

HOW TO MAXIMIZE YOUR

eCommerce SITE WITH SEO AND SOCIAL MEDIA



Presented by:



NationalPositions +

Profitable Internet Marketing



IS THIS BOOK RIGHT FOR ME?

Not quite sure if this ebook is right for you? See the below description to determine if your level matches the content you are about to read.

INTRODUCTORY

Introductory content is for marketers who are new to the subject. This content typically includes step-by-step instructions on how to get started with this aspect of inbound marketing and learn its fundamentals. After reading it, you will be able to execute basic marketing tactics related to the topic.

INTERMEDIATE

THIS BOOK

Intermediate content is for marketers who are familiar with the subject but have only basic experience in executing strategies and tactics on the topic. This content typically covers the fundamentals and moves on to reveal more complex functions and examples. After reading it, you will feel comfortable leading projects with this aspect of inbound marketing.

ADVANCED

Advanced content is for marketers who are, or want to be, experts on the subject. In it, we walk you through advanced features of this aspect of inbound marketing and help you develop complete mastery of the subject. After reading it, you will feel ready not only to execute strategies and tactics, but also to teach others how to be successful.

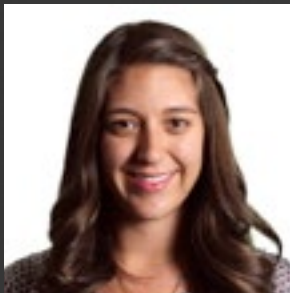
Share This Ebook!





Adam de Jong

Adam de Jong is the marketing director for National Positions. He specializes in lead generation and lifecycle marketing.



Liz Knight

Liz Knight is the marketing manager for National Positions. She specializes in content creation and inbound marketing.



Tiffany Sands

Tiffany Sands is the social media director for National Positions. She specializes in social media marketing, branding and community outreach for hundreds of clients.



CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. A Post-Panda SEO Strategy
3. A Post-Penguin SEO Strategy
4. The Importance of Buyer Personas
5. How to Create Great Content Your Customers Will Love
6. The Power of Rich Snippets
7. Why eCommerce and Social Media are a Perfect Match
8. 3 Social Media Essentials for Every Site
9. How to Use Facebook Marketing to Boost eCommerce
10. How to Manage a Profitable Social Media Campaign
11. Conclusion





Introduction

Profitable eCommerce marketing must have a successful organic presence. To maximize your online store, you need to drive qualified, organic traffic from search and social. While many eCommerce sites can drive immediate traffic and revenue from paid ads, especially from Adwords, it's often a bad idea to rely exclusively on one marketing channel.

Share This Ebook!



“ **Organic traffic** provides the best long-term opportunity for growth. ”

If you can master eCommerce SEO and social media marketing, you will create predictable revenue streams that grow exponentially every year. Your products will be found by relevant customers on Google, Bing, Facebook, Pinterest and many more credible places.

But driving organic traffic is far from easy, especially for eCommerce sites. To help you navigate the lucrative—albeit difficult—world of eCommerce marketing, we’ve created this eBook with proven strategies that have helped many of our clients boost exposure, build brand loyalty and increase profitability.

