

Planning a Search Engine Strategies Campaign

By Jason Olson

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In order to plan a new search engine strategies campaign, one must determine the goal of the web site. Is the goal to increase sales? Let people know you exist? Promote a product? Gather visitor information? Obtain feedback?

Regardless of the goal, the site and the search engine strategies campaign must be designed to attract a specific audience. Do you want to attract middle-aged, high-income people? Do you want to attract high school students that are not sure if they will attend college? Be specific in determining your market.

Once the audience has been determined, research must be conducted to determine search patterns and internet use habits of the targeted market. What search terms are most likely to be used by the determined market needs to be identified, as well as how the competition is being accessed via search engines.

The broader the search term, the less targeted the search results become. For example, if you wanted to find a company in your town to design a web site, you would need to be specific in your search terms. If you were to search "web design" on one of the major search engines, in the first 30 results you might find five web design company web sites. The majority of the results will be tutorials on designing web sites. If you search for "web design" and then the name of your state, you will get results that provide you with sites related to web design in your state.

We could take this a step further and say that two people can search for the same term but hope for completely different results. Someone could be hoping to find information on how to design web sites and search for "web design". Someone else could be hoping to find a company to design a web site for them and also search for "web design".

Just remember this when you are optimizing your web site for the search engines. You'll need to take a look at your potential search terms to see if searches conducted on those terms will generate visitors to your site or if it will just place you on the search results page along side web sites that are directed more towards what the visitor is looking for.

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