Four Reasons to Invest in Search Engine Optimisation by Trevor Southwold

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With so many different ways to spend a marketing budget, it is hardly surprising that businesses often struggle to choose where to apply their limited resources. The difficulty of the decision is compounded by the fact that it is often difficult to measure the performance of some types of marketing campaign.

Search engine marketing, or search engine optimisation as it is often known, should have a place in the marketing strategy of any business that is intent on growing its share of the market and reaching a wider audience. Search engine optimisation has a number of advantages over other forms of advertising, such as the following:

1. Search engine marketing is global

This is important for businesses who want to reach large national and international audiences. Using search engine optimisation techniques, it is possible and even practical for businesses to reach a far larger group of prospects than advertising through many traditional media. A business with a website that is based in a small town in North America can reach consumers in Malaysia and beyond through search engines. To reach a similar audience through television or print advertising would require a massive commitment of resources.

2. Search engine marketing is cost-effective

For the same cost as a single full-page advert in a leading publication, a business can employ a search engine optimisation agency to promote its website for three months. While the advantage of the magazine advert will decline precipitously by the time of the next issue, money spent on search marketing will continue to benefit the business for months or even years to come. Provided the website of a business functions well as a conversion funnel, the additional traffic generated through search engine optimisation can produce a massive uplift in sales.

3. Search engine marketing is measurable

Search engine marketing is about as measurable as marketing gets. The internet provides unparalleled opportunities for data collection, prospect targeting, and performance analysis. A quick glance at the major search engines results pages for your chosen key terms will go a long way towards telling you how well your chosen digital agency is performing, and a little analytical flair can tell you a great deal about your ROI - click-through rates and conversion rates from the additional traffic generated through search engine marketing can give you a strong inkling of how much money your efforts are bringing in.

4. Search engine marketing is granular

Although search engine marketing is global, it is also granular. Through intelligent keyword targeting, it is possible to target very specific groups of search users. For example, by targeting certain long-tail search terms such as "good mechanic bristol" or "buy novelty cheese grater" it is possible to ensure your website reaches people who have expressed a strong desire for your product. While placing an advert in a relevant industry magazine will attract prospects who are broadly interested in similar products, targeting your advertising efforts to search users who are one step closer to purchasing your particular product will often produce better results.

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