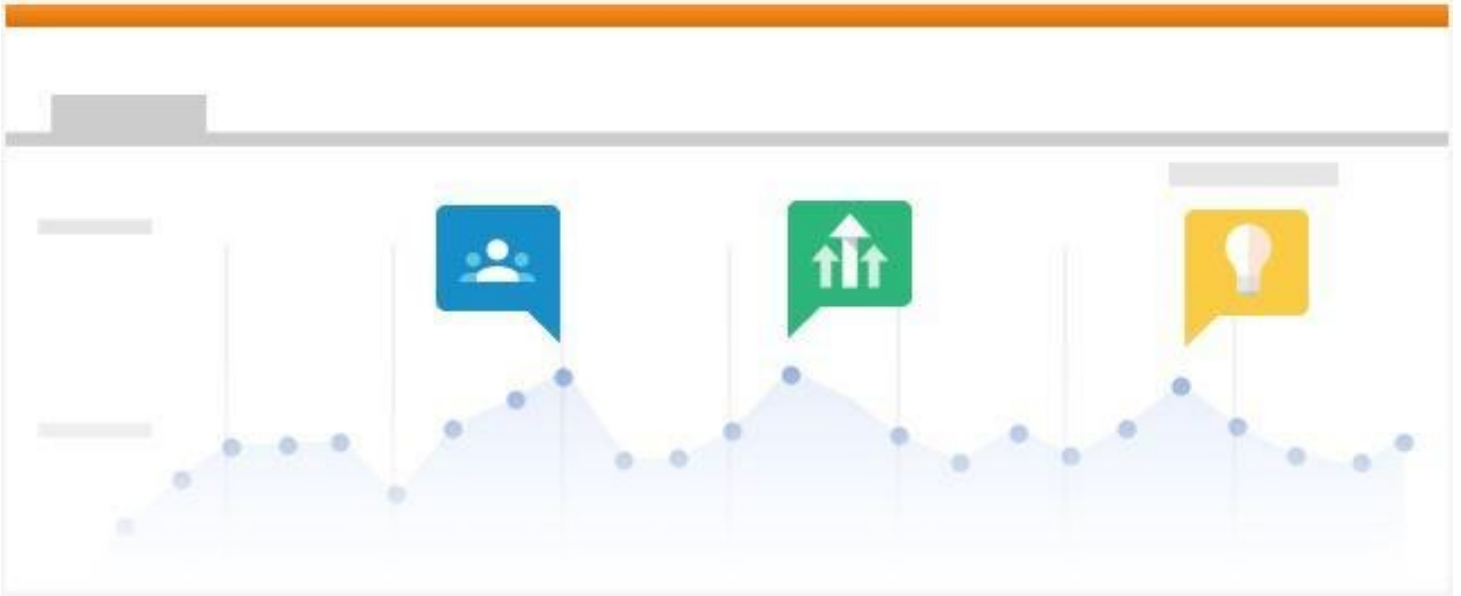
This eBook will show you how to master SEO in a competitive market, use social media to win over new customers and strengthen your brand for long-term success.

Share This Ebook!



A **Post-Panda** SEO Strategy for eCommerce Sites

Driving new customers to your site is essential in order for an eCommerce business to succeed, and getting ranked at the top of Google's organic search results offers the visibility necessary to generate new leads and drive more traffic straight to your site.



Unfortunately, search engines are far from stagnant, and algorithm updates like Panda and Penguin have the power to wreak havoc on your eCommerce site's rankings, unless you have an SEO strategy that's equally adaptable.

Share This Ebook!

