

Over the past few years, social networking sites enabled by Web 2.0 technologies have dramatically changed the way we use the Internet. What was once a one-way connection has transformed into a dynamic connective medium, allowing users to share a wide range of content including blogs, photos, videos, and much more.

Yet how have social networking sites like Facebook changed the way online marketers advertise online? For one, they've made our jobs much easier. Facebook is the ideal medium for advertising within an environment that's viral by nature. These online social directories use an interactive format that allows users to create a personal profile, connect to other users, and share content.

In a sense, these users have already effectively segmented themselves, coming together through like interest groups and connecting through content. These behaviors, which are inherent to social media and enabled by Web 2.0, create valuable networks of targeted and specific demographic groups. Now more than ever, the "Net Generation" is becoming involved in social media and presenting online marketers with the chance to market to predefined segments of online users, positioning branded messages on sites where these users spend time online.

Moreover, these social networking sites are growing at an exponential rate, adding more and more users from more diverse backgrounds. Initially, Facebook was created only for college students, but last year, it was opened to anyone with an email address. According to Microsoft, Facebook is the sixth most trafficked site in the U.S., and now has over 73 million registered users in 40,000 different collegiate, high school, work-related, and geographic networks. This represents a 530% growth rate over one year alone.

The tactic through which advertisers communicate with these segmented online audiences is known as **Social Media Marketing (SMM)**. SMM has become a popular tool for **search engine optimization (SEO)** thanks to its unique ability to improve website visibility, name recognition, and brand awareness among specific online audiences through the acquisition of a network of relevant links.

So what opportunities does Facebook present for targeted online marketing efforts? Among Internet users ages 18-24, Facebook placed first on the list of favorite sites in Youth Trends most recent survey. Over 70% of females ages 17-25 indicated that Facebook was their favorite site in terms of time spent online. For males, this figure was still a powerful 56%. These demographic is clearly technology-driven, thanks to their growing up in a culture that considers time online an integral aspect of daily life. More than half of those surveyed visited Facebook at least once a day, logging an average of 35 minutes on the site.

Furthermore, these users are familiar with online environments and are adept at seeking out and finding specific pieces of content they're interested in. Thus, social networking sites, especially Facebook, present online marketers with the opportunity to engage users with advertising messages at critical moments of relevance.

So how can we utilize social media marketing to effectively engage these elusive audiences of young adults? Below are several ideas on how to utilize social media marketing on Facebook.

- **Connect Through Groups:** Facebook has an infinite number of shared interest groups which users join for a myriad of reasons. These groups cover an unlimited number of subjects and interests, from marine biology to snowboarding to politics to rap music to Italian food. No matter what your interest or target market, there is a group for you. Take it from me. I've been a registered Facebook user, or "Facebooker" since 2003, and I've seen a group for everything, *literally*. Many even have a local focus, like Denver Broncos fan groups or Denver Chinese Students Group. Each of these groups has its own page with a forum, discussion board, photo gallery, etc. This is the best place to position messages meant for specific niche audiences, as you're almost guaranteed everyone who sees it fits your target profile. In the past, when I was trying to drive traffic to a video site I was working for, I placed descriptive and enticing links to relevant videos on the group's "wall," or discussion board. I saw great results as many of the members of this particular group, which was devoted to skiing, followed these links to watch videos about their favorite sport, skiing.
- **Connect Through Applications:** Recently, Facebook has opened up its platform to outside developers who have created innumerable applications, ranging from fantasy stock picking simulators to video games of "beer pong" to world maps marking desired travel destinations. Users can add as many of these applications as they like to their profiles, creating opportunities for marketers and developers alike to subtly integrate marketing messages into these applications and their functions. Many developers have already done so and are not doubt reaping some major benefits, not only through increased brand awareness but through traffic driven from Facebook, which many have bridged to their own sites.
- **Connect Through Content:** Because Facebook allows users to post videos, images, links, photos, and more, advertisers can seamlessly utilize social media marketing strategies to connect with these groups through content. By positioning your content where your target audience is, you can be assured your brand will be right in front of their eyes as they interact with your message. Facebook is a repository for an endless amount of consumer data, what many experts have dubbed "a community in a box." So why not leverage this data by getting involved? Connect through content.
- **Connect Through Events:** As Facebook has grown, it has added an "Events" section where users can post information about upcoming events and then invite their Facebook friends to attend. The entire section of events is searchable, and users can quickly locate events they're interested in, find the host's name, location, time, and even a description of the event. What's more, Facebook gives each event its own page, where users can RSVP, decline to attend, or even post information on the event page's public discussion wall, like what to wear, what to bring, etc. This presents social media marketers with a valuable opportunity to post events and then invite people that are most likely interested in attending. In my own experience with this medium, I've created events for clients and then posted information and invites within groups that align. For example, when promoting an upcoming reggae concert or college football game, find as many groups related to reggae music, college football, music and sports that you can, and post the event information on their group discussion

