UNLOCKING DIGITAL MARKETING POTENTIAL WITH SEO AND SEM

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ABSTRACT
Marketing has changed a lot since humans first started trading. With the fast growth of technology, there is now a big shift towards digital marketing. Search engine optimization (seo) and search engine marketing (sem) are very important parts of digital marketing. Recently, marketing strategies have been greatly influenced by technologies like ai, big data, iot, and machine learning, all of which have shown to be very helpful for business growth. This survey paper aims to provide an overview of how digital marketing, seo, and sem have evolved, and to explain the different tools and techniques used in these areas.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Search Engine Marketing, Search Engine Optimization, Digital Marketing Assets.

I. INTRODUCTION

Marketing has evolved day by day but with the world coming online and with the increase in digital technologies, it has shifted its focus on digitalization. Out of all modern marketing techniques and tools, digital marketing resources, channels and social media becomes the most interactive, attractive and essential.

Digital Marketing has become one of the most important marketing mix over the past few years as companies and organizations are realizing the importance of a good online presence, it has been effective for their growth in terms of sales and creating an innovative presence online [PinakiMandal, Prof. Nitin Joshi, el at 2015]. Digital marketing can be termed as an approach for the development of brand, product or service online. There's a saying by Bill Gates that, "If your Business is not on the internet then your business will be out of business".

To have an effective online presence, any organization or a company needs a strong strategy designed using the correct technologies to help marketing activities in order to improve customer knowledge by matching their needs is digital marketing. Companies can use the internet to provide ongoing information, service, and support. It also creates positive interaction with customers that can serve as the foundation for long term relationships and encourage repeat purchases. Various social media campaigns are proven to be cost effective with beneficiary results. [PinakiMandal, Prof. Nitin Joshi, el at 2015].For any online marketing activity, content and graphics play a great role according to customer psychology.

This paper consists of the following sections – I. Introduction, II. Related Work,III. SEO and SEM, IV. Current Research and V. Conclusion.

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Figure 1: Various components of digital marketing

A. DIGITAL MARKETING ASSETS

Digital Marketing Asset is any tool you use online, one or more of such common examples are – social media profiles, a fully optimized website, images and video contents, blogposts and ebooks. With tech advancements such as AI and machine learning, marketers are better equipped with the marketing technology needed to reach consumers on digital devices at just the right moment. This is opposed to traditional marketing methods – which have to be planned and placed well in advance. The digital marketing trends are moving from passive advertising to active engagement with social networking pages, its quality rather than quantity [Esinmukul, GulcinBuyukozkan, el at 2019].

Everything that the brand says is the content, whether that product description, blog posts, eBooks, info graphics, social media posts it is all considered content. Content helps convert the website visitors into leads and customers, and helps to raise the brand's profile online. Whatever the goal that is going to need to use owned content to form digital marketing strategy. The content creation plan should include audit and planning the earned media, audit and planning the paid media and bringing it all together.

B. BENEFITS OF DIGITAL MARKETING PLATFORMS

Digital marketing platforms perform several functions in one solution – allowing marketing teams to get more integrated or holistic view of their campaigns.

When selecting a digital marketing platform, consider the following advantages for choosing the right marketing attribution software provider:

1) Track and Allocate Spend

Many marketers struggle with determining which channels are driving the most value, and therefore the ones they should spend more on. This challenge is exacerbated by the increasingly wide variety of digital channels they need to be present across. With this in mind, marketing teams should leverage a platform that uses advanced attribution modelling. This will give them insight into spend and success rates across multiple digital channels, and actionable suggestions on howto then optimize ad spend.

2) The Right Ads to drive conversation

With the right digital marketing platform, you can gain a better understanding of what type of content resonates with your customers across platforms. This allows marketers to understand which voice and creative elements garner the most engagement.

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3) *Correlate Qualitative and Quantitative Results*

The right digital marketing platform will help you make better choices to drive revenue when planning media, tracking your brand across channels, leveraging new advertising techniques or conducting media buys.

