A GUIDE FOR BUSINESS LEADERS

WINNING THE WEBSITE WAR

4 STEPS TO MARKETING SUCCESS

THOMAS YOUNG

INDIE BOOKS
INTERNATIONAL

Table of Contents

PART THREE: Implementation and Action Plans

PART ONE:
INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

Book Objective

This book is written for the business leader who wants a successful website. These leaders are fighting the battles needed to launch and manage a winning web marketing program. For the most part they're fighting on two fronts. The first is out-performing their competition and the second is developing an effective web marketing team. The objective of this book is to win at both those challenges.

It is not written for website marketing professionals, although they will get value from this book. It is written for business owners or key managers who are leading web marketing efforts for their companies, but are not going to handle design or technology issues directly. Their job is to make the website productive and provide direction to a team of experts that will be doing the work and following a strategic plan. This book is a starting point for those efforts and presents a proven process for getting results from your website and Internet marketing.

The book is for business leaders at all levels interested in gaining a comprehensive understanding of how to generate leads and grow sales from their online marketing efforts. It is not a technical book, but rather a strategic book that helps business leaders ask the right questions and set a strategic groundwork for web marketing success. Strategy wins wars and the right strategy wins online.

This book is important because many business leaders turn over strategic web marketing efforts and decisions to team members before they take the time to learn the fundamentals and basics of web marketing. Those fundamentals are needed to set direction for this work and to drive results. They are also needed so business leaders can write a web marketing plan and set the right priorities. Lack of web knowledge should no longer be an excuse for the business leader's lack of involvement in strategic online marketing. This book lays the foundation for the involvement necessary to compete online and win the website war.

A Proven Process Gets Results

Smart business leaders and managers know that companies with excellent processes get better results. Yet, most companies fail to follow a proven process or system for marketing on the Internet. They often take advice from people who are not thinking strategically about their business, which leads to poor results. It is also common for web marketing teams to just wing it or to guess at what users want from their website.

This book introduces business leaders to a Four-Step Process for getting results from their web marketing efforts. Your company website and the Internet are critically important marketing resources and can drive success or failure for organizations looking to increase sales, get more leads and retain customers and clients. For these reasons a strategic process is critical to success and just "winging it" will not bring adequate returns on your time and money.

Making the Complex Simple

This book strives to take something that is very complex to most business people and make it simple. Few business leaders have adequate training in the comprehensive nature of web marketing. The Four-Step Process breaks it down into simple and clear sections to help the business leader develop action plans and assign the right people to tasks. This assures the work gets done and you see results from your website. This book is a comprehensive approach to web marketing, and although the focus is primarily on your company website, the book considers social media sites and other web properties that will include content about your company. The book uses the terms "web marketing", "online marketing" and "Internet marketing" to define this comprehensive approach across many online channels.

The chapters in this book can stand alone, but they are best taken together for a thorough and comprehensive experience. Too often business leaders focus on only one part of web marketing and miss the big picture, when it is the comprehensive approach that drives the greatest return. For example, just being found on the first page of Google does not make for a winning web strategy.

Simplifying the world of online marketing into four steps will help business leaders understand the big picture so they can develop a successful strategy. In that way, this book becomes the roadmap and blueprint for a web marketing strategy and Internet marketing plan that can drive results for your business.

Strategies for Every Industry

The strategies in this book are universal and apply across industries and market segments. These best practices for web marketing strategies come from hands-on experience with many types of businesses across many market segments and with a wide variety of websites. The collected recommendations from across market segments is added value to readers as it helps business leaders understand which techniques work across those market segments.

Book Updates

The book will be updated frequently to account for major changes in web marketing. These changes can literally happen overnight, but the key fundamentals will remain unchanged.

Sign up for updates to this book at www.WinningtheWebsite War.com to stay on top of major changes in web marketing that can impact your strategies and keep you ahead of your competition.

> **TRUE STORY – Only the Names Have Been Changed to Protect Privacy**
>
> Kent Bento, the CEO of Bento Leather Products, was in his office when the CFO hurried in. "Have you seen the new monthly sales report for Internet orders?" he asked.
>
> "No," Kent said.
>
> "Well, take a look. Sales are through the roof!" the CFO said.
>
> Bento is a 103-year-old manufacturing company specializing in men's wallets and briefcases with a large and very loyal customer base. However, these loyal fans were not buying from the company website or even finding it in web searches. Keyword research showed that people were looking for the company in much greater numbers than were visiting the website or buying online.
>
> The company's primary strategy was to achieve a higher online conversion rate with an easy-to-use website that featured the products loved by Bento's loyal buyers. The new website was a success and became a key sales channel, attracting not only current customers, but also new buyers who expanded Bento's base of loyal fans.

Here is a summary of what Bento learned from applying the Four-Step Process:

STRATEGY: Target their loyal customer base and identify missing opportunities in their current web marketing strategy to immediately increase sales.

