

Want More “Qualified” Web Traffic? We Strongly Suggest Using Bait.

If you haven't incorporated Search Engine Optimization (SEO) as part of your web strategy, you may have wasted your money building a website. Don't worry you're not alone. This article is to help you better understand why this often misunderstood term is so important to your online presence and what you can do to get on track.

After almost 20 years in advertising, it still amazes me when a company wants a beautiful and intuitive website with all the bells and whistles and then decides to launch it without any regard for how the site is going to be found on search engines like, Google, Yahoo, etc. It's much like preparing for a big fishing trip... You buy the best boat, rods, reels, nets, GPS unit, fish finder – the whole nine yards. But, you decide not to use BAIT — one of the most essential ingredients?!?! Believe it or not, SEO is your website's bait. Without it, I wish you the best of luck — you're going to need it.

Websites shouldn't be created just because “everybody else has one.” Certain businesses don't need them at all. So, before you make the investment to build one, make sure you're doing it for all the right reasons. If a website can't streamline a business process, collect useful data, sell a product or do something that will improve your company in some tangible way, it will sit out in cyber space collecting dust. And trust me, if you don't have a plan to market it online using SEO, you better get out the Pledge and a roll of paper towels.

By the time a website is completed, companies are chomping at the bit to get it online — so that friends and family members can take a look and tell them how great it is. What they don't seem to understand is that without some sort of SEO implementation, these same family members will probably be the only ones who ever see it. For those of you who have no idea how SEO works, you're not alone. The following will give you a basic understanding behind this extremely important process.

Everyone has gone on Google and done a search for something specific, like “sunglasses.” If you are a company that sells sunglasses, you're in business, right? WRONG. 9,140,000 people searched the term “sunglasses” in April, 2009 alone, which is great, but there are 45,000,000 websites using that same word in their websites. This is your competition. So, what are the odds that your company, “Bob's sunglass hut,” will come up on the first page of that search? ZERO. And if you aren't on the first page of a particular search, you might as well be on the last, because only 3 percent of people will look at a second page. See where I'm going with this?

The main goal in SEO is to identify search phrases that people are looking for that aren't too broad like “sunglasses,” or too narrow, like “mint green sunglasses with reflective lenses.” The trick is to identify a keyword or phrase that has enough traffic searching for it to make a difference in your business and has the best chance for your site to come up on the first page of that particular keyword search. This process takes research and analysis and good decision making based on “facts.” You can't just make up keywords. You have to know the “exact” words or phrases people are using to find your particular product or service and set your site up around them.

There are some basic techniques used to modify a site for optimum relevance in these searches, and if you aren't implementing them, believe me, your competition is. Don't let the term SEO scare you anymore, or think that it is a waste of time and money. In my opinion, it's equally as important as having a great website – one can't live without the other. Optimization costs vary greatly depending on what you are trying to achieve. We advise our clients to utilize a portion of their overall marketing budget for SEO. I don't know of a better way to get a bigger bang for your advertising buck.

For more information on this or other marketing and advertising topics, contact High Tide Creative at 252-671-7087 or visit our website www.HighTideCreative.com to find out more about our services.

About the author

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