# ONLINE MARKETING What You Really Need to Analyze



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# **Online Marketing**

Running and marketing an online business or an offline business online requires a lot of online real estate. It requires content for all the real estate, an understanding of the ways to market everything, and then the knowledge of how to analyze your efforts. In addition, you will need tools and resources that help you with all of the above.

When marketing online, there are many different channels that you can use:

- Websites
- Blogs
- Mobile
- Social media
- Search engine optimization
- Pay-per-click campaigns
- Affiliate marketing
- Video marketing
- Email marketing
- Online public relations
- Article marketing
- Shopping cart management

All of these are used to varying degrees by most businesses online or off. You may not have everything such as a shopping cart, but it is most certainly a good idea to use most of these channels to market your goods and services. But, even when you use all these channels, there is no way to know if it's working if you don't learn how to analyze the metrics, or know what metrics to test.

As you know, there is no point in continuing any activity that isn't producing the results you need to have a successful business. You want to do things that bring more business, and throw out the rest. By analyzing your efforts you can improve your results exponentially.

### Set S.M.A.R.T Goals

Way back in 1981, well before online marketing became a reality, George T. Doran came with the acronym "SMART" to describe making management goals. This process works very well for making goals for online marketing and deciding what you need to analyze. Here's what the acronym means:

**S** – Specific: It's important that you know exactly what goal you want to achieve. For example: "I want to increase sign-ups to my email newsletter by 1000 subscribers."

 $\mathbf{M}$  – Measurable: For a goal to be workable it needs to have something that indicates progress or success, such as a number or other benchmark.

**A** – Assignable: You need to know who, what, when and how it will be done.

**R** – Realistic: This is not the time to make a pie-in-the-sky declaration; this is the time to figure out what can realistically be achieved, then perhaps add a little bit to it to make it challenging.

**T** – Time-Related: When making any goal, if you don't have a deadline, you won't know when to check your progress or have any indication when success or failure has been achieved.

Other authors have assigned different words for the acronym. Some of these might help you with different projects based on the hoped-for outcome. Some other designations have been as follows:

 $\boldsymbol{S}$  - Significant, stretching, simple, sustainable

**M** - Motivational, manageable, meaningful

**A** - Appropriate, agreed, attainable, actionable, action-oriented, adjustable, ambitious, aligned with corporate goals, aspirational, acceptable, aggressive

**R** - Result-based, results-oriented, resourced, resonant, reasonable

**T** - Time-oriented, time-framed, timed, time-based, time boxed, time-specific, timetabled, time limited, time/cost limited, trackable, tangible, timely, time-sensitive, timeframe

(Source, Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMART\_criteria)

Before you can hope to start analyzing your online efforts, it's important to understand how to make goals that work. Using any of these words in place of the letters S.M.A.R.T. will help you develop appropriate goals for your business.

The important part of the SMART acronym to remember regarding analyzing the success of your actions, is to create goals that can be measured in some way. This usually means to compare where you started with where you end up at the time limit you've imposed. Measurement is imperative for determining success or failure when it comes to almost anything you do in business or life.

#### **Understand How Google Sees Your Website or Blog**

One of the most important things to understand is how search engines work. Since Google is still the number one search engine, you need to understand how Google sees your online real estate - most especially your website and/or blog. If you can rank well with Google, you will rank well with the other search engines.

One of the most important things you can do when starting out is to have a full understanding of how Google's bots search your website and determine whether it's appropriate for their customer - the person searching. If it's appropriate for your target audience, then it's going to be appropriate for their audience since the entire point of the search engine is to send people to information that they are trying to find.

Google's goal is to return the most relevant search results to its audience. Due to the fact that technology is always improving, Google's way of returning those results will continue to evolve and improve. While this can be stressful for the online marketer, the truth is that if you have a valid business with online real estate (on many channels) that offers excellent information, products and services to your target audience, and you do a good job of indicating that to visitors, your website or blog will become more relevant and appear closer to the top of search results - which is your goal.

You want your website or blog to be entertaining, informative, educational, and interactive for your audience, but you also want Google Search to acknowledge your existence and relevance to your audience. To do so, you'll need to stay up to date with <u>Google Webmaster Tools</u> and every Google Algorithm change that comes along – and there will be many. But if you stay informed, and offer value to your audience, the changes will only be good for your business. Read and memorize the information for the <u>Steps to a Google-Friendly Site</u>, and check back often for changes.