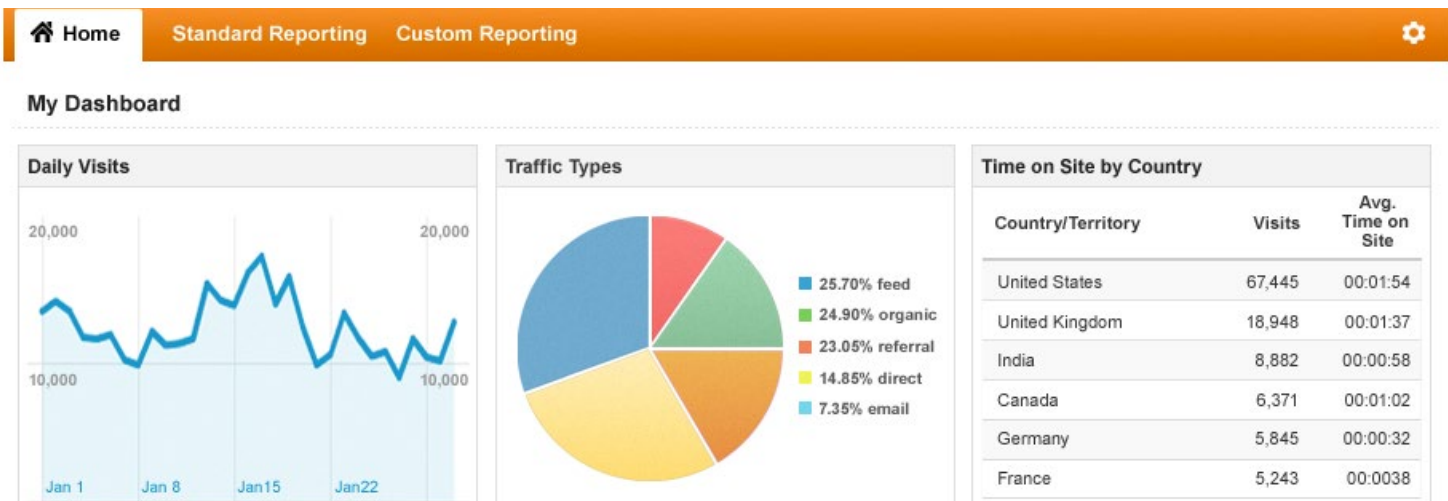


With Panda updates now incorporated as a regular part of Google’s changing algorithm, staying on your SEO toes—especially for eCommerce sites—is more important than ever.

The Effect of Panda on eCommerce: Why eCommerce Sites Were Some of The Hardest Hit

Since the first Panda update in 2011, eCommerce sites in particular have suffered serious blows to their rankings, their products’ exposure, and ultimately, their sales.

Despite the fact that Panda was engineered to root out poor quality sites with bad user-experience, the update devastated even legitimate eCommerce sites and left e-tailers reeling.



Share This Ebook!



After the first few Pandas, many in the eCommerce industry began to ask themselves: is Panda “out to get” eCommerce?

Why?

Google’s algorithm is advancing every day, and it’s more sophisticated than ever. But it still has a limited scope of understanding and the search engine is often incapable of inferring what searchers can. When Google crawls multiple pages for each product, sees pages filled by images with lots of links but low word counts, repetitive product descriptions and more, the algorithm sees “webspam” and ranks accordingly.

Fortunately, there are a number of issues that eCommerce sites can address in order to overcome Panda, show Google their real value, and start seeing the rankings they deserve.



Share This Ebook!



Recovering from Panda: Common eCommerce Problems & Solutions

1

Content

One of the biggest problems for eCommerce sites is content. With so many product pages, a lack of content on each page, as well as duplicate product descriptions, content can be a source of serious problems for eCommerce sites looking to boost their organic rankings.

“**Original content** is essential if you want to top the search results and drive traffic.”

Resist the urge to copy-paste descriptions from the manufacturer. It can be difficult—and definitely daunting—to write unique product descriptions for each product page on your site, but it’s absolutely essential if you want to top the search results, drive traffic, and stay safe in the face of Google’s Panda updates.

Share This Ebook!



2

Microformatting and Rich Snippets

[Rich Snippets](#) are a tremendous SEO resource that many e-tailers fail to utilize to their full potential. Microformatting makes specific product-level data more accessible and easier for Google to index, helping search engines infer what searchers can naturally infer on their own — allowing Google to more easily identify (and display) a business' name, a product's make or model, a brand, a product's price, and so on.

```

1 <title>Kenmore White 17" Microwave</title>
2
3 <div itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/Product">
4   <span itemprop="name">Kenmore White 17" Microwave</span>
5
6   <div itemprop="offers" itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/Offer">
7     <span itemprop="price">$55.00</span>
8     <meta itemprop="priceCurrency" content="USD" />
9     <link itemprop="availability" href="http://schema.org/InStock"/>In stock
10  </div>
11
12  <div itemprop="aggregateRating" itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/AggregateRating">
13    Rated <span itemprop="ratingValue">2.5</span>
14    /<span itemprop="bestRating">5</span>
15    based on <span itemprop="reviewCount">2</span> customer reviews
16  </div>
17
18  Customer reviews:
19
20  <div itemprop="reviews" itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/Review">
21    <span itemprop="description">Not a happy camper</span> -
22    by <span itemprop="author">Ellie</span>,
23    <meta itemprop="datePublished" content="2011-04-01">April 1, 2011
24    <div itemprop="reviewRating" itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/Rating">
25      <span itemprop="ratingValue">1</span>/

```

Share This Ebook!



3

Canonical Tags and Unfriendly URL Structure

When users navigate their way through an eCommerce site, there are often a number of ways for them to reach the same product. Let's look at an example.