boards to ensure that anyone who's interested now knows and attends.

- **Connect Through Mobile Devices:** Just this week, Facebook announced that it has partnered with RIM, or Research In Motion, and their BlackBerry device. In addition to BlackBerrys, Facebook is accessible to a wide range of other mobile devices. This presents valuable opportunities for advertisers to reach potential customers on a **local** level, positioning their company presence at the moment of relevance.

Still, Facebook's explosive growth hasn't been without challenges. In response to criticism from a plethora of groups, Facebook recently added additional security measures in an effort to better protect private information. In addition to assuaging privacy fears, this is sure to encourage more users to join the site and share more information about themselves. Yet this will also force social media marketers to be more innovative and creative when identifying and locating target audiences.

As you can see, Facebook users have taken care of the segmentation process, connecting themselves through content and shared interests. These behaviors, which are inherent to social media and enabled by Web 2.0, create valuable networks of targeted and specific demographic groups. Now more than ever, the "Net Generation" is becoming involved in social media and presenting online marketers with the chance to market to predefined segments of online users, positioning branded messages on sites where these users spend time online.

The company I work for, [Fusionbox, a Denver Internet marketing company](#), uses social media marketing to combine the objectives of Internet marketing with the capabilities of social media sites and Web 2.0 technologies. Click here for more information on social media marketing [<http://running-with-the-bulls-seo.blogspot.com/2007/09/social-media-marketing-bridging-gap.html>].

Essentially, our SMM services create powerful forms of viral marketing that leverage the large audiences and user communities of social media sites. Whether on MySpace, YouTube, Digg, Facebook, Del.icio.us, Flickr, or any number of others, SMM revolves around the creation and connection of users to companies through unique content.

For this reason, SMM can be utilized to build a network of links, spread brand messages, increase visibility and awareness, and even manage your company's reputation online. After all, these social media sites each have millions of registered users, grouped into like-interest communities. Now all you have to do is discern where your target audience is congregating online. What more could a marketer ask for? No other channel allows companies to declare their identity, service offerings, value proposition and location within such a targeted environment.

Our team of experienced and innovative social media marketers will effectively position your website content in a targeted digital space where it will be seen by those you want to see it.

Fusionbox is a leader in applying Web 2.0 technologies to the Internet marketing domain. Our services have been aptly deemed Web Marketing 2.0 because of our ability to connect clients to customers by engaging the market and initiating

conversations through social media.

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Fusionbox is a full-service interactive agency. We combine custom web design and development with search engine and Internet marketing to help our clients grow.

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Posted by [Patrick](#) on January 27, 2010

Make all the parts of both your online and offline campaigns work together for results. Ivy Hastings, one of our web strategists, shows you how. [More »](#)



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Posted by [Ivy](#) on January 27, 2010

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• **Microsites Power Product Launches & Multi-Channel Marketing Efforts**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:SEO] As online marketing strategies continue to evolve, the development of microsites has proven to be highly effective. Microsites are an auxiliary to a company's primary website, with the main distinction being that microsites are often focused on a specific product or content theme. Whether functioned as an independent website or as a subdomain, microsites can be utilized to further a company's objectives during a product launch. In addition to supporting sales efforts, microsites help to open distributor channels, generate industry awareness, boost search engine optimization (SEO) efforts, and sculpt a unique, ownable brand image.