#### How to Decide What to Analyze on Each Channel

Now that we've covered all of that you're probably still wondering, "What do I analyze?" The answer varies depending on your goals, your market, and the channel, but there are some basic things that every business owner needs to understand about their business which we will go over now.

#### Websites and Blogs

Every business owner today should have a website. If you don't have a website then you're making a huge mistake. Do not get a free website builder, or disregard the importance of having your own domain name. Take yourself as seriously as you want other people to take you. Having said that, you'll want to track the metrics of the following aspects of your website:

**1. Unique visitors** – If you are running a marketing campaign right now that includes PPC, social media and other channels to get the word out about your special product or service, you should be getting more first-time visitors than during times that you're not running a marketing campaign. You can use <u>Google Analytics</u> to measure this type of traffic.

**2. Returning visitors** – If the website you're marketing has content that you want your audience to read or use (such an informative blog, articles, a forum, and lots of advertising that you earn money on), then you want to have people returning to your website often. This is an important indicator that your efforts, to keep the interest of your audience, are working. This factor is important to Google Search because if people keep going back to your website, it shows that it is an authoritative and useful website for your audience.

**3. Where your audience is coming from** – The source of the traffic is also an important thing to track, especially if you're spending time, money or other resources on marketing at various places to get traffic. If none is coming from one of the places where you're spending resources, you may want to reconsider. The traffic sources should correlate with the time and effort you're making.

**4. Bounce rate** – If someone comes to your website and leaves within 60 seconds, they will be counted as "bounced" unless within that time frame they visit another page. What this tells you is that the person who clicked through to your website did not immediately find what they were looking for. If you have a high bounce rate (over 40 percent), either your website isn't interesting enough for your audience (referred to as "sticky"), or you're not doing a good job with targeting your audience.

**5.** Average time spent on your website – The time people spend on your website as well as the pages they read is important, because it can be an indicator of audience interest and what type of content your audience wants to digest. The more you can improve the time spent on your site, the better all your stats will become.

**6. Keywords** – Google Analytics tells you which keywords the customer used to find your website to a point. Today you have to use "Acquisitions" to determine where and why traffic is coming to you. With some Google changes sometimes you get a result "Keywords Not Provided". The reason is that these are organic or unpaid search terms. Paid search terms will show, but organic ones won't. Try using the "Profiles" and then filter to find more information about results.

These analytics are very important and will teach you a lot about how your website or blog is performing and give insight on what you can do better. If you spend just a few minutes per day looking at these analytics, you can get a better idea of what type of content and information you should add to or subtract from your website or blog to get better results. Without this information you're just shooting in the dark, and you're more likely to miss your mark due to that.

#### **Mobile Metrics to Analyze**

Today, mobile is hardly separate from PCs. The truth is, if your website isn't optimized for mobile and you're not maximizing the benefits of mobile, you're missing out on a huge portion of your audience - if not the biggest portion of your audience. Accessing websites, blogs, social media and email is happening via mobile, in some cases more often than from personal computers. Mobile devices are outselling personal computers, too. Due to these facts, it's imperative to not only design your online real estate to work on mobile devices just as well as via a PC, but to specifically market to mobile users too.

When you are analyzing your website for all of the above, you want to also take a look at how much of your audience is coming from mobile. This will help you determine how much time and effort to spend on ensuring that your website, blog, and all the content you distribute is optimized for mobile. Even if you have few mobile users, it's still important to take this time now to ensure that your website and blog are responsive.

Responsive refers to your website, blog and email, and even shopping cart if you have it, being usable to mobile users and PC users without having to build more than one website. Everyone should see your website and be able to access the information you provide, the products and services you sell via whatever means they prefer. So, what mobile metrics should you analyze?

- **Track mobile visitors and their behavior** Use Google Analytics to track your mobile visitors. What pages do they visit? Do they bounce off your website? Do they make a purchase, or follow your other calls to action and if so, at what rate? How many of your mobile visitors convert compared to your PC visitors? Do you know?
- Analyze results of your mobile campaigns weekly When you run a mobile marketing campaign, try to capture the data weekly based on each individual effort. For example, if you run a mobile campaign where you actually purchase Google Ads for mobile, you need to not mix up the results from another program. Keep results weekly, and then compare each effort to find out what works best for your audience.