A shopper can come across Blue Thomas the Train Bedsheets through a number of different channels, such as:

Bed & Bath > Children's > Blue > Blue Thomas the Train Comforter

OR

Kid's bedding > Comforters > Blue > Blue Thomas the Train Comforter

In each of these instances, a customer landed on the same product page in a different way. Many eCommerce sites choose to reflect each step of the process within a unique URL, depending on the channel the customer took to find the product. In this case, it would look something like this:

<http://www.eCommerceExample.com/bed-bath/childrens/blue/blue-thomas-the-train-comforter>

Share This Ebook!



While these URLs may provide context and give customers a sense of confidence that they are on the right page, to Google, they're nothing more than multiple URLs with duplicate content—which is exactly what Panda was engineered to eliminate.

So what can you do to keep both customers and search engines happy?

Implement [Rel=Canonical Tags](#), which will allow you to identify a single URL as primary, and all others as “identical” versions of the original page.

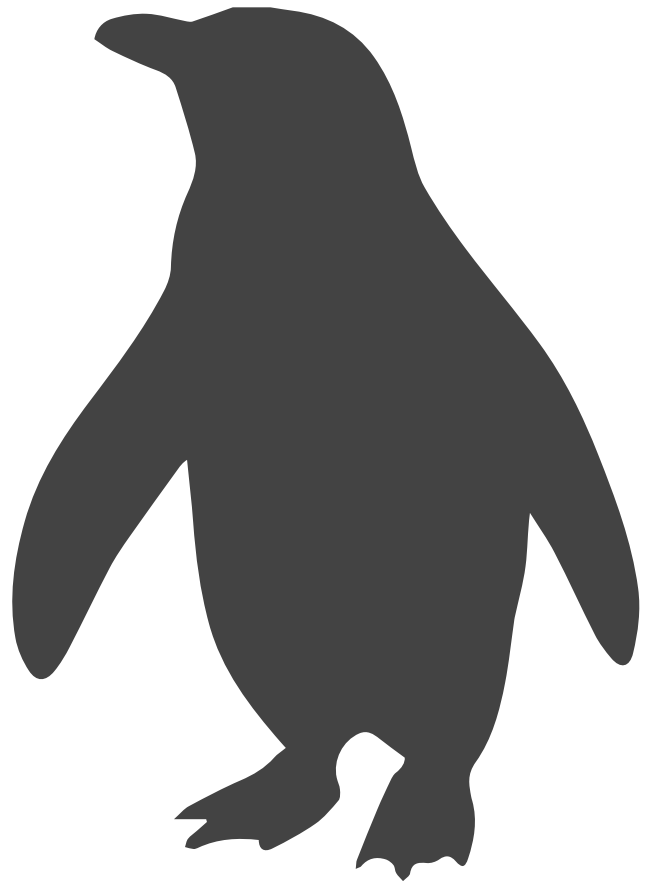
Share This Ebook!



A Post-Penguin SEO Strategy for eCommerce Sites

When Google's first Penguin update was released last year, the impact of its crash landing was felt far and wide by sites of all shapes and sizes. And now, as of May 2013, another Penguin has been officially released.

Penguin 2.0, and the updates that came before, are changes to Google's algorithm designed to root out sites that are essentially "over-optimized." While this doesn't necessarily imply "Black Hat" — which goes entirely against Google's Guidelines — the update is targeted at sites that push the boundaries of SEO a little too far and focus a little too heavily on search engines, not on searchers themselves



Share This Ebook!



Google's Penguin 2.0 and Its Effect on eCommerce

Penguin 2.0, as Matt Cutts, the head of Google's Webspam team, put it, is set to be a more in depth algorithm update than the original, complete with an even deeper impact.

2.3%
**OF ENGLISH QUERIES
AFFECTED**

The latest Penguin, and the fourth of it's kind, is said to affect 2.3% of English queries and many eCommerce sites have already experienced a drop in organic rankings. As [Matt Cutts remarked](#) just before the refresh was rolled out, it's looks like it's going to be a pretty "eventful summer."