• **Content Management - Technology Driving Engagement**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:SEO] Content Management is total content control. With a content management system, or CMS, you can maintain consistency across your site with a few clicks. Whether brand messaging, news, or even look and feel, a CMS makes sitewide maintenance simple and quick. But there's more to it than that.

• **Web 2.0 Analytics - The Rules of Engagement**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:SEO] As the depth of the user experience continues to evolve with Web 2.0 changes and innovations, measuring users' online actions and behaviors has become infinitely more complicated. In the past, tracking basic metrics like hits and visits was enough. But with emerging forms of social media content ranging from videos to widgets, social networks to podcasts, RSS readers and beyond, these outdated surface level metrics may no longer provide the data and insight required to optimize cross-channel campaign performance.

• **SEO - Does Your Website Need It?**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:SEO] Over the past few years, search has become an essential aspect of the online marketing mix. Both organic search engine optimization (SEO) and Pay-Per-Click (PPC) strategies can be utilized to deliver different results.

• **SEO Strategies - Optimize Online Press Releases For CRM**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:SEO] In a fiercely competitive online atmosphere, press releases can be a valuable resource for increasing your company's overall visibility (SEO), but only if they're optimized effectively. In this article, I'll explain why this tactic is no longer just about publicizing your latest news. Instead, it's about creating visibility through multiple channels that allow you to connect through content, reaching those audience segments that are relevant to your company and purpose. When optimized correctly, online press releases can boost search engine rankings for SEO, drive targeted traffic, build brand awareness, and even help save money on Pay-Per-Click (PPC) campaigns. Despite these numerous benefits, however, many companies continue to use unoptimized press releases that don't work as well as they could. Click here to find out how to use online PR to build your web presence.

• **Is Your Website An Asset Or A Liability for Users and SEO?**

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[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:SEO] We try not to "judge a book by its cover" but in an online atmosphere that's all you've got to go on. In the information age, you can't not judge a website by its form and function. So this must leave you wondering: Is my website an asset or a liability? By answering the following questions, you can find out if it's time for an overhaul or just some simple changes. Or maybe your site doesn't need any work at all. Ready to find out?

- **Optimize PDF Assets for SEO & Search Success**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:SEO] In less than one minute, most of us can think of at least eight to ten content assets our company keeps hidden away in files, drawers, and other places where we know they won't be seen by customers. But in an online atmosphere that demands fresh, quality content to achieve high search engine positioning, why not let the search engines (and hopefully users) see what you've kept tucked away?

- **Where Not To Acquire Links For SEO**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:SEO] We all know that link building is a critical aspect of search engine optimization (SEO). Yet what type of links do you want? More importantly, what type of links should you avoid? This article identifies link building strategies and methods that have been known to incur penalties from the major search engines. Use the advice here to ensure your search engine optimization efforts aren't wasted. Remember, not every link is a good one. In fact, many can hurt you far more than they help you.

- **Social Media Marketing And Facebook - Why You Need A Profile**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:Social-Networking] Social networking sites like Facebook have drastically changed the way we use the Internet. Online advertising is no exception, as social networks and social media have altered online marketing strategy. This article explores the power of social media marketing (SMM) as well as various ways to connect with Facebook users through this revolutionary advertising medium. The rule of thumb in social media marketing: Connect through content.

- **Google Search Interface - A New Look**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:Search-Engine-Marketing] A little more than a month ago, Google pioneered something known as "Universal Search." This new search interface is an expanded version of their original results page. This page presents users with blended search results, returning videos, images, maps, photos, blogs, news, local, and even audio results in addition to text links. But the look and feel of the homepage have changed. How you ask? This article will detail these changes and provide ideas on how you can leverage Universal or blended search for your search engine marketing initiatives.

