



We Share Our Knowledge

Article no. 2

Website Traffic

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1. Introduction

Imagine what would happen if every morning at 4a.m, Arcadi Gaydamak would scatter a bunch of money notes at Rabin Square. How soon would traffic in the area come to a halt? The answer to this rhetorical question is the essence of this article.

If your website has consumer value, traffic will be buzzing. The higher the value, the busier the traffic, and the steeper the traffic growth chart will be.

2. Objectives

When deciding to establish a website, for any purpose, two key objectives should be considered:

1. Attract first time visitors to the website.
2. Increase the ratio of returning customers (in commercial website, the ratio is visitors/shoppers).

The first objective can be achieved using any number of traditional marketing and advertising tactics, but none of these tactics directly relates to the website's commercial goals.

The second objective aims to boost the number of repeat shoppers. This is the paramount objective, but it is also the harder one to accomplish.

3. It's All About Value

It's easy enough to attract first time visitors to the website (using money). However, the trick is to make them stay and visit again. This trick is called "Value".

Shoppers will come back only if they get what they are looking for, or what they perceive to be value that's worth returning for.

To illustrate the importance of a website's commercial value, we are willing to venture and say that the ability to offer customers value, is the difference between a successful website and a failing one. Therefore, when launching a commercial website, we should first ask ourselves: Did we create commercial value? Did we understand what the customer is looking for in a website such as ours?

4. Value That Creates Effective Traffic

To understand what the right value to offer our customers would be, there is one rule of thumb to follow: Keep It Simple. Though cool, funky ideas and features initially seem web-appropriate, they usually will not achieve the desired goal. We must recognize the true nature of our commercial value. It must be related to the essence of our business.

For instance, if the website of a large company posts clips of naked models, no doubt the traffic in that website will be quite high. But high traffic isn't necessarily effective traffic. On the other hand, if the website incorporates Self-Service options, creates important product-related content, offers products that correspond with the specific customer's lifestyle and has lower prices than those of competing websites', no doubt it will enjoy a high percentage of returning shoppers.

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5. Other Methods of Increasing Traffic

As mentioned above, creating value is the single most important method of increasing website traffic. However, there are additional, complementing methods that, directly or indirectly, promote website traffic by supporting or enhancing the commercial value.

Below are the main methods of increasing website value:

1. Purchasing search words - If you can't afford to buy enough traffic, don't count on traffic generated only from advertising. Create perceived value for the customer, so that others will write about your website and have other websites refer and/or link to yours.
2. Organic Promotion - construct your website according to the construct of search engines. There are many articles and companies specializing in exactly that. In an interview with Matt Cutts from Google, he said: "SEO companies face challenges such as JavaScript Ajax and how to make a website created for Web 2.0 be searchable. These are no laughing matters, as a website might look great, but if the search engine deems it as a one page site, it will be hard to rate for searches. There can often be a middle ground, such as Flash or Ajax, but at the same time, there are full navigation options such as static HTML at the edges or a link to an HTML sitemap at the bottom of the page, leading to all product pages etc. It is great if you can include innovative technologies like Ajax, but at the same time, it is also important to be accessible", says Matt. "Think of a SEO as a resume", Matt suggests, "you can be an excellent worker, but if you don't present yourself in a good way, people might not realize how good you are". "Simply put, if you don't offer the user enough relevant materials, or convincingly and clearly emphasize your advantages, chasing after higher search engine ratings will be futile, and your competitors will win. Usually, there are no miracle SEO solutions. Paying attention to details adds to the higher level, so you should be smart and introduce yourself in the best way possible".
3. Affiliation Model – this is the best model for conversion, as it uses other websites to refer/link to commercial websites, in exchange for a certain percentage of the sales. In fashion-related websites, for instance, for every purchase made through an affiliate website, the affiliate will receive anywhere between 5%-15% of the sale, pending on brand popularity. This method is very easily implemented and comes highly recommended.
4. Blogs – a posting in a popular blog will attract a lot of traffic to the mentioned website and additional indirect traffic from sub-postings in other blogs. If you gift-wrap your product and mail it to the 10 most popular industry-related bloggers, just one posting from one of them will generate high traffic for your website, for nearly no cost.
5. Article Websites – writing articles and posting them on specialty websites (such as Squiddo Lens focused websites). A good article, including a link to your website, will generate a lot of traffic.
6. Link Exchange – exchanging links with other websites, whose users have shared interests with yours, means you each promote the other's website. One of the most important and effective criteria when it comes to search engines, is the amount of referrals from other websites to yours. Therefore, the more websites linking to yours, the higher your search value will be. "One of Google's "backstage" criteria for website credibility is the quality of your inside links. Most of us want to be popular, but we have to become popular for the right reasons, and be recommended by the right people. The phenomenon of links coming from unreliable or irrelevant sources can hurt your status, while a group of good links may support your status and improve your page rank. It is recommended that you encourage organic links, but there is nothing wrong with linking to relevant affiliates, as long as you avoid link farms and linking to low-quality websites."

