

“Facts are stubborn things...”

— John Adams (1735-1826)

MEDIA FACT SHEET

To view this information online and read additional media fact sheets, visit:
BloodHorse.com/MediaFactSheet

Online Advertising Channels

By Leslie Neilson
Blood-Horse Online Advertising Sales Manager

If you are just beginning your online marketing strategy, web advertising offers many benefits you won't find anywhere else, and many companies are embracing those benefits during these tough economic times. Internet marketing is fast, flexible and cost effective. It is an increasingly important part of the small business marketer's toolkit. Online advertising can attract more people to your website, increase customers for your business, and enhance branding of your company and products.

“Half of small businesses spend less than 10 percent of their marketing budget online, even though 63 percent of those small business respondents look online first themselves when seeking products and services, according to a recent survey by Nielsen Online.” — Inc.com

It is largely beyond debate that exposing the consumer audience to your message through a variety of media has a greater impact on your bottom line. Likewise, a successful multi-channel marketing effort across traditional and Internet channels is an essential strategy in today's multi-media world. The key is to identify all touch points and how the content should differ between the channels.

There are a number of different ways in which a company can, and should, advertise on the Web. Each avenue presents a different and important layer in an overall Web marketing strategy. Building a strategy is a process that includes implementation of all the various methods and channels appropriate for your business model and goals.

Here is an introduction to the primary online marketing channels that every business should consider:

Web site Content is the raison d'être of a Web site and the keystone of advertising online. Keeping your Web site up to date and populated with fresh content will increase traffic and interest in your Web site; resulting in improved search rankings. If you don't have the resources or time to write new content every day, aggregated content delivered to your site through RSS feeds is an excellent alternative. RSS feeds are a free and easy way to add fresh content to a Web site.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the process of improving the volume and/or quality of traffic to a Web site through the art and science of getting the site's Web pages highly ranked and listed in the top of search engine results. As an Internet marketing strategy, SEO considers how search engines work and what people search for. Optimizing a Web site primarily involves editing its content and HTML coding to increase its relevance to specific keywords and to remove barriers to being indexed (included) in search engine results.

CONTINUED ON NEXT 2 PAGES

Blood-Horse
SINCE 1916

CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS:

3101 Beaumont Centre Circle ■ Lexington, KY 40513 U.S.A.
Tel.: (800) 866-2361 ■ (859) 278-2361 ■ Fax: (859) 276-6706
BloodHorse.com ■ Email: advertise@BloodHorse.com

Press Releases written and optimized for the Web are a free way to accomplish the first two marketing channels I've mentioned above: Website Content and Search Engine Optimization. Place your press releases on your Web site, submit them directly to industry news sources and use an online newswire service to further distribute your PR online. There are several free newswire services online which will aide you in submitting your press releases to major news portals such as Google News and Yahoo News.

Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is the practice of promoting a Website in the search engines through the purchase of paid search listings. Bought listings or ads are displayed in search engine result pages based on keywords and phrases entered by internet users or potential buyers. The three biggest sources of this type of advertising are Google AdWords, Yahoo Search and MSN adCenter.

Online Directories are a fast, free and easy way to promote your Web site. From industry directories, to white pages and search engine directories, the possibilities are in the thousands. As an element of SEO, online directories are an excellent way to increase your Web site's search engine visibility.

Text Ads are advertisements using text-based hyperlinks. There are several kinds of text ads. Google AdWords are considered text ads, business text links can be traded (link exchange) or purchased on relevant websites, and in-text ads are a form of contextual advertising in which text link ads are embedded in content. Text ads are yet another element that aides in SEO. A powerful advantage of text ads is that they are not affected by ad blocking software — this is greatly important in email marketing.

Email Marketing can be the placement of advertisements in email newsletters or the direct marketing by a company via email to their customers and prospects. Both forms of email marketing are largely advantageous in an Internet marketing strategy. Email marketing in 100% opt-in newsletters is perhaps the most targeted marketing method in existence. Likewise, few Internet marketing channels have the return rate of permission email marketing to an in-house database of customers and prospects.

Display Ads are image ads, most often called banners, which are purchased and placed on Web sites. Display ads appear on Web pages in many forms. They can consist of static or animated images, as well as interactive media that may include audio and video elements. Display advertising is an important multi-media advertising component of any marketing campaign.

Floaters/Interstitials are creative display advertising alternatives to pop-up ads, which are often interrupted by ad blocking software. A floating banner is served as a transparent layer over a Web page; appearing to 'float' on top of the page content. A floating banner is an online comparison to a magazine belly band. An interstitial is a full page message that displays between the Web page a viewer is looking at and the next page they navigate to. Similar to a TV commercial, interstitials are also known as transition or intermercial ads. Both are highly effective ad units, unavoidable in gaining the visitor's attention, ideal for rich media capabilities; including audio and flash video, and offer endless creative possibilities.

Contextual Advertising also known as content-targeted advertising is based on keywords in the surrounding content or context, which means that your advertisement is shown on a Web page that is 'in context' to your specific product or service. This advertising technology works by publishing your text, image or rich media advertisement on the relevant Web sites or Web pages that best match your selected targeted keywords or channels.

Video Advertising online can refer to two different methods — The placement of promotional video on a company's Web site or other Web site (i.e. relevant industry Web site, YouTube, etc.) or the placement of flash video advertising within video content. Flash video advertising is often delivered in a pre-roll format; by which a short video ad is played prior to watching a video content piece online. Video advertising is the fastest growing online marketing channel on the Web today.

Lead Generation is the solicitation and collection of client prospect information through the use of online forms. This is not a new way of gaining business, although the Internet brings a new approach to this crucial marketing strategy element. Brand engagement is important, but it is equally important to turn ad clicks into leads. Don't let your ad clicks become a dead end for you or your customers. Lead generation is a win-win for both the buyer and seller. The buyer is able to request information about your business and you, the seller, are given the opportunity to pitch your product or service to someone who has given you permission.

Blogging is an abbreviated version of “weblog,” which is a term used to describe Web sites that maintain an ongoing chronicle of information. A blog is a frequently updated content platform featuring diary-type commentary and links to articles on other Web sites. Blogging is not for everyone — it requires a large time commitment. It’s important before starting a blog that you have a strategy and figure out that you have enough to say. If you are selling a product, you have to be much more creative because people don’t want to read a commercial. Blogging can be a transparent marketing tool for companies that want to be identified as mission-oriented or socially responsible.

Social networking online is the grouping of individuals or organizations into ‘communities’ of people who share common interests. Use of social networks is an exploding trend in business marketing. Social media represents a cost effective way to engage potential new clients and customers in large numbers compared to traditional channels. The most popular of social networking sites are FaceBook and Twitter. Reaching out through these networks is the optimum channel for reaching Generation Y and younger-minded prospects. There is still a lot of hype, but the opportunity and potential here is very real.

Whatever your online marketing strategy, don’t make the mistake of treating the Internet as if it is simply another place to put your brochures and advertisements in electronic form. The Web is not just another advertising medium. Internet advertising is very different from traditional media and requires a different approach than off-line advertising. Exploit the Web’s unique qualities to provide a richer experience for your customers and prospects.

By adopting the above marketing channels you’ll be on your way to creating a concrete internet marketing strategy that could boost your business substantially.

**For more information, or to advertise, e-mail advertise@BloodHorse.com
or call (800) 866-2361 or (859) 278-2361.**