

Winning the Google Race



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Even with the “social media revolution” that we’ve witnessed over the past few years (the rise of Facebook & Twitter in particular) - the most coveted traffic, with the highest commercial intent, is still from search. Particularly Google, who now holds about 70% of the market-share in search.

By a mile, by 10 miles actually.

And the reason is logical.

Search engine marketing has essentially become the global equivalent of the yellow pages in the phone book... where a searcher needs a solution, a service or a product, right now.

In many cases, they are literally asking the search engine what to buy, or where to buy what they need. This is why ranking well for the right keywords can generate a constant flow of new customers, and transform your business into a sales powerhouse, if you can get there.

It used to be fairly straightforward to rank your site well in Google, Yahoo & Bing (formerly MSN). And while Bing & Yahoo have largely remained unchanged in terms of algorithmic indexing, Google has been anything but stable, in terms of how they rank sites in their index. In fact, over the past two years, Google has made more changes to their algorithm, and instituted more anti-manipulative “countermeasures” (to combat spammy practices) than they have since they were founded - in 1998.

What does this mean for businesses, webmasters & marketing agencies competing for that coveted spot on page one?

It means that the game is constantly changing, that it’s not going to be slowing down any time soon - and that the only way to survive (and thrive) is to be on the cutting edge of search engine technology.

And that’s where we come in.

But more about that further down. First - let’s talk about how Google actually works, what’s different now (and beyond), and most importantly, how your business can “win” the search engine gold-rush, and land those coveted keyword positions.

What Determines How a Site Ranks in Google?

Technically speaking - and this is straight from Google - there are more than 200 different factors, or “ranking signals”, that Google’s algorithm looks at when it determines how to organize its index of sites for any given search query.

In a nutshell, these ranking signals have been engineered to generally rank pages that are both tightly relevant to a query, and popular enough (in the web “ecosystem”) to warrant attention by the user.

And this is where these 200+ signals, or indications, come into play - to determine the relevance of a page to any given query, as well as how important that page is, according to the entire internet ecosystem.

Let’s look at how Google currently determines relevance:

There are many specific, technical elements that Google uses to determine a page’s relevance to a keyword (search query), but the following are what have consistently yielded the largest influence as a ranking signal for several years - and continue to do so today.

Some on-site factors are title structuring, properly structured content, linkages, and many other factors.

Let’s look at how Google currently determines popularity:

Google uses an algorithm known to determine the importance, and popularity of any given site or page in its index. And though there are certainly many moving parts to this algorithm - it’s always been a very simple premise.

Namely, that a hyperlink is a “vote”, and the more votes a page or a site has, in general, the more popular and important that page is assumed to be.

The popularity factor can be compared to being popular in school; if the “cool kids” are talking about you then it can be assumed you are cool as well.

There are other factors that determine how PageRank is distributed, but in general, increasing the visibility of a site or page in Google’s index, once it’s seen as being relevant to a certain keyword, is simply a matter of getting “votes”.

This is a process that we call “link building”, and it’s a central pillar of the SEO industry. It is absolutely crucial that this is done correctly, no short cuts. If not properly done this can actually harm your rankings and even get your website penalized.

In some markets, where the demographic is vocal, and there’s a lot of online activity – getting “votes” is just a matter of building some initial “buzz” around your site (perhaps with a contest, or a public poll, etc.), and then letting the users take it from there, talk about it, blog about it, and so on.

This organic “touchless” promotion is the only method of link building that Google condones.

However, the reality is that many markets, topics & industries simply do not have a user-base that is active, or vocal, online. For example, it's not very easy to build "buzz" about a website selling bedsheets.

Similarly, the local plumber will likely find it very challenging to cultivate a rabid following of fans that talk about, and share, his website around the web. This is why SEO is such a sought-after service... because for most businesses, let's face it - getting "votes" is no picnic.

That said, there are many legitimate ways to build publicity around even the "driest" website/business - which we'll explore shortly.

So, if it's just about relevant content & getting "votes", then isn't it fairly easy to rank well?

This is a simple question, but I'm afraid the answer is less simple. A few years ago, it was possible to simply acquire enough links, from enough different sites, until your own site would start to rank very well for your target keyword(s).

It was never a guarantee, and in the very competitive spaces, it took a truly staggering volume of links (from established sites) to finally reach the first page for those coveted primary keywords... but up until a few years ago, the rankings were basically a link-building contest.

But in 2011, Google began taking much more substantial measures to try and combat what had become an entire industry of "mass manipulation" - where organic rankings in the competitive spaces could effectively be purchased from more aggressive SEO agencies, link networks, and so on.

They did this by rolling out a series of anti-spam algorithm updates, which have each had a number of successive updates, and will likely continue to be updated for a long time to come.

What do these algorithms do, exactly?