II. SEM AND SEO

Search Engine Marketing (SEM), which allows firms to target consumers by placing ads on search engines, has proven to be an effective audience acquisition strategy. Unlike traditional online advertising, advertisers pay only when users actually click on an ad. When successfully implemented, SEM can generate steady traffic levels and tremendous return on investment (ROI). As SEM becomes more common, the level of competition is driving bid prices through the roof.
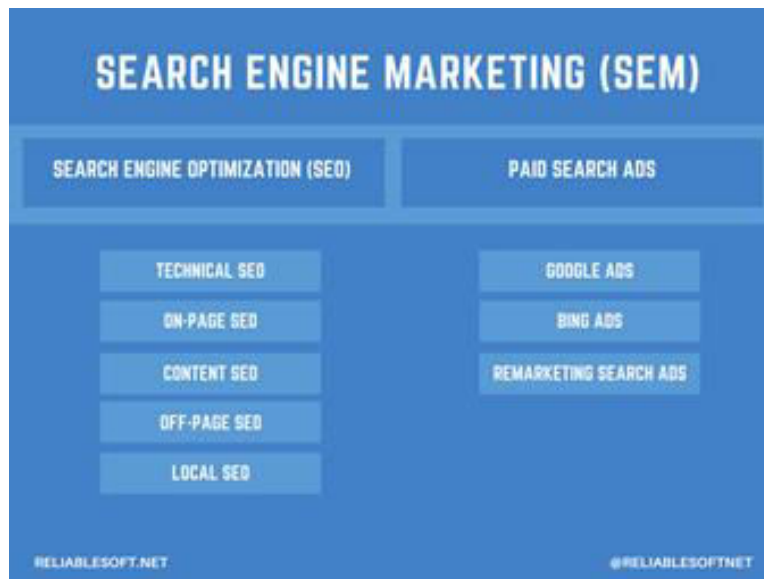

Figure 2: Search Engine Marketing

A. COMPETITION

Increasing competition in search marketing is making it virtually impossible for advertisers with limited budgets to maintain top rankings. The Atlas Institute published a report in September that analysed the impact of paid search engine ranking on traffic. [MS Iskandar,D Komara, el at 2018]

In October 2004, Fathom Online, in conjunction with MediaPost, both well known marketing firms, released a tool intended to measure the price volatility of the search market (Fadner, 2004b). This tool, called the Keyword Price Index (KPI), "is intended to serve as a base for comparing the relative cost effectiveness of search engine marketing (SEM) campaigns. Going forward, it will track the fluctuations in cost per click (CPC) over time" (Fadner, 2004b, p. 1). So far, this effort has revealed that some industries have high enough payouts to justify CPCs of more than a dollar or two, while others simply do not (Fadner, 2004b). The finance/mortgage industry, for example, had a weighted average CPC of $3.17, which sounds more reasonable when one considers the potential earnings from the sale of a mortgage or an investment account (Fadner, 2004b). Retail, on the other hand, had a weighted average CPC of $0.32 because neither the potential gains nor the conversion rates are substantial enough to justify higher bid prices (Fadner, 2004b). Ultimately, this index will give advertisers a better understanding of bid price fluctuations in their industry over a period of time. [MS Iskandar and D Komara, el at 2018].

B. IMPORTANCE OF KEYWORD ANALYSIS

Keywords play remarkable role in optimizing your website. Analysing the correct keywords is a basic necessity for a highly optimized website. There are 3 types of keywords having search frequency from high to low:

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1. **Head –** First are the head keywords, these are the one word phrases like logistics and their call. They are called head keywords because they represent head of the graph.

2. **Body** – Second are the body keywords, these are 2-3 word phrases. These are less competitive and also their search frequency can be a bit less because they are more specific.

3. **Long Tail –** Third are the long tail keywords, these are more descriptive phrases. These have less searches because they are less competitive and less specific.

There are many keyword analysing tools that help you identify correct keyword to target more viewers for your website. Some of these tools are Ubersuggest, Google, Keyword Everywhere, Keyword Shitter etc. To narrow down our keyword list we can access the keywords on two criteria:

1. **Use Search Volume Data –** How many searches per month in Google do the keywords get that will help us identify which of those topics are the most popular and also which keywords are more popular.

2. Assess the commercial intent, the business value of certain keywords.

C. STRATEGIES

With nearly all the organizations shifting their businesses online too have a variety of audience acquisition strategies to choose from, opt in, viral, banner advertisements, search placement, pay per click(keyword marketing). Banner ads are either textual or media based placed on Websites that contain link to other web pages. Advertisements that use search engine marketing as their strategical part of their marketing mix may do so for multiple reasons. One of the reasons being SEM account is very simple and using it wisely might generate quick traffic that might be beneficial.