By tracking mobile separately from PC performance, you can be sure to inject enough resources into your mobile marketing if and when it's needed. If you jumble all your marketing together into one result, your results will not be accurate and you may end up wasting time and money on efforts that are not working.

## **Social Media Analytics**

It's also important to collect data from your social media efforts. Your blog can be counted in those social media efforts, and so can social networks like Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and others. You might also want to include your efforts, for example, with forum commenting or blog commenting in your metrics. This information is important because without it, you don't know if the things you're doing are producing the results you desire.

- Determine customer satisfaction You can utilize social media to determine how your customers feel about your business, using your business name, or even keywords of your products and services to capture the discussions they are having. If you have a Facebook page, you can read through the comments being made to determine consumer satisfaction and sentiment. Before determining what you want to analyze on social media, determine which goals you've made correspond with your social media activity.
- **Customer engagement** Social media is an excellent resource to use to analyze customer engagement. If you post a poll, how many answer it? How far is your reach on Facebook for any given post, and how is it improved by boosting it? If you run a Facebook advertisement, how does that help or hurt your efforts? How many followers

did you get on Twitter during the campaign, and how many are retweeting your messages?

• **Revenue increase** – Has your revenue increased due to any particular action you've taken on social media? If you cannot trace your revenue back to a specific action, you are not creating SMART goals that can be matched with a tool to study the results of the goal. Remember, you don't need to take wasted action. You want to "work smarter, not harder".

As with other analytics, first you need to know what you want to track, what your goals are, and what tool you will use to track it. In addition, you'll want to know how you'll gather the data and what form you will put it in for further study (for example, a spreadsheet).

#### **Search Engine Optimization**

One of the ways in which business owners get traffic to their websites and blogs is via search engine optimization or SEO. SEO can be on-page SEO and off-page SEO. Those are just what they sound like. On-page SEO is what you do directly on your website or blog to get search engine traffic, and off-page SEO is what you do outside of your website such as on social media, via email, and anything else not directly on your website to get search engine traffic.

Most SEO is considered organic. This means it's technically free traffic just because you've done such a great job letting the search engines know that your website is authoritative and valuable to your audience (and therefore theirs). This is based on several factors such as how much original content you have on your website or blog, as well as how many inbound links you have that are also authoritative. Plus, how long people stay on your website, and how fast they leave it or bounce off it. All these factors come into play when it comes to SEO and your search engine ranking.

Therefore, to analyze SEO it's important to know what you've done new today with your SEO and where you're starting in terms of the stats, so that you can start tracking the results today. The tools you use to analyze your SEO are the same tools you use to analyze everything else - Google Analytics and social media built-in analytics. It's also important to know where you started, where you want to go, and be able to know how you got there.

### **Pay-Per-Click Campaigns**

A pay-per-click or PPC campaign is means that you pay for clicks to your blog, website, sales page, email list sign-up or even a social media page. If you run a PPC campaign, you should most definitely analyze the results so that you can determine the return on investment.

You should be able to tell exactly where every click and every sale comes from. To ensure this, understand how the PPC works, and how you'll know where the click came from. Some things to look closely at and adjust according to results are location, day and time, search query and keyword position. These are very important metrics to determine how well your PPC is working.

In addition, compare your paid search versus your organic search to see which is producing the best results. Maybe you can drop some of your PPCs and do more organic search or vice versa. By checking the metrics at least weekly, you'll have a good idea of how your PPC is performing and be able to determine what you need to do more of, and what you need to do less of.

### **Affiliate Marketing**

If you sell products, whether digital or physical, you can start an affiliate program. An affiliate program is a way to get other people to promote and market your goods to others, and you only have to pay them if they make a sale. This is a fabulous way to get other people to market for you at a less expensive cost. Your affiliates will run PPCs, conduct social media campaigns and more.