In a nutshell, these algorithms look for sites with low-quality content, and look for unnatural linking patterns (particularly with respect to anchors - or link descriptions - being "over optimized").

The effect that these algorithms have had over the past couple years has been profound. Now that a site can actually experience negative effects from using manipulative onsite and off-site SEO practices - losing as much as all of its visibility in the rankings - it's created an entirely new search ecosystem.

You can no longer be too aggressive, or just throw caution to the wind when it comes to organic promotion. If you're promoting a site that matters, the days of simply "buying enough links" have long since passed.

Long-term success with SEO now requires either a purely organic, buzz-driven campaign (which is really only possible in a few verticals)...

...or a strategic, expertly-executed series of quality promotions designed to give Google exactly what it wants, give your users exactly what they want - and ultimately, drive consistent results for your business, day after day.

And to do this, you need to be working with someone who has their finger on the pulse of this fast-changing industry - and who can actually deliver results, which we'll talk about in just a moment...

What About the Future of Search...

With the Mobile Revolution, & People Increasingly Shifting to Social Media to Recommend Content –

Won't Google Change Their Algorithms Accordingly?

Many of these changes are already afoot.

For instance, we know for a fact that Google's recent algorithm update has been largely optimized for mobile devices. And Google has stated that they do crawl both Facebook and Twitter to some extent to gain insight into what pages / sites are trending, or becoming popular.

The jury's still out on exactly how much impact these "social signals" may or may not have currently, but there's no doubt that in time, Google will definitely be turning up the "volume" regarding how much weight is given towards social platform signals.

But there's even more on the horizon - the mobile & social "revolutions" are just the beginning...

While this is still just a prediction, simple logic suggests that this is inevitably going to be the biggest change to the search ecosystem (and this is already starting to happen).

We call it the "Personalization Revolution".

It will likely go by a different name, once it's fully in effect. Here's how we think this might happen...

You've likely already noticed that when you're logged into your Google account, certain search queries will return different results - or results with enriched, personalized data - than they do if you're not logged in.

Things like previously-visited or bookmarked sites, sites that have some connection to people in your "Google Circles" (via Google +), and so on. In some cases, the entire top-fold of the search results is completely different when you're logged in, versus when you're logged out.

And this session-based customization is neither the extent of what's possible with personalization, nor the full realization of where it's eventually headed - regardless of whether you're logged in or not.

Even now, your physical location will actually influence what you see in the search results - especially if you're searching for things that are normally associated with regional intent (things like "movie show times", or "take out Chinese food" for example). But this is just the tip of the iceberg.

We believe that we'll be seeing the following types of personalization in the very near future, which will essentially auto-customize any given set of search results, for each individual user - all in real-time:

- * Products that your friends have reviewed, purchased or had some other activity with
- * Sites / businesses that have some connection to you or your friends
- * Sites / businesses that you have previously visited or interacted with - independently of Google
- * Products / sites that match your behavioral preference-profile, based on advertising data
- * Content that your friends / connections have interacted with in some way
- * And so on.

Total, real-time personalized customization is already in Google's crosshairs (that's why they're pushing Google+ so much), and since so much of the online advertising industry already operates in a data-sharing ecosystem, it won't take long for the major internet portals to follow suit, for mutual gains.

Again - we don't claim to be "Google insiders", nor do we have a fully-functional crystal ball. But the fact is, the race is already on among the internet's biggest portals (Google, Twitter, Facebook, Bing, etc.) to provide search results that blend seamlessly with personalized data & social connections.

This is where search is inevitably headed.

What does this mean for you, and your business?

Basically, the key is to start becoming prominent in your market, right now. Time is of the essence, because the real winners in the "personalization revolution" will be the businesses who already have an established audience, across key social channels.

And ironically - this is a "Catch-22", because the best way to establish these audiences is to first of all bring in a consistent flow of online customers... through search traffic, and then turn them into "fans". (For most businesses, this is much easier than trying to prospect for new leads on social platforms).

The lion's share will not go to the newcomers, or to those who procrastinate. It will go to those who act now, and who understand that the key to thriving throughout the inevitable shift towards personalization comes down to building up a strong online presence in advance.

So let's change gears now, and talk about how you can start securing a prosperous online future, by tapping into the most effective & abundant traffic source that currently exists...

Are You Ready For a Podium Position in the Race for Rankings?

Competing in Google is, in many ways, just like racing a Formula One car...

It takes intricate knowledge of the course.

You need to know every hairpin, S-curve and optimal apexes like the back of your hand if you even want to stand a chance. Professional drivers at the F1 level will spend far more time studying the course than they do driving it.

It takes true expertise.

When the prize is your livelihood - the competition will be intense. You need to be the best, and be able to take your car to the envelope of what's possible – without losing control. This “knife-edge” distinction between aggressiveness & control is what separates the amateurs from the champions.

Just like in SEO... you don't win a race with the gas pedal. You win a race by executing the ultimate synthesis of power, strategy and timing. And that only happens when you've had enough seat-time.

