



Denis Kondopoulos

Internet marketing

Advanced techniques for increased market share

DENIS KONDOPOULOS

Naxtech.com, 6 Regent Court Reading, RG1 7HW, United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

Information technology provides the tools for online marketing but classic marketing principles remain at the core of the marketing process. SEO (1) must be driven by the customer's needs and wants and by the competitive presence on the internet. SEO is an integral part of the marketing plan and not a simple add-on to the website. The article discusses the importance of SEO integration in internet marketing and provides a six-stepped technique to enhance the presence of any type of enterprise on the web.

INTRODUCTION

It is often said that Internet marketing and SEO (1) in particular is probably the most efficient and cost effective form of modern marketing. However, due to its somewhat technical nature it is often put to one side or ignored in favour of more traditional methods of marketing which are easier to understand and have existed for decades. This is more common where senior management and executive staff is unfamiliar with technology, the internet and electronic marketing in general. This lack of understanding often prevents companies from embracing and using technology effectively for marketing purposes.

THE PROBLEM

In cases where online marketing activities do not provide the expected results, a failure to deliver is blamed either on the marketers or on the technical staff. However, the truth is that

SEO – The Popular/Typical Approach

- SEO is more of an Add-On



- Product X -> Take to market: Force the sale

Figure 1. SEO disconnection from the marketing plan is the "norm" today.

effective online marketing actually requires *the collective input* not only of marketers and technical staff but also the involvement of the brand team (where applicable) as well as strategic guidance and support from senior management. The principles behind online marketing are no different from marketing offline. We still need to understand our target market, we still need to analyse what the competition is doing and position our products and services appropriately. Unfortunately internet marketing activities such as SEO are seen as add-ons to an existing website, while the corporate marketing plan exists as a separate "Information Island" (Figure 1).

This approach to SEO is based on the long-existing style of product driven companies which is "I have Product X -> Take to

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market ->Force the sale". It disregards whether the necessary demand exists or how the marketing message should be used or adapted for the Internet.

So, how can someone make sure that they promote their products and brands effectively? How can we ensure that our

marketing message is properly backed up by technology and ranks at the top in searches?

THE SOLUTION



Figure 2. Six steps to SEO integration in marketing plan.

Search visibility will come from appropriately constructing the website in a manner which makes it visible to search engines and promoting the specific terms which are in demand by visitors.

We are proposing a 6-step approach:

1. *Supply*: Look at the marketing plan, products/services to be promoted and competition activity.
2. *Demand*: Look at target market requirements, search patterns and behaviour.
3. *Technology*: Look at the Technology used. IT as an enabler or hinderer.
4. Compile a list of recommendations.
5. Translate recommendations to technical requirements.
6. Apply technical changes and review/monitor process.

Using this method, SEO is integrated to the online marketing activity and no longer an add-on. You are now listening to the market and adapting your strategy. We're not forcing the sale but adapting the sales message. In short, you make sure that supply and demand converge. In practice, this approach will increase your search visibility and result in increased market share.

URL	Page Rank	Anchor Text	Link Type	Outbound Links	Strength
http://www.merck.com/newsroom/news-release-archive/product/fosamax_statement.html?WT.svl=footer	6	http://www.actonel.com	Good	20	69
http://www.wcrx.com/	5	Actonel®	Good	25	35
http://mastersite.com/	5	ACTONEL	Good	185	5
http://blogs.nature.com/nm/spoonful/daily_dose/	5	Actonel	Good	757	1
http://www.experiencepg.com/brands.html	5	-N/A-	Missing	2	432
http://www.always.com/rosetta.html	5	-N/A-	Missing	181	5
http://jp.pg.com/links/rosetta_jp.html	5	[ALT] Osteoporosis Information, Testing Your Bones	Good	229	4

Figure 3. Competition link analysis as a powerful tool for your marketing plan.