But, even if this seems like a great idea and pretty hands off, there are metrics to analyze regarding your affiliate marketing as well. You want to ensure that the marketing collateral that you create for your affiliates is working for their audience and that your affiliates understand which audience needs your products. You can even offer training to help your affiliates promote the products that you offer.

The things you want to analyze when it comes to affiliate marketing are: which ads that you've created are your affiliates using more, which ones among those that are used are getting you the most clicks as well as conversions, and which affiliates are making the most sales. In addition, you want to be sure that the program provides a good return on investment.

The affiliate platform you use will have some stats available to you in the form of reports. There are several different platforms you can use; many of them offer a free trial or access to a demo account. Choose one that offers the metrics you need to ensure that your program works in the manner you want it to.

### **Video Marketing**

When you use video in your marketing, you can also analyze the effects it has on your marketing and your business. Using video for your business marketing is an excellent way to improve SEO, connect better with your audience, and make more sales. However, there is a lot more to video marketing than getting views. Even if your video goes viral, there is no guarantee

that you will make sales due to that video. In addition, if you do not study the video marketing metrics, you won't know whether or not you were successful in your efforts.

Did you know that a one-minute video can have an impact on your traffic and website that over 3000 web pages cannot match? More than 100 million people who use the internet watch online videos, and shoppers love seeing videos when making a choice whether or not to purchase. According to the Web Video Marketing Council survey, 81 percent of companies are producing video content for their websites. When looking at what to analyze about your video marketing, it's important to consider what your goals are for the video marketing.

Some measurements to be concerned with are sales leads generated, revenue generated, YouTube views, comments that define customer sentiment, how many view on your website, Facebook likes, Twitter retweets, shares and so forth. What metrics you choose to analyze will depend on your goals.

#### **Email Marketing**

If content marketing is king, then email marketing is queen. No matter what other type of marketing you do, you must engage in email marketing. In fact, pretty much all your marketing needs to have a goal to get more of your target audience to sign up for your various email marketing lists.

Some statistics you may want to analyze in regard to email marketing are:

- Delivery issues How well do your messages get delivered to the intended recipients?
- Content success Copywriting is very important when it comes to marketing messages going through email to your customers or leads. The value of each email is very important and the last email they received will determine how they view future emails from you.
- **Timing issues** Every audience has a different time that they're more apt to open emails. This is an important metric to analyze so that you can ensure that your emails go out at the right time.
- Your competition Sign up for your competitions email marketing to see how they do it. Try to determine how effective their campaigns are. Improve upon them.
- Market segmentation How well are you segmenting your market? When you engage in strategic segmentation, such as keeping those who have not purchased off the lists of those who have purchased, and vice versa, how does this affect your email marketing success?

• **Conversions** – Whether your call to action is to buy, share, comment, reply or so forth, what type of conversions rates are you seeing? How can you improve?

Email marketing is hands down one of the most important forms of marketing that you will do for your business. It's imperative to give it the time and effort it deserves in relation to the other types of marketing, including analyzing various aspects of success or failure for each campaign that you run.

# **Article Marketing**

Today, article marketing isn't what it used to be. Now, instead of "article marketing" you will want to find places to post original guest articles/posts, comment on blogs, and engage in social bookmarking. What's important to remember is that you want to write high quality articles that are backed up by research and study. Plus, you do not want to place the same article or blog post anywhere but one place.

By providing high value information, your articles will not be perceived as spam by either the audience or the search engines. So, there is still value in article marketing even though it's done a little differently now. The main keys are that the article should be longer than a typical blog post, in depth, valuable information to the target audience, and original and exclusive to that one place where you post it.

Finally, be careful where you post the articles. You want them to only be on high value, authoritative websites that your audience reads, with your author's bio, linking to your website. Also, you need to take responsibility for marketing your content, no matter where it is posted and answering people who take the time to leave a comment.

Statistics that you want to analyze when it comes to article marketing are:

- Shares How many people read the article and shared it with others?
- Comments How many people engaged with you on the article and made comments?
- Click-throughs Are people clicking through to find out more about you, the author?
- **Conversions** When people click through, are they converting? Are they buying, signing up for your email lists or answering your calls to action?

You may have other goals for your article marketing such as simply expanding brand awareness, and you'll need to figure out a metric to help you with determining if you've succeeded. All goals need metrics in place to determine success.

