

marketing ONLINE versus OFFLINE

How are they different?

By Joyce

Your online presence doesn't replicate your offline one – it complements it. How?

Social networking: Get your face on Facebook, your links on LinkedIn and your tweets on Twitter. Develop world-wide exposure as the expert to whom people turn for advice on your industry. Syndicate your blogs, updates, tweets and diggs (diggs.com) to automate your actions through all outlets simultaneously.

Article campaigns: On the Internet, people seek advice in their buying. Sales take longer than in real life. To establish yourself as an expert, create trust by offering free advice through article distribution sites.

Target marketing: Participate in blogs and online communities such as forums, where people have discussions. Can't find conversations specific to your product? Get more and more general until you hit the bull's eye. (So if there's nothing on "mineral makeup," check "beauty"). Leave a link to your site, but don't sell. Simply offer advice.

Competitive research: Scout backlinks to see where your competitors are, then add your links next to theirs whenever possible. To do this, use the Yahoo search "linkdomain: www.[competitor].com" and click the button labelled "except from this domain." You'll see all the sites linking to the competitor.

Market share: Get backlinks to rank higher on search engine queries. Submit your URL to directories, launch article campaigns, participate in forums and get on Twitter. Just don't cheat or oversell, or the search engines will catch your material and label it as spam.

Pay-per-click ads: Often word-based, these appear only when relevant to a page or a search. They're not those annoying pop-up ads! Google AdWords, the most dominant, is the first you should employ.

Keywords: Optimize your site and online ad campaign using words and phrases that bring in sales. Don't just pick adjectives that describe your business: do research to see which ones work. Tools in Google AdWords and Word Tracker will show which search queries people use to find you.

Online affiliate programs: These third-party operations work on commission. They sell your product through their own e-marketing channels. A sufficiently high share of the cut creates an incentive for them to work even harder for you, saving you time and resources.

Meta tag spying: Discover which keywords are in the code of a competitor's website to make it rank so well. Find out by viewing the source in your web browser and doing a "find" for "meta tag."

Shopping cart inside your website: Don't focus on sales on your home page, or you'll turn people off. Instead, start with information about your business. Then lead naturally to the shopping cart. An e-marketer can find out how long people spend on each page of your site, to see if your sales lead is working.

Joyce Astifan is an e-marketing & media relations specialist at SmarttNet, an e-marketing company that performs search engine optimization, develops CMS websites and teaches businesses how to succeed on the Internet. Astifan is co-author of The 6 week online business makeover: SEO and e-marketing for small businesses, available for free download at www.smartt.com/freeguide.

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