Ge'LenaVavra, an entrepreneur specializing in Italian suits in Las Vegas, spent $60,000 in 2003 on Google ads, and claimed "Our business exploded from Google and Google alone" (as cited in Markoff& Zachary, 2003, p. 2). SEM delivers ads to users who are already searching for the products or services that an advertiser is offering, meaning that theoretically, they areonly receiving qualified traffic[MS Iskandar and D Komara, el at 2018]Here, keyword marketing has proved to be the most effective strategy for SEM. Any viewer visits Google or Yahoo and enters specific keywords or phrases and the result is, they are provided with number of organic listings and sponsored listings.

The Interactive Advertising Bureau has found that "search engine marketing is the fastest growing sector in online marketing" (as cited in Brooks, 2004, p. 1). With more and more advertisers using keyword marketing as a means of reaching potential customers, it is becoming increasingly expensive to maintain top positions. "The explosive paid search market is likely to grow to $2.5 billion or about one third of current online spending in 2004" (Smith, 2004, p. 24). Thomas Weisel Partners have estimated that paid search will account for half of all online expenditures by 2008, which would require an annual growth rate of 21% (as cited in Francisco, 2004a). This is a substantial figure, considering the number of companies that are using online advertising as a means of reaching potential customers. [MS Iskandar and D Komara, el at 2018].

D. CHALLENGES

With online marketing gaining popularity, competition is growing which eventually increases the flow of challenges faced by the marketers. In a long run search engines are going to reach critical masses in which they cannot meet advertising demands. Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer earlier this year admitted that the company was behind on search technology development but vowed that it would catch up to take on Google and Yahoo! All three companies are working on customized, personal search tools for the desktop, as well as local search services. Search engine optimization has proved to benefit organizations by growing not only sales but help organizations develop market from the feedback loop from the viewers. Search engines would like to be able to serve advertisements relevant to the user's location, income level, family size, etc. This could potentially reduce competition among advertisers by categorizing them according to user preferences.

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III. RELATED WORK

There are two main methods to appear in search results: one uses organic techniques and is called Search Engine Optimization (SEO), while the other uses paid techniques and is called Search Engine Marketing (SEM). We will explore the latest important research in these areas. Defining SEM can be tricky, as some sources, like Backlinko, argue that SEM includes both organic and paid methods.

SEO is about convincing search engines to show your content as the best answer to users' queries. Search engines use bots to "crawl" web pages and gather information, which is then indexed. You can think of the World Wide Web like a spider web where these bots (or spiders) move from page to page through links. After collecting this data, the search engine's algorithms analyze the index using hundreds of ranking factors to decide which pages should appear at the top of the search results for specific queries.

Pinaki Mandal and Prof. Nitin Joshi, in their paper "Understanding Digital Marketing Strategy," provide an introduction to digital marketing, its key components, and how digital marketing platforms help businesses grow.

Similarly, Buyukozkan and Merve Guler, in "Evaluation of Digital Marketing Technologies," discuss how digital marketing aligns with digital technologies to be more genuine and effective. They also present a method for evaluating these technologies.

Authors Arokia R. Terrance, Shruti Shrivastava, and Asmita Kumari, in their paper "Importance of SEO," explain what SEO is, why it's crucial for digital marketing, the challenges faced in this field, and the increasing competition for higher search rankings.

In "Implementation Techniques of SEO," Rony Baskoro Lukito et al. discuss strategies used for SEO and SEM. They also highlight the importance of keyword analysis in optimizing content and its effectiveness.

MS Iskandar and D Komara, in their paper "Application Marketing Strategy," detail the strategies and methods used for SEM, providing a case study of Mountain Grounds Coffee and Eatery.

SEM involves marketing a business through paid ads that appear on search engine results pages (SERPs). Advertisers bid on keywords that users might search for, giving them the chance to show their ads alongside search results. These ads, often called pay-per-click ads, come in various formats. Some are simple text-based ads, while others, like product listing ads (also known as Shopping ads), are more visual and display key information like price and reviews. The main advantage of SEM is that it allows advertisers to place their ads in front of motivated customers who are ready to buy at the exact moment they're prepared to make a purchase.

CURRENT RESEARCH

Search engines use complex algorithms to ensure that the most relevant results are shown for each search, considering factors like your location and other available information. In paid search advertising, sponsored ads appear at the top and on the side of search engine results pages, giving them more visibility than the organic results.

Imagine you are looking for a product or service online. You go to a search engine and type in your search terms (also known as keywords). On the search results page, you will see various company ads whose keywords match what you typed. These ads are placed in prominent spots on the page, along with other search results that match your keywords. These paid ads are very relevant to your search, making it likely that you will click on them.