## **Shopping Cart Management**

If you have a shopping cart, it's also important to analyze how and what is working to increase conversions. In the case of online shopping, it's not a situation where you can "build it and they will come." Instead, you have to try to design everything with your audience in mind - from the look and feel to the content used in the descriptions. The only way to do that is to publish, test, analyze and repeat.

Most shopping cart platforms will come with their own analytics and reporting features that are different from the analytics that you may see in Google Analytics. And, this is great because this new information will help you improve your offerings exponentially if you use the data to make changes.

#### Shopping cart abandonment

One of the main things you want to analyze when it comes to your shopping cart is shopping cart abandonment. If you can figure out why people are putting things in their cart and leaving it, this one issue can drastically improve sales. In addition, with this information you can set up ad retargeting to bring them back.

This one metric can help you make improvements fast and immediately affect your bank account if you do it right. Not only that, but analyzing shopping cart abandonment also gives you a lot of information about your audience. Many businesses have over a 50% abandonment rate. Imagine if you could just convert a few percent of these to actual customers. They have already shown that they want what you are offering. They are a better bet than those who have not put something in their cart. These people are no longer browsers; they're legitimate leads.

Seek to keep your cart abandonment rate lower than your site bounce rate by segmenting abandonments into categories to try to figure out why. Try testing different features of your shopping cart. For example, if you aren't showing prices prior to your customer adding to the cart, show prices. If you are asking them too many things at the checkout, for example, such as whether they want to get an additional product, you might change that to be an upsell after the purchase to see if that works.

Managing your customer's shopping cart experience is an important part of running your business and you can improve it drastically with analyzing this one simple metric. Of course, you can decide on your own metrics to analyze based on your goals.

### **Online Public Relations**

Online public relations campaigns focus on publicity actions that persuade online media, communities, and audiences to do some action that can be reached only on the internet. That includes search engines, blogs, forums, social networks and really any online communication tool which can be used to influence your audience.

Using online PR is appropriate for all businesses, large or small, bricks and mortar or digital. There are many different ways to engage in online PR, from sending out press releases to simply commenting on a message board or blog post to using bookmarking sites like http://www.delicious.com or http://www.reddit.com. In addition, PR can include reputation management.

But, how do you analyze the effectiveness of your PR? What do you look at to ensure that your PR is meeting the goals that you've set? Check the following metrics at least weekly for each new campaign.

- **Inbound leads** You should be able to tell which inbound links come from PR efforts compared to other efforts such as PPC or social media links. If your social media likes and follows start increasing directly after a PR effort, is it related?
- **Prospect conversions** Often after a good PR effort you'll notice more conversions due to enhanced customer awareness, which also translates into a shortening of the sales cycle.

In addition, a good PR campaign can increase your social media likes, engagement, and followers. But, you will need to develop ways to tell whether or not the results are from your public relations efforts or not. Most PR agencies have tools to help you determine effectiveness. Plus, you can use good old Google Analytics for much of this discovery.

No matter what your goals are, you can develop a way to measure whether or not you've reached those goals, and whether or not the goals you made ultimately assisted you with achieving the desired results. That's what analyzing anything ultimately does. It helps you improve and quantify results.

Whether it's analyzing the effectiveness of your social media marketing campaign, or determining why people are abandoning your shopping cart, the reason you measure anything is so that you can find a way to make it work better. When deciding what to measure ask yourself who, what, when, where and why of the factor to help you come up with measurements that truly give you the answers you seek.

#### **Internet Marketing Info Products / Services**

<u>Simplyplr.com</u> - Internets Best PLR Content And Article Marketing Provider

<u>CB University</u> – Learn To Use Clickbank To Market Your Product

<u>Commission Blueprint 2.0</u> - Complete Affiliate Marketing System For a Changing Internet / Mobile Landscape

<u>Auto Affiliate Program</u> - One Click Branding System For CB Affiliates. Download And Giveaway Quality Ebooks Pre-branded With Your Profit Pulling Affiliate Links

<u>Social Marketing Tribe</u> - #1 Resource For Ongoing Social Media Training. 100+ Hours Of Training On Topics Like: Facebook, Linkedin, Twitter, Youtube, Email / Digital Marketing

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