Digital Marketing - Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM)

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Abstract - **Marketing has evolved since the time human started trading, with the rapid development in technology there is a shift towards digitalization. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) are domains of highest priority when dealing with digital marketing. In recent times marketing strategies have been shaped by technologies such as AI, Big Data, IOT, Ml have evolved to a great extent with beneficial responses for an organization's growth. The aim of this survey paper is to give an overview of research on evolution of digital marketing, SEO and SEM strategies and differentiating amongst various tools and techniques.**

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Search Engine Marketing, Search Engine Optimization, Digital Marketing Assets.

I. INTRODUCTION

Marketing has evolved day by day but with the world coming online and with the increase in digital technologies, it has shifted its focus on digitalization. Out of all modern marketing techniques and tools, digital marketing resources, channels and social media becomes the most interactive, attractive and essential.

Digital Marketing has become one of the most important marketing mix over the past few years as companies and organizations are realizing the importance of a good online presence, it has been effective for their growth in terms of sales and creating an innovative presence online [PinakiMandal, Prof. Nitin Joshi, el at 2015]. Digital marketing can be termed as an approach for the development of brand, product or service online. There's a saying by Bill Gates that, "If your Business is not on the internet then your business will be out of business".

To have an effective online presence, any organization or a company needs a strong strategy designed using the correct technologies to help marketing activities in order to improve customer knowledge by matching their needs is digital marketing. Companies can use the internet to provide ongoing information, service, and support. It also creates positive interaction with customers that can serve as the foundation for long term relationships and encourage repeat purchases. Various social media campaigns are proven to be cost effective with beneficiary results. [PinakiMandal, Prof. Nitin Joshi, el at 2015].For any online marketing activity, content and graphics play a great role according to customer psychology.

This paper consists of the following sections – I. Introduction, II. Related Work,III. SEO and SEM, IV. Current Research and V. Conclusion.

Figure 1: Various components of digital marketing

A. Digital Marketing Assets

Digital Marketing Asset is any tool you use online, one or more of such common examples are – social media profiles, a fully optimized website, images and video contents, blogposts and ebooks. With tech advancements such as AI and machine learning, marketers are better equipped with the marketing technology needed to reach consumers on digital devices at just the right moment. This is opposed to traditional marketing methods – which have to be planned and placed well in advance. The digital marketing trends are moving from passive advertising to active engagement with social networking pages, its quality rather than quantity [Esinmukul, GulcinBuyukozkan, el at 2019].

Everything that the brand says is the content, whether that product description, blog posts, eBooks, info graphics, social media posts it is all considered content. Content helps convert the website visitors into leads and customers, and helps to raise the brand's profile online. Whatever the goal that is going to need to use owned content to form digital marketing strategy. The content creation plan should include audit and planning the earned media, audit and planning the paid media and bringing it all together.

B. Benefits of digital marketing platforms

Digital marketing platforms perform several functions in one solution – allowing marketing teams to get more integrated or holistic view of their campaigns.

When selecting a digital marketing platform, consider the following advantages for choosing the right marketing attribution software provider:

1) Track and Allocate Spend

Many marketers struggle with determining which channels are driving the most value, and therefore the ones they should spend more on. This challenge is exacerbated by the increasingly wide variety of digital channels they need to be present across. With this in mind, marketing teams should leverage a platform that uses advanced attribution modelling. This will give them insight into spend and success rates across multiple digital channels, and actionable suggestions on how to then optimize ad spend.

2) The Right Ads to drive conversation

With the right digital marketing platform, you can gain a better understanding of what type of content resonates with your customers across platforms. This allows marketers to understand which voice and creative elements garner the most engagement.

3) Correlate Qualitative and Quantitative Results

The right digital marketing platform will help you make better choices to drive revenue when planning media, tracking your brand across channels, leveraging new advertising techniques or conducting media buys.

II. SEM and SEO

Search Engine Marketing (SEM), which allows firms to target consumers by placing ads on search engines, has proven to be an effective audience acquisition strategy. Unlike traditional online advertising, advertisers pay only when users actually click on an ad. When successfully implemented, SEM can generate steady traffic levels and tremendous return on

investment (ROI). As SEM becomes more common, the level of competition is driving bid prices through the roof.
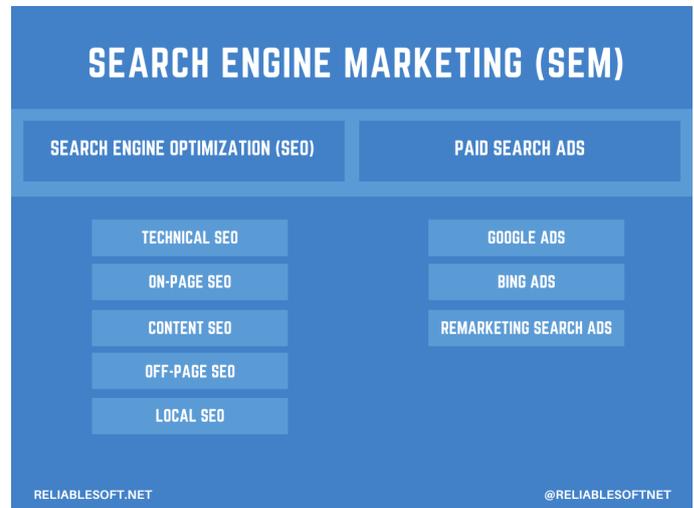