Now, let's look at how SEM (Search Engine Marketing) campaigns work from a marketer's perspective. SEM networks allow marketers to set up their campaigns quickly. Here's what they do:

- Conduct Keyword Research: Marketers research and choose a set of keywords related to their website or product.

- Select a Geographic Location: They decide where the ad should be displayed based on the location.

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- **Create a Text-Based Ad:** They write a simple ad that will appear in the search results.

- **Bid on Ad Placement:** They set the price they are willing to pay for each click on their ad.

Creating these text-only ads is straightforward. Marketers need to provide a headline, some body text, a call-to-action, and a URL link. Many consider search engine marketing to be a very effective way to spend marketing money because it directly targets people who are already looking for related products or services.

EXAMPLES OF SEARCH AD NETWORKS
The two primary search networks that SEM professionals target are Google Ads (formerly Google Adwords) and the Bing Ads.

Google AdWords is actually two networks: Google Search Network and Google Display Network. The first network consists exclusively of search-related websites owned by Google, while the second includes properties such as YouTube, Blogger and Gmail. The Bing Ads allows customers to buy ads on both Yahoo's network of websites and Bing's network.

Example 1: SEO for a Local Bakery

Scenario: A local bakery wants to improve its online presence to attract more customers.

SEO Strategy:

1. **Keyword Research:** The bakery identifies relevant keywords like "best bakery in [city name]," "fresh bread near me," and "custom cakes [city name]."

2. **Content Optimization:** They update their website with these keywords, ensuring that their homepage, product descriptions, and blog posts are optimized.

3. **Local SEO:** They claim their Google My Business listing, ensuring it is up-to-date with correct contact information, hours of operation, and customer reviews. They also add high-quality photos of their products and store.

4. **Backlinks:** They reach out to local food bloggers and websites to feature their bakery, generating high-quality backlinks to their site.

5. **User Experience:** They improve website speed and mobile-friendliness to ensure a positive user experience.

Result: Over time, the bakery's website ranks higher in organic search results for relevant queries, driving more traffic and increasing foot traffic to their physical location.

Example 2: SEM for an Online Clothing Store

Scenario: An online clothing store wants to increase sales during the holiday season.

SEM Strategy:

1. **Keyword Bidding:** The store identifies high-intent keywords like "holiday dress sale," "winter coats discount," and "buy sweaters online." They bid on these keywords using Google Ads.

2. **Ad Creation:** They create compelling ads with strong calls-to-action, highlighting holiday sales, free shipping offers, and limited-time discounts. These ads include both text-based search ads and product listing ads with images, prices, and reviews.

3. **Targeting:** They use demographic targeting to reach their ideal customers, such as women aged 18-35 interested in fashion. They also use remarketing to target previous visitors who didn't make a purchase.

4. **Budget Management:** They set a daily budget for their ad campaigns and monitor performance closely, adjusting bids and keywords as needed to maximize ROI.

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5. **Ad Extensions:** They use ad extensions to include additional links, call buttons, and location information in their ads, making them more informative and clickable.

Result: The store's ads appear at the top of search engine results pages for targeted keywords, driving increased traffic to their website and boosting sales during the holiday season. The immediate visibility provided by SEM helps them capture ready-to-buy customers efficiently.

These examples illustrate how SEO focuses on long-term organic growth by optimizing content and website structure, while SEM leverages paid advertising to achieve quick, targeted visibility and conversions.

IV. CONCLUSION

SEO tools are an important consideration to help optimize a website for search engines. SEO tools are essential for optimizing a website for search engines. These tools have different features and analyze various SEO factors. Here are some key areas they focus on:

Keywords: This involves finding the most common search terms related to your website and your competitors. Using the right keywords can help your site appear in search results.

Content: Your website content should include relevant keywords to match search queries. It's important to place these keywords in titles, descriptions, and tags to improve SEO.

Backlinks: Backlinks are links to your site from other websites. They are crucial for good search rankings. High-traffic sites linking to yours can significantly boost your site's traffic.

Domain: The domain name is important for SEO because search engines like Google scan URLs for keywords to understand the site's content.

Social Media: Some SEO tools analyze data from social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and others. They track how many users visit your blog or sub-pages and how often your content is shared on social media.

These tools help ensure your website is well-optimized and can achieve better search engine rankings.

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