

The Road East is the Road West—Web Marketing and Direct Mail



Have you penned direct mail letters linking to web pages to drive traffic and help your clients measure and improve conversions? The

road East is also the road West. Web marketing tools can help your direct mail campaigns.

I receive many direct mail solicitations that I consider marred by the heavy use of “inside baseball” talk. What I mean by “inside baseball” is language that makes assumptions that I—the reader—think about what that organization does in the same terms that people working inside their walls do. Linguistic scholars study how dialects vary from place to place, with some places being less than a mile apart. Organization walls breed singular lexicons, too.

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for their groups. Group members benefit by having a comprehensive news digest readily available to them on LinkedIn. It can be a great way to discover new blogs and sources shared in the group, and members can discuss the hot topics that emerge from the stream.

Social media and search engine optimization have value on their own, but together they become even more powerful. Creating content for a social media campaign is no less important than doing it for an SEO campaign. The content is going to end up in the same spot – the search results – so it’s important you create it with a clear purpose. Remember to optimize the content itself and use your key words consistently.

Tracking Social Media ROI

Tracking ROI or the effectiveness of social media tools can be expensive and complex. Here are some free/cheap tools to do it yourself:

Think of the web as a growing treasure trove of data on how people really speak and think. Every time someone does a search, they add to the enormous and ever-changing database that the web comprises. Mine this data to help you communicate more effectively with your targeted audiences.

Google provides free data on keyword popularity. Sometimes what you find is surprising. Last year, I was astonished to meet a UK company whose web pages all had the keyword metatags of “business acumen.” (Note: Keyword metatags were obsolete, even then—a tale for another column.) Wow, I thought. Do they really think that people are going to the search bar and typing business acumen to find them? American girl that I am, wasn’t I surprised to find that this is actually a relatively heavily sought-out term in the UK, and in Australia, too—but not in my “neighborhood” of the U.S.

Take a step up from free Google data to a low-priced Keyword Effectiveness Index (KEI), a tool that uses some combination of algorithms to measure popularity vs. competition. The better ones give you a glimpse of how many are using terms for “optimizing” web pages to lure that traffic.

- **Twazzup**, a dashboard tool that monitors Twitter so you can track when key words are mentioned in a tweet.
- **Socialmention**, a tracker that will show user-defined statistics for your keywords over a 30-day period.
- **Addict-o-matic**, gathers information about keywords or brands from across the web, including Flickr, YouTube, Digg, and Google Blogs, as well as all the traditional social media platforms.

Mobile Marketing

And just when you’ve integrated social media into your integrated marketing plans, here comes mobile! The top three things to work on *now* include:

1. **Making your websites mobile-friendly.** Does your website work on smartphones? It better. And start thinking about a mobile version of your website on your next update.
2. **Collecting cell phone numbers.** Do you have a field in your database for mobile phone numbers? Is there a space on your

From this data you can infer which terms help “convert” traffic to leads to sales—everyone wants winners.

Search engines now type us with “personalized search” algorithms, too -- misnomers for identifying ways groups of us think. The search engine optimizers that help you write better web copy by identifying “surrounding” terms to cast a wider net because of “personalized search” help you zero in on better direct mail verbiage too.

Google AdWord tests to different pages (the simplest testing, called A/B testing, is perhaps the gold standard). If you have spent years developing a list that you want to squeeze the most from with any one mailing, why not use very inexpensive, short-run AdWords tests to see which terms yield the highest traffic conversions first?

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online and print new-member applications that requests mobile numbers? Are you asking members their preferred communication method?

3. **Embracing video.** Content is king but video delivery is *super* king! Who wants to read? Members want to be entertained, taught, and empowered to tell others. Great, compelling video can do all that, in a matter of seconds.

Integrate social media into traditional marketing strategies (don’t forget traditional methods that still work); focus on great content and messaging; and use tracking data to adapt to changing member needs.

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Jeanne will be sharing social media case studies at DMAW’s Association Marketing Day, October 19. Reach Jeanne at jsheehy@bostrom.com.