Design and Development: Design and develop an easy-to-use e-commerce website targeting the demographic making up their most loyal customers. Highlight the bestselling products and focus on up-selling new product categories.

Traffic Generation: Build the search engine optimization for their brand name so their website was highly visible in any search for their company name or related searches. Supplement those searches with paid ads through Google AdWords.

Monitoring Return on Investment (ROI) and Tracking Results: The surge in sales resulted in a new marketing focus for the company. Ongoing web marketing meetings and action items are now a major part of the Bento marketing agenda. This is needed to sustain and grow online sales. The team tracks the ROI of every dollar spent on web marketing against online sales.

The Results: Bento reported a 700 percent increase in online sales the first year following implementation of the Four-Step Process. Direct web sales are now a key sales channel for the company.

What You Will Get from this Book

T he strategies and action items in this book will help you grow sales for your company. That is the principle focus of the book and the bottom line. Everything discussed in these pages leads to that end result. You may find that it is impossible to track exactly where the growth comes from because there are many factors working together that drive results. This includes improved website data, a website that is easier to use, and strong, effective website content. This book will show you how to bring together these strategies and more, to drive results and win the battles online against competitors and in finding talent.

If this book has done its job, you will find ways to grow your business from strategic, well-planned and well-executed web marketing. Here are a few things you can expect to get from reading this book:

- Specific action items to *generate leads* and *new sales* from the Internet and web marketing efforts.

- How to implement a *Four-Step Process for driving web marketing* results.

- How to *measure those results* and *determine return on investment (ROI)*.

- How to build a web marketing team to develop and implement action items.

Use the Four-Step Process

This book will drive sales growth from a proven four-step web marketing process. Those processes can be measured for specific ROI, probably better than any other sales or marketing effort performed at your company. You will learn how to prioritize and assign web marketing tasks to the individuals best suited for driving results for each of the four steps.

The only factors that may provide resistance to your achieving your goals will be market forces outside your control and the motivation of the people executing the work. That's not to say you won't have roadblocks along the way, but this book will help you cover the fundamentals and help you rest assured you are doing the right things online to grow your business.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Here are a few common questions we've heard from business leaders that this book will help you answer:

• How do I increase my company sales with web marketing?

• What are my web marketing priorities?

• How do I prepare an effective web marketing plan?

• Who is going to do this work and how do I build a team to get this work done?

• How do I track my return on time and money spent on web marketing?

• How do I know which strategy for marketing my company online will work the best?

• How do I measure success?

• How do I get found on Google and other search engines?

• How can I get inside the head of my website visitors to better meet their needs?

• Is there a process to get results that has worked well for others?

Develop an Action Plan

The recommendations in this book come from more than twenty-five years of marketing experience and it would be a waste of time if they did not translate into action. Most chapters include a list of action items you can complete as part of your web marketing plan which can then be delegated to your team. The book also includes a list of resources and web marketing worksheets that can be used for developing action plans to get results. Your first action item is to read this book and share it with your team!

TRUE STORY – Only the Names Have Been Changed to Protect Privacy

"It is sure nice to see a record sales month, especially after the great year we had last year. This is a very pleasant surprise," said Ralph Moore, sales and marketing director for BC Wire Carts, a leading manufacturer of industrial laundry carts. Their web marketing strategy prior to implementing the Four-Step Process was to have a basic website with a few key products.

"We never thought our website could produce sales at a level worth the investment we would have to make to build a new e-commerce website. Most of our sales come from our distributor network and we did not think customers would want to buy at full retail prices when they can purchase our products at 20 percent less from a distributor," reported Ralph.

As it turns out, customers will pay more to buy direct from the manufacturer on a website they trust with full access to all available products. Distributor websites are often poorly developed and hard to use. Also, coding every product for search engine optimization (SEO) increased traffic 30 percent annually leading to higher sales.

They also tackled a high cart abandonment rate head-on by instituting a cart abandonment e-mail program with excellent results. "If a customer does not complete their shopping cart and purchase, we follow up with an e-mail reminding them about the product of interest. Many of these website users come back and purchase," said Ralph.

The key to success for BC Carts was keeping things simple and focusing on the products. Here are a few things they learned from the Four-Step Process:

Strategy: They designed and developed an easy to use e-commerce website to target buyers of industrial wire carts and baskets. They also included the full complement of products found nowhere else on the Internet.

Design and Development: They allowed website visitors to buy without a login and include all products on the website with their accessories. Up-selling accessories and using shipping incentives to improve conversion rates also helped increase their sales.

Traffic Generation: By coding every product page for SEO, they achieved a page-one ranking in Google for key industry search terms. Hundreds of products were coded for such searches.

Monitoring ROI and Tracking Results: They scheduled monthly web marketing meetings to analyze sales data and make changes as needed to increase sales. Follow-up on all prospective customers who abandoned their shopping carts with a personalized e-mail and description of the products they left in their carts was critical to their success.

The Results: Consistent annual increases in sales and website traffic built the brand and helped grow the company on and off the Internet.