Keyword Research

Top Cities for angina

City	depression	angina	osteoporosis
Thames Ditton	100	100	100
London	38	43	23
Manchester	44	40	20
Edinburgh	50	40	22
Sheffield	47	36	21
Brentford	43	36	21
Milton Keynes	46	35	20
Birmingham	42	34	18
Poplar	42	31	19

Top Cities for osteoporosis

City	depression	angina	osteoporosis
Thames Ditton	100	100	100
London	39	43	22
Edinburgh	49	38	19
Poplar	44	30	19
Manchester	45	40	19
Brentford	43	34	19
Birmingham	41	36	18

Top Searches related to angina

symptoms angina	100
angina pain	70
angina pectoris	40
angina attack	40
unstable angina	35
symptoms of angina	35
chest pain	35
angina chest pain	35
heart attack	30
angina treatment	25
heart disease	20

Top Searches related to osteoporosis

national osteoporosis	100
osteoporosis treatment	85
osteoporosis society	85
osteoporosis nice	85
osteoporosis guidelines	70
national osteoporosis society	65
osteoporosis uk	50
osteoporosis symptoms	50
calcium	50
osteoarthritis	35
nice guidelines osteoporosis	35

Target Market: UK

*data is based on the month of March 2011 on Google.com

Figure 4. Demand side analysis: what terms do customers search for and where are they from?

EXAMPLE

Here is how the 6-step approach works in the pharmaceutical sector. These findings can be extended in confidence to any other industry, including the chemical industry (2).

Step 1 - SUPPLY: define target market, and analyse competition activity

In this step you do a lot of the groundwork required for a successful online marketing campaign. You need to analyse who you want to target and analyse your environment. By using "competition link analysis" you look at what your competition is doing online. This will provide powerful insights in their marketing activity, ranging from sponsorship and exhibitions to partnerships and advertising campaigns. The table below is a small extract from one such report showing visibility ranking, link type, outbound links and link strength. This provides a powerful insight in the marketing response and feeds in directly in the marketing plan both on-line and off-line.

Examples

- Pharmaceuticals - Normal View



Figure 5. Human view of the website.

Step 2 - DEMAND: know your target audience

Figure 4 shows the search demand for two therapy areas, Angina and Osteoporosis. On line research indicates the type of searches our target audience performs in relation to the therapy areas mentioned. So for instance there is 4 times more demand for terms referring to the symptoms of angina compared to information on treatment. In the case of osteoporosis the results are the opposite. Information on treatment has approximately 60 percent more demand than information on symptoms. One has to adapt their SEO activities accordingly. One can also gain tremendous insight in the geographic specifics of the demand side. In the United Kingdom market for example, it would be logical to assume that London would be the most productive market however the on-line research shows that in fact Thames Ditton will maximize investment in SEO for both Angina and Osteoporosis!

Step 3 - IT alignment with marketing goals

When engaging in online marketing it is critical to consider the effects our existing IT systems and platforms can have on our marketing campaign. Depending on your



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RESULTS

So, you might say "great theory, but does this work?".

The answer is probably easier to give using three website screenshots illustrating the six step process. Figure 5 shows the screenshot of what the website looks like to a human.

Figure 6 shows by contrast what the website looks like to Google. It clearly shows the use of the search terms as discussed above. Previous versions of the web did not use the same terms and the search engines gave the company low ranking, making it practically invisible for the on-line customer.

The main conclusion here is to ensure that your message is not just promoted to humans but also promoted in the right way to search engines via the programming behind your website.

Finally, Figure 7 shows that with the right programming, the ranking of the website is greatly improved as a result of the six step integrated SEO approach.

In this case, the particular website appears on the very first page of search results, only in 3rd-4th position on the first page.

Surely, not a bad result to achieve without having spent any money on paid advertising or PR.

CONCLUSIONS

Internet marketing, Search Engine Optimisation specifically may be technology-centric but the traditional marketing principles still apply.

Careful analysis and targeting remain at the very heart of successful internet marketing and will help you formulate the right strategy and message both on-line and off-line. Nevertheless, this needs to be done with adequate IT insight and by integrating SEO in the company marketing plans. ■

