Article Side

Decoding Internet Concepts â€“ Search Engine Optimization versus Search Engine Marketing by .

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A surprisingly large number of people, who call themselves industry experts, are still confused between search engine optimization and search engine marketing. These terms are often mistakenly used interchangeably, which further elaborates that dire need for comprehensive education in the field of internet marketing.

Letâ€™s decode both these concepts in brief to understand their roles in the entire gamut of your web promotions initiative â€“

What is Search Engine Marketing?

SEM quintessentially refers to the textual advertisements that we see at the top or right corner of a search engine result. Companies and brands typically purchase these advertising spaces or links from Google Adwords and Yahoo Overture so that they can be published on a result page when a relevant search is made.

In addition to these ads appearing on a search result page of a home search engine, one can also publish these ads in secondary ad networks. For example, Adwords can also be displayed on AOL.com search result pages.

Each search engine follows its own unique commercial model on how they wish to charge companies or brands for posting these ads, but typically these advertisements are Pay Per Click (PPC). This means that the company is charged every time someone clicks on the link.

In addition to this, SEM initiatives typically also incorporate banner based advertising or paid advertising on any authoritative website. The primary discriminating factor between SEM and SEO is that in the former, one can control their marketing initiative from the point of view of budget, keywords and the placement of your SEM activities.

What is Search Engine Optimization?

SEO initiatives are executed with a single focus of improving a websiteâ€™s natural ranking on any search engine result page. A number of factors influence the ranking of your website â€“

1. Keyword density

2. Web design

3. Quality of content

4. Use of keywords in anchor texts, hyperlinks, headings, bold tags, website content, and URL

5. The number of incoming links through back-linking initiatives

6. Quality of sites that hold your links.

7. Relevancy of sites that hold your link

8. The incorporation of a site map, good link structure and the ability to easily index your web pages.

SEM versus SEO

Both these internet marketing initiatives come with their own set of benefits and drawbacks. SEM provides businesses the benefit of getting immediate and relevant traffic to their web pages. At the same time, the extent of success of your SEM initiative highly depends on your budget and your ability to optimize this service to make it viable for your business in the long run.

PPC advertising poses the risk of a company being prey to a click fraud. This means, that many a times, competitors tend to purposely click on your ads to facilitate the depletion of your SEM funds. Most search engines have in place systems that detect such fraudulent activities; but they arenâ€™t always easy to catch.

On the other hand, SEO is a long-term approach to internet marketing which can be built on ethical practices, and high quality web development standards. If you are able to offer to your customerâ€™s good quality content and execute a robust link building campaign, you will be able to build for yourself a sustainable future on the World Wide Web.

While one cannot choose one strategy over another, it is definitely true that a balance of both SEO and SEM initiatives can do wonders for the success of your brand online.

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