Figure 2: Search Engine Marketing

A. Competition

Increasing competition in search marketing is making it virtually impossible for advertisers with limited budgets to maintain top rankings. The Atlas Institute published a report in September that analysed the impact of paid search engine ranking on traffic. [MS Iskandar,D Komara, el at 2018]

In October 2004, Fathom Online, in conjunction with MediaPost, both well known marketing firms, released a tool intended to measure the price volatility of the search market (Fadner, 2004b). This tool, called the Keyword Price Index (KPI), "is intended to serve as a base for comparing the relative cost effectiveness of search engine marketing (SEM) campaigns. Going forward, it will track the fluctuations in cost per click (CPC) over time" (Fadner, 2004b, p. 1). So far, this effort has revealed that some industries have high enough payouts to justify CPCs of more than a dollar or two, while others simply do not (Fadner, 2004b). The finance/mortgage industry, for example, had a weighted average CPC of $3.17, which sounds more reasonable when one considers the potential earnings from the sale of a mortgage or an investment account (Fadner, 2004b). Retail, on the other hand, had a weighted average CPC of $0.32 because neither the potential gains nor the conversion rates are substantial enough to justify higher bid prices (Fadner, 2004b). Ultimately, this index will give advertisers a better understanding of bid price fluctuations in their industry over a period of time. [MS Iskandar and D Komara, el at 2018].

B. Importance of Keyword Analysis

Keywords play remarkable role in optimizing your website. Analysing the correct keywords is a basic necessity for a

highly optimized website. There are 3 types of keywords having search frequency from high to low:

1. Head – First are the head keywords, these are the one word phrases like logistics and their call. They are called head keywords because they represent head of the graph.
2. Body – Second are the body keywords, these are 2-3 word phrases. These are less competitive and also their search frequency can be a bit less because they are more specific.
3. Long Tail – Third are the long tail keywords, these are more descriptive phrases. These have less searches because they are less competitive and less specific.

There are many keyword analysing tools that help you identify correct keyword to target more viewers for your website. Some of these tools are Ubersuggest, Google, Keyword Everywhere, Keyword Shitter etc. To narrow down our keyword list we can access the keywords on two criteria:

1. Use search volume data – How many searches per month in Google do the keywords get that will help us identify which of those topics are the most popular and also which keywords are more popular.
2. Assess the commercial intent, the business value of certain keywords.

C. Strategies

With nearly all the organizations shifting their businesses online too have a variety of audience acquisition strategies to choose from, opt in, viral, banner advertisements, search placement, pay per click(keyword marketing). Banner ads are either textual or media based placed on Websites that contain link to other web pages. Advertisements that use search engine marketing as their strategical part of their marketing mix may do so for multiple reasons. One of the reasons being SEM account is very simple and using it wisely might generate quick traffic that might be beneficial.

Ge'LenaVavra, an entrepreneur specializing in Italian suits in Las Vegas, spent $60,000 in 2003 on Google ads, and claimed "Our business exploded from Google and Google alone" (as cited in Markoff& Zachary, 2003, p. 2). SEM delivers ads to users who are already searching for the products or services that an advertiser is offering, meaning that theoretically, they areonly receiving qualified traffic[MS Iskandar and D Komara, el at 2018]Here, keyword marketing has proved to be the most effective strategy for SEM. Any viewer visits Google or Yahoo and enters specific keywords or phrases and the result is, they are provided with number of organic listings and sponsored listings.

The Interactive Advertising Bureau has found that "search engine marketing is the fastest growing sector in online marketing" (as cited in Brooks, 2004, p. 1). With more and more advertisers using keyword marketing as a means of reaching potential customers, it is becoming increasingly expensive to maintain top positions. "The explosive paid search market is likely to grow to $2.5 billion or about one third of current online spending in 2004" (Smith, 2004, p. 24). Thomas Weisel Partners have estimated that paid search will account for half of all online expenditures by 2008, which would require an annual growth rate of 21% (as cited in Francisco, 2004a). This is a substantial figure, considering the number of companies that are using online advertising as a means of reaching potential customers. [MS Iskandar and D Komara, el at 2018].

D. Challenges

With online marketing gaining popularity, competition is growing which eventually increases the flow of challenges faced by the marketers. In a long run search engines are going to reach critical masses in which they cannot meet advertising demands. Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer earlier this year admitted that the company was behind on search technology development but vowed that it would catch up to take on Google and Yahoo! All three companies are working on customized, personal search tools for the desktop, as well as local search services. Search engine optimization has proved to benefit organizations by growing not only sales but help organizations develop market from the feedback loop from the viewers. Search engines would like to be able to serve advertisements relevant to the user's location, income level, family size, etc. This could potentially reduce competition among advertisers by categorizing them according to user preferences.