It takes relentless adaptation.

Air temperature, tire status, elevation, league restrictions, track conditions, and the driving profiles of each of your competitors... all of these factors demand perpetual adaptation. No two races are ever the same.

And in the same way, becoming a “champion” of the search engine placement goes far beyond just following a certain formula, or a one-size fits-all strategy. Every industry has unique challenges, and winning the “rankings race” for your business will require a unique approach.

And finally...

The owner of the racing team doesn't drive the cars.

This is where most business owners make a fatal mistake - they try to “do it all themselves”, or “in house”.

Just like how you wouldn't hand the keys for a \$10 million-dollar race car to kid with a learner's license - search engine marketing (especially today) isn't something you can approach casually, or have the intern - who's “good at Facebook” - handle in his or their spare time.

Proverbially speaking, they'd be lucky to make it past the first corner - let alone finish a single clean lap. And to put it bluntly, this is (unfortunately) a common story that we encounter often. In fact, nearly half of our clients ended up finding & reaching out to us only after watching their rankings tank, or otherwise watching their “SEO budget” literally evaporate into nothingness.

Usually, this is because they left their search engine marketing - a crucial factor in the livelihood of their business - in the “capable hands” of an employee with no experience, a basement dwelling Nephew who needed something “productive” to do, or themselves...

...all with predictable results. (None).

Isn't it time to start taking your online marketing seriously?

Because your competitors are already serious, in fact, as you're reading this, their sites are ranked for keywords that would likely cost several dollars a click (via Adwords), and they're pulling in active leads like clockwork, every day. And if they are not taking SEO serious this is your chance to lap them!

That could be you, on top - leading the pack, and winning the lion's share of leads, customers, and new business.

So why not find a driver who can actually win you some races?

And, more to the point...

Why Not Unleash Our Proven Ranking Expertise for Your Business - And Watch as We Win You “Podium Positions” Time & Time Again...

The stakes are high, when it comes to winning the search game.

Google currently takes in over \$150 million dollars a DAY, almost all of which is from selling pay-per-click ad placements in line with their organic search results. And the experienced advertisers happily pay it, because they're making even more in return.

But pay-per-click (PPC) marketing is a whole other topic - and one that we don't have time to cover in this report. But suffice it to say that PPC does not come close to generating the kind of return on investment (ROI) that is possible with ranking organically.

Not only do Google's users intrinsically trust the organic listings more than the ads... but the effective “cost per click” with SEO is going to be a small fraction of what you'll pay with PPC - and in many cases the traffic quality (the value of those leads) will be higher, simply based on the trust factor.

In fact, we recommend that you utilize both SEO and PPC, but at the very least - make sure you're leveraging SEO as much as possible.

Because SEO is still, without question, the king of ROI when it comes to traffic acquisition. Nothing else can touch it. And it's a flow of new business that can last indefinitely.

And like anything worth having... it doesn't come easy.

But that's where we come in. We literally eat, sleep and breathe SEO every day. We're up in the wee hours, tracking each new development in the webmaster community.

We run tests, continuously, to monitor the effectiveness of our core strategies, and to compare known ranking factors against new theories.

We have extensive, inside access to data that spans an ever-growing multitude of sites & businesses (our own, our colleagues, and our clients), so we can gain accurate insights into what's actually happening, based on what we can feasibly measure.

When you partner with us - you're no longer dealing in guesswork.

You're dealing in reality, and real-world results. Results that could revolutionize your business, and possibly even take your business to a level you never honestly thought possible.

The fact is, your would-be customers are already out there, right now - finding your competitors.

This isn't theory. It's right in front of you.

Isn't it time you handed the keys for your "SEO Race Car" to an expert driver who can actually take you to the finish line?

Excellent, then let's get started...

Here's the First Step...

The first step is have a quick meet & greet, talk a little shop - and then (painful as it might be) - we have to do a full-spectrum analysis of your website.

And there's probably going to be a lot of things wrong with it, and a bunch of "red flags" that need to be sorted out ASAP.

And that's okay. That's the way it goes for nearly all of our clients.

After that's done, we dig deep into your industry - and into your competitors' rankings – and through a process of intense reverse-engineering, forensic marketing analysis and experience driven insight, we make a plan.

And then, stage by stage, we start the engine... put it into gear, and begin rolling onto the raceway.

From that point forward - it's an intense, exciting ride to the finish line.

But before all of that happens - we need the "keys"...

Sound good?

Great! We can't wait to hear from you today, so we can start plotting with you on how to outrank your competitors, and start taking in leads like clockwork from the web's ultimate traffic source.

You can either contact us through our website: brainpowerwebsites.com/contact

Or, you can reach us directly at one of the following...

Email: service@brainpowerwebsites.com

Phone: 443-812-8404

Talk soon!