- **Blended Search Changes Search Marketing Strategy**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:Search-Engine-Marketing] As Internet marketers, we all know that search (and the Web itself) is essentially a continuous revolution in progress. The most recent and useful stage in this revolution is the introduction of blended and universal search, in which the search engine results pages (SERPs) display a range of content in addition to text links. So far, this expanded search interface has grown to include videos, maps, photos, blogs, news, local, and even audio results.

- **Achieving Organic Search Engine Ranking**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:SEO] Everyone nowadays is talking about search engine optimization, better known by its acronym SEO. Internet marketers all know that they need SEO, but the majority don't understand how to go about implementing it effectively. After all, SEO is similar to surgery, only in this sense, your website is the patient. So by now, you're probably asking yourself, "How exactly do I go about optimizing my website? This article will reveal the basic methods that search engine optimization is built upon.

- **SEO Myths Dispelled - Flash**

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utilizes Flash multimedia within its design. Since 1996, the use of Flash has grown in popularity thanks to its ability to add animation and interactivity to websites. But from an SEO standpoint, Flash was long considered an unindexable villain, an empty source of content that search engine spiders couldn't see. Recently however, Flash has become visible to spiders' digital eyes, and now it can be indexed. How does this affect your website, and how can you use Flash in combination with your SEO efforts?

- **Getting Noticed - The Golden Triangle of Search**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:SEO] When it comes to organic search engine results pages (SERPs), there's much more happening than meets the eye, literally. Human psychological behavior determines the way we interpret and interact with the search engine results pages. We begin by anchoring ourselves in the upper left corner of a web page, like we would with any other print medium. From there, our eyes begin to scan the results page from left to right, top to bottom, and so on. There is a triangle formed in the area where we are psychologically programmed to begin scanning known as "The Golden Triangle" by many industry experts because the way we orient our eyes within this small area determines which pages get our coveted clicks.

- **Latent Semantic Indexing Changes Search Engine Optimization**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:SEO] The search engine optimization (SEO) industry continues to grow everyday. In just the past three years, SEO spending has increased in the neighborhood of 400%, and this trend is forecasted to increase even more in the near future. This year alone, over \$1 trillion will be allocated to online marketing efforts.

- **Social Media Marketing - Bridging the Gap**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:Social-Media] We've all heard far too much about the amazing potential of social media marketing (SMM). We've listened to the myriad reasons why it should be an essential component of our integrated search engine marketing (SEM) campaigns. Still, for as much as we've all heard, very few of us have taken the time to answer the most important question: Why? Why should you integrate SMM into your SEM campaigns?

- **10 Ways Blogging Can Help Denver Businesses**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online: Blogging] By now, everyone has heard the term "blog" somewhere, and it's more than likely that almost everyone has read a blog at some point in the last few years. Blogging is fast becoming an integral part of many companies' online marketing initiatives and web presence. But how many of us know how blogging works and why it's become so popular with online marketers? More importantly, how many of us actually understand how to use a blog to boost business online? Surprisingly, very few of us; this article will explore how to do just that by providing ten reasons you need to start blogging (if you haven't already).

- **Web Marketing 2.0**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:Internet-Marketing] The advent of Web 2.0 technologies has made the Internet an even more valuable tool for businesses. The web now acts as a broadcast vehicle for your brand and has become a valuable channel for creating and managing customer relationships. Marketing 2.0, as this extension of Web 2.0 has come to be known, presents several implications for the process in which marketing is defined and created in an online environment. As marketers, we must ask ourselves how these changes affect our process and online strategy: How can we engage customers through this channel? How are we as Internet marketers to utilize Web 2.0 technologies in our campaigns, whether online or off? The answer is simple: Connect through Content.

- **The Future of Online Marketing - The User**

[Internet-and-Businesses-Online:Internet-Marketing] The future of online marketing is the user, so put yourself in your users' shoes. So, when designing your site and creating your content, you need to assume the mindset of your user. Ask yourself four critical questions: Who are my users? Why are they here? What are they looking for? How will they search for it? Thus, when taking any action on your web site, whether it be design, development, marketing, or otherwise, ask yourself if that action meets the now

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