But while we have yet to fully comprehend the impact and the implications of this new Penguin, we do know that that removing toxic "spammy" links and working to build a natural and diverse link profile are essential if you want to recover from Penguin and see your business and your products at the top of Google's search results.

Share This Ebook!



What To Do About Potentially Toxic Links

With Google's Penguin Update now stricter than ever, the search site now has an even lower tolerance for "spammy" links and there are a number of links that can do your site more harm than good.



Sites with overly aggressive inbound linking and unnatural link profiles were some of the hardest hit.

If unnatural or excessive linking is hurting your SEO, there are essentially two actions you can take if you want to keep your site safe from Penguin and secure at the top of the rankings:

1. **Make Links "No Follow"**
2. **Remove or Request Google Disavow Links**

Share This Ebook!



Diversify your Link Profile

In order to have a natural link profile, diversity is essential.

Building a diverse link profile involves driving highly relevant links from a variety of sources complete with varied sets of anchor text. Content marketing, infographic marketing, social media and more can help you broaden your reach, boost conversion, and build a diverse link strategy geared to get you to the top of the search results.

Aim to Build Relationships, Not Links

Having a strong authority and an identifiable brand are powerful tools against Penguin 2.0.

Grow your brand, encourage engagement, and be active online. Every social interaction is usually expressed in the form of a link—so the more active you are, the more relationships you build, the more you can naturally build your brand and expand your link profile.

Share This Ebook!



Who Are Your Customers Anyway?

The Importance of Identifying Buyer Personas

If you're looking to grow your eCommerce business, stop thinking about you and start thinking about your customers.

In the end, while your website design, your content, your marketing, and even the products and services you offer might be about you, they're certainly not for you. And the key to success is keeping that in mind each and every step of the way.

“ **Stop thinking about *you* and start thinking about your **customers.**** ”

For an eCommerce business to thrive: marketers need to know what kind of leads they're generating, sales teams need to know who they're selling to, and customer service teams need to know what kinds of customers they're looking to retain—and that means creating a Buyer Persona.

Share This Ebook!



Buyer personas help businesses not only write content that engages, but design products that sell, calls to action that work, and everything else in between. By creating an archetype of the customers you hope to attract and retain, you can better understand their needs, their goals, their behavior, their personality and their preferences—and cater to them—giving your business what it needs and buyers what they want.

Instead of thinking of your customers as some generic group of prospective buyers and marketing to them with a “one size fits all” mentality, strive to analyze, segment, and personalize the ways you interact with your buyers. That way, you’ll be able to gain new leads, boost sales, and grow your business.



Share This Ebook!



In order to tap into the psyche of your customers and define (and refine) the personas of your buyers, try asking yourself the following questions:



WHO ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS?
WHAT ARE THEY LIKE?

When trying to understand your buyers, analyzing demographics—age, gender, income, location, etc—can be a good place to start. But that’s certainly not the end of the story.

In order to understand a buyer as a potential customer, you need to understand them as a person. What does an average day look like for them? Do they spend more time at work or at home? What makes them tick? Finding out the answers to questions like this may sound tedious and even excessive, but having a concrete image of your target buyers will help you attract more actionable leads and convert more customers.

Share This Ebook!





WHAT DO THEY VALUE MOST? **WHAT ARE THEIR GOALS?**

When people *feel* something, they often *do* something. Emotion is one of the strongest motivators, so ask yourself: what gets your customers excited? What gets under their skin? What spurs action? What do they care about, and what don't they? Understanding what your buyers like, and more importantly, what they value, is essential in appealing to their interests and attracting their business.

Next, determine their goals. Are they hoping to be taught? Entertained? Informed? Whatever your buyers' goals, work to help each person achieve them as quickly as possible by providing a targeted, well thought-out, user-friendly experience—tailored to them.

Share This Ebook!





WHERE DO THEY GO TO FIND WHAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR?

Asking where your customers go to find what they need, in general, but especially online, is key to understanding where, and how, to target them. Find out where your buyers spend their time.



Is it on social sites like Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn? News sites? Search engines? If so, which search terms are they using? Also try to determine who, and what, your buyers trust most. Are they more confident in the opinions of friends and family or industry experts?

