements and results help you optimize this process.

There are two ways to implement the online sales engine:

- **Customer-driven**, which ensures that you start with defining your market and audience analysis activities first.
- **ROI-driven**, which ensures that you start saving money in paid search sooner and using those funds to drive implementation of additional components.

The specific phases of the customer-driven online sales engine process are

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1. Configure tracking and set goals for metrics.
2. Improve the paid search advertising campaign.
3. Optimize the website for organic search.
4. Revisit the metrics.
5. Continue to implement the online sales engine by revisiting other components you skipped (such as audience analysis and usability) and make continuous improvements to your website.

Are you ready? Then, let's move ahead to the next chapters and dive into the details of each online sales engine component.