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The Basics of Internet Marketing by Brian Roehm

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Like it or not most small businesses are lost when it comes to marketing. They know they need marketing and a website, but most donâ€™t know why and even fewer know how to start. Worse yet, many clients donâ€™t recognize poor marketing tactics and get sucked into a smooth talking marketer who overcharges, offers little value and may even damage their clientâ€™s reputation and marketing efforts.

Thatâ€™s what Iâ€™d like to discuss today. Iâ€™m breaking this subject into two parts. Part one will deal the basic types of online marketing and part 2 will look in depth at what should be expected from a good marketing firm.

The 2 branches of marketing

At the broadest level there are two different types of marketing, inbound and outbound.

Outbound Marketing simply means reaching out to your clients. This marketing type includes radio, tv, cold calling, newspaper ads, email blasts, and direct mailing. This type of marketing has fallen on hard times recently and seen a significant drop in response rates from leads. To be honest the market has become oversaturated and the public is simply shutting out the noise. When is the last time you stopped your car to write down a 1-800 number? Bought a product from an advertisement hung on your door? Itâ€™s not that this marketing doesnâ€™t still have a place and a presence, itâ€™s ju become more difficult to see a positive and measurable return on investment.

Inbound Marketing covers all marketing efforts that focus on the client coming to you. It includes social media marketing, some search engine optimization, pay per click campaigns, word of mouth, etc. This type of marketing focuses on getting found and drawing customers to your door.

So where do I begin?

Before we look more in depth at the different types of inbound marketing I need to give you the ultra super secret that will unlock the golden door to the glorious world of leads. No, itâ€™s not meta tags, links, Facebook friends, or the guaranteed positioning for only $995 a month. ? The secret of inbound marketing is . . . . content. Really, thatâ€™s it. Now of course you have to do a lot of work to make sure that the content gets seen, but this is what separates the good marketing firms and websites from the bad ones. It doesnâ€™t matter how many visitors your website has (and without good content itâ€™s probably not too many), it matters how many of your potential clients are satisfied and stay on your site and eventually buy your product or service. This topic in and of itself could take several papers to discuss, but I at least wanted to briefly touch on the topic as it should be the foundation of any marketing program.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Search Engine Optimization is all about getting found when somebody types in a search term in Google, Yahoo, etc. This type of marketing can make or break your business. Good search engine optimization is what the big color ads in the yellow pages used to be (only on an international level). Every second there are an estimated 34,000 searches per second on Google. If you can gather even a small fraction of the traffic you can become a leader in industry off this marketing branch alone.

Social Media Optimization (SMO)

Social Media Optimization includes Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, Blogs, LinkedIn and a whole host of other programs and opportunities. It offers a chance to interact with your customers and bring a face to the business. It also offers a chance to distribute your valuable content to a host of potential customers. If done improperly SMO can be a GIANT time waster but if properly performed it can be an extremely valuable asset to your business.

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Brian Roehm - About Author:
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