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7. Technorati – while posting on a blog, you must comply with Technorati, which is a search engine established by bloggers, and is used for locating any type of media created by internet users.
8. RSS Feeds – this is one of the finest means for content providers to spread their content anywhere and everywhere. If users are everywhere, let's bring our content to them, wherever they are (i.e., not necessarily in our website). This is a very realistic approach, based on the realization that the user is in control.
9. Widgets – an application that applies to anything from a clock, a video clip, the status of your cell phone bill, or any number of other examples, to be implemented in the user's personal website/blog/aggregation website. In other words, present the essence of your website as a simple tool for users to use on their own websites, with the understanding that more traffic will be generated to yours. This simple tool is basically the value of your website as perceived by your end user. Nearly all commercial websites today offer this option and that includes websites whose traffic is generated mainly in this manner.
10. Don't Bore! – The user has many options. Let you and your employees be the guinea pigs of your content and be brief! Internet users read very little, if at all.
11. Relevance – always try to keep up with world events. Keep your website relevant. If you intend to buy advertising space, make sure you know who your target audience is and choose your online advertising space accordingly (focus).
12. Distribute the Knowledge. Users will develop a habit of coming back.
13. One Last Advice – there is no point in designing an ornate homepage, if it doesn't clarify what the website offers and what the value for the customer would be. After a few visits, most customers no longer notice the homepage. If it's properly designed, it is transparent to them. They log in, click the link relevant to them, and go on surfing.

6. Measuring

Measuring is one of the most complex and difficult principles to implement on online commerce. But if you don't measure, you don't learn. It is crucial that we know and analyze our website, but what seems important to us is not necessarily what our customers deem as important.

We should install measurement tools in our website, in order to learn about user roaming habits, popular and unpopular pages, and preferred shopping options as opposed to shopping options that promote abandonment. Measuring alone does not offer any value, unless we learn how to analyze the information acquired and act accordingly. For example, understanding why a certain page is often abandoned and diverts traffic from that page to more effective pages.

7. Conclusion

In order for our website to succeed, we should understand our target audience, its needs and the value we can provide to fulfill those needs. The process of extracting value is similar to that of peeling an onion, in that at each stage more irrelevant ideas and redundant features are removed, until we are left with the basic customer-value.

After realizing what that value is, we should use all the methods featured in this article, in order to create effective traffic to and within our website.

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About Synergy

Synergy is an international consulting company, specializing in Analytical CRM solutions.

Synergy offers marketing oriented business ventures, formed by a team of leading local and international industry experts.

Synergy aims to provide its customers with the ability of acquiring commercial advantages by informative analysis of their customers' shopping data.

Synergy has vast experience in working with leading commercial organizations, both locally and internationally, and its clientele includes foremost industry leaders in the communications, financial and retail fields.

For more information, visit our website at: www.il-synergy.com, or email us at: info@il-synergy.com.

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