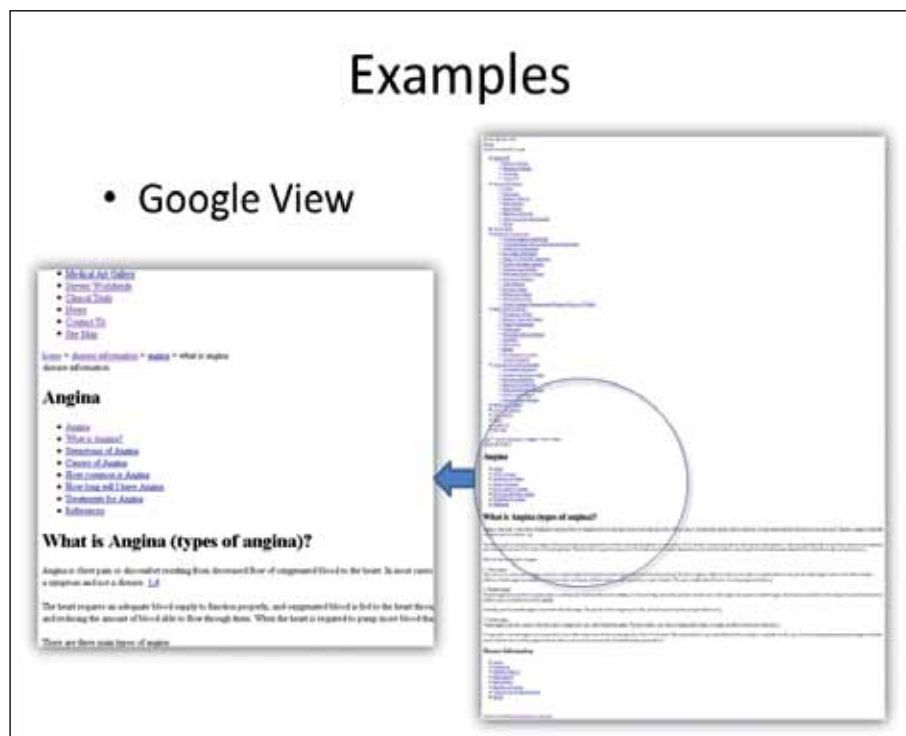


Figure 6. Google view of the website.

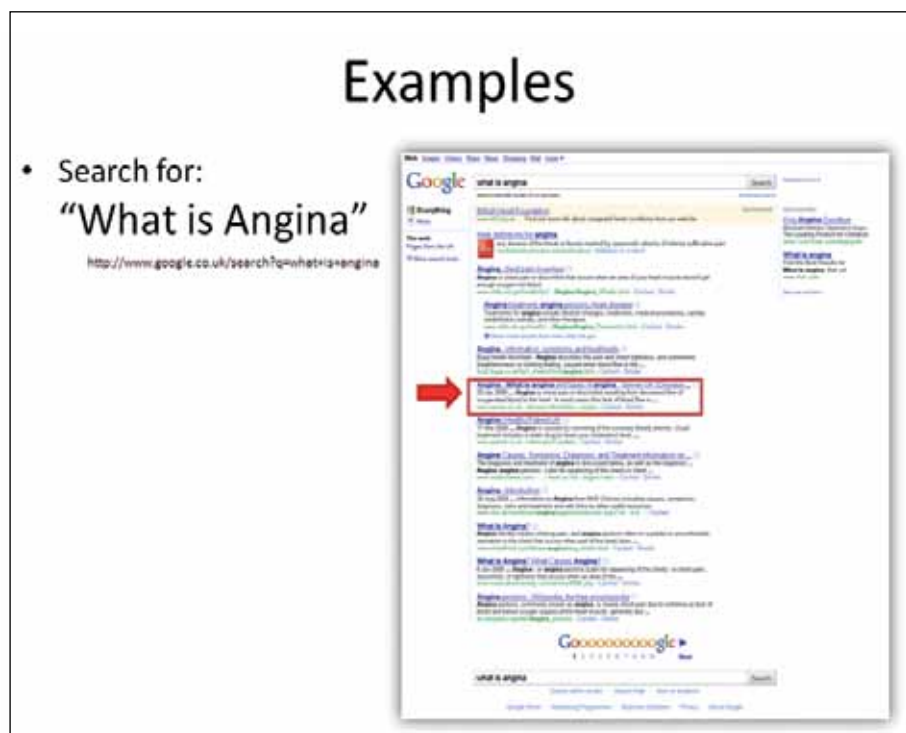


Figure 7. The SEO integrated approach delivers high ranking in Google.

existing systems, some things are easier than others, so it is important to consider the role of IT in delivering the desired outcome. Technology must provide you with the tools to promote your message in the right way.

Step 4/5/6

Based on insights from Steps 1, 2 and 3 we can recommend how to promote our message online, which is Step 4. In Step 5 we need to translate those high level business requirements into technical requirements which we can then execute, and then monitor and enhance regularly in Step 6.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. SEO stands for "search engine optimisation"; SEO improves ranking in internet searches using search engines like Google or Yahoo and is critical for attracting traffic to the company website.
2. Pharmaceutical companies in Europe i.e. are not allowed to promote their products under the law; SEO activities provide the only way to "promote" ranking in search engines within regulatory requirements; the pharmaceuticals ranking is influenced much less by other marketing activities this is why it illustrates clearly the importance of SEO.