III. RELATED WORK

An approach that uses organic methods to appear in search results and the other approach uses paid methods to appear in search results respectively called as SEO and SEM. We look at the important research that is currently trending in these areas. When defining SEM often disputes and contradictions arise some sources, Backlinko as an example, cite that SEM is the wider channel of search that encompasses both organic and paid.

SEO is the art of persuading search engines to recommend your content to their users as the best solution to their problem. In order to collect information on web pages, search engine bots "crawl" sites to create an index. You can think of the Worldwide Web a bit like a spider web -- the bots (or spiders in this example) travel from page to page by links. Once the bots get this information, an index is created. Search

engine algorithms then review the index based on hundreds of ranking factors to determine which pages should appear where on the search engine results pages (SERPs) when users type in a specific query.

The authors Pinaki Mandal and Prof. Nitin Joshi, in their paper "Understanding Digital Marketing Strategy", give a brief introduction to digital marketing, its assets and how the digital marketing platforms are beneficial for an organization's growth.

Furthering the above Buyukozkan and MerveGuler, in their paper "Evaluation of Digital Marketing Technologies" discusses how digital marketing is aligned with digital technologies to be more authentic and effective. The paper also illustrates the proposed evaluation method.

The authors Arokia R. Terrance, Shruti Shrivastava and Asmita Kumari, in their paper titled "Importance of SEO", talks about what search engine optimization is, defines how it is important in digital marketing, what are the various challenges faced in this sector and the increasing competition for ranking high in the search results.

In the paper, "Implementation Techniques of SEO" Rony Baskoro Lukito et al have discussed the strategies employed for Search Engine marketing and Search Engine Optimization. It also talks about the importance of keyword analysis in every expect during optimizing your content and its effectivity.

In their paper titled "Application Marketing Strategy" authors MS Iskandar and D Komara, have detailed the strategies and methods used for Search Engine Marketing (SEO) along with the results of the research. They have explained the strategies giving the example of Mountain Grounds Coffee and Eatery store.

Search engine marketing is the practice of marketing a business using paid advertisements that appear on search engine results pages (or SERPs). Advertisers bid on keywords that users of services such as Google and Bing might enter when looking for certain products or services, which gives the advertiser the opportunity for their ads to appear alongside results for those search queries. These ads, often known by the term pay-per-click ads, come in a variety of formats. Some are small, text-based ads, whereas others, such as product listing ads (also known as Shopping ads) are more visual, product-based advertisements that allow consumers to see important information at-a-glance, such as price and reviews. Search engine marketing's greatest strength is that it offers advertisers the opportunity to put their ads in front of motivated customers who are ready to buy at the precise moment they're ready to make a purchase.

IV. CURRENT RESEARCH

Search engines use complicated algorithms to ensure the most relevant results are returned for each search, including location and other available information. In paid search advertising, sponsored ads appear at the top of and on the side of search engine results pages to gain more visibility and prominence than the organic results. Let's say that you are a customer looking for a product or service online. You go to a search engine and type in your search terms (also known as keywords).In your search results page, you will come across various company ads whose keywords match the keywords in your search. These ads appear in prominent locations on the page – along with the other search listings that match your keywords. The paid listings are highly relevant to your specific search, making it likely that you will click on them. Now let's take a look at how SEM campaigns work from the marketer's perspective.SEM networks are self-serve operations. Once a marketer selects a network, they can get a campaign up within a short period of time. When setting up a campaign within an SEM network, the marketer is prompted to:

- Conduct keyword research and select a set of keywords related to their website or product
- Select a geographic location for the ad to be displayed within
- Create a text-based ad to display in the search results
- Bid on a price they are willing to pay for each click on their ad

Text-only ads are easy to produce. Marketers enter a headline, text for the body of the ad, a call-to-action and a URL for the hyperlink. Search engine marketing is considered by many to be the most efficient way to spend marketing dollars.

Examples of search ad networks

The two primary search networks that SEM professionals target are Google Ads (formerly Google Adwords) and the Bing Ads.

Google AdWords is actually two networks: Google Search Network and Google Display Network. The first network consists exclusively of search-related websites owned by Google, while the second includes properties such as YouTube, Blogger and Gmail. The Bing Ads allows customers to buy ads on both Yahoo's network of websites and Bing's network.

V. CONCLUSION

SEO tools are an important consideration to help optimize a website for search engines. Many tools differ in the scope of their function yet also analyse different SEO factors. Some of the most important areas to be analysed are Keywords: Keyword Analysis is process of determining the most common search terms that relate to your website and the competitors using those words, Content: Website content should contain keywords to match search queries. Placing keywords in the titles, the descriptions or tags of the content are also important for search engine optimization (SEO), Backlinks: Backlinks are also important for a good ranking. A backlink is a link to your site from another site. Sites with a high amount of traffic can help drive traffic to your site, Domain: Domains are important for SEO because Google and other search engines scan the URLs for keywords so they can determine the content of the site and Social Media: Some SEO tools analyse data from social networks like Facebook, Google+ or Twitter. They measure roughly how many users access the blog or other sub- pages of a domain, and they can measure how often blog pages or articles are linked via social media.

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