Share This Ebook!





WHAT KIND OF EXPERIENCE ARE THEY LOOKING TO HAVE BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER BUYING?

People have very particular expectations for particular situations. Having an understanding of what kinds of expectations your customers have about their shopping experience will help you gain, and retain, more customers. How do your buyers want to be presented with products and services? Do they want simplicity or more information? Do they want to go straight to the checkout cart or do they want help from a representative?

“ **Finding out who your business’ buyers are makes an enormous difference.** ”

For eCommerce sites in particular, understanding buyer persona is key to marketing effectively, improving user-experience, creating web design that sells, and writing content that converts.

Share This Ebook!



How to Create Content Your Customers Will Love

Content is King—okay, we won't go there again. We've all heard how important content is, and it's certainly not "king" for nothing.

In order to drive traffic to your site, you need to have more than just content—you need great content. And while creating original, quality material can be difficult for the average site owner, eCommerce businesses face even bigger challenges when it comes to content.

With a high page volume and a propensity for low-word counts, eCommerce sites often struggle to create the kind of content capable of getting them—and keeping them—at the top of the organic search results.



Share This Ebook!



Luckily, there are a number of ways that eCommerce sites can generate great content and start seeing their rankings, and their sales, soar.



BUILDING OUT **THIN CONTENT**

For many sites it's the quality of the content that's the problem. These sites struggle to create high quality content that's optimized, fresh, relevant, and unique. But eCommerce sites have it even tougher: they often have to overcome issues of both quality and quantity.

Since eCommerce sites are image-heavy in nature, it takes conscious effort to rack up a high word count. When it comes to eCommerce sites, most of the content is found in the product depictions, which offer limited subject matter on which to feasibly write. How many words can someone realistically write about Blue Thomas the Train Bedsheets? How much would a customer even really want to read?



Share This Ebook!



The idea of writing a unique description for each let's say, duvet cover, that you sell, probably seems like possibly the worst time imaginable—up there with having a root canal or being stuck behind that person writing a check at the grocery store.

But it simply needs to be done.

Having thin, or worse, *no* content, is one of the biggest SEO no-nos. Build out thin content by writing quality product descriptions that add value to each page. Even if all you can manage is a few hundred words on each page, it's better than nothing.

Look at key metrics like page views, visits, and engagement to determine if your content and your pages are helpful and relevant to users. If your users see your content as quality, it's safe to say Google will too.



HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH? THE IMPORTANCE OF THINKING IN RATIOS

Because eCommerce often involves a greater focus on images, links, and even ads, it's not necessarily a question of word count. Instead, it's the proportion of a page's content in relation to what else is on that page. When it comes to content for eCommerce you need to be thinking in ratios.

UNIQUE COPY : OTHER PAGE CONTENT

Share This Ebook!



While an image speaks 1,000 words, Google needs to see at least some of those words in actual writing in order to recognize the value of a page and rank it accordingly.

Ask yourself: What's the ratio of unique content on this page? The content to link ratio? The content to ad ratio? The content to image ratio? Answering these questions will help you determine where you need more content and exactly how much is “enough.”



DUPLICATE CONTENT AND THE PROBLEM OF PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS

eCommerce sites in particular have suffered serious ranking drops due to duplicate content.



**DUPLICATE CONTENT. DUPLICATE CONTENT.
DUPLICATE CONTENT. DUPLICATE CONTENT.
DUPLICATE CONTENT.**

Many e-tailers often have a different product page for each variation of the same product. It may be tempting to take product descriptions and copy-paste them—simply substituting “red” for “purple” or size “small” for “large.” Having the same description even makes sense—each is essentially the same product after all.

Share This Ebook!



But while users may see each option as unique from the others, all Google sees is the same content, over and over. Duplicate content is a big SEO no-no, and eCommerce sights are not exempt from Google's scrutiny in this department.

First, if you directly copied a manufacturer's description for a product: rewrite it.

Secondly, a different page for each color mug is a recipe for a whole host of duplicate content issues, meaning multiple pages for different product options can cause serious problems.

“ **If you have directly copied a manufacturer's description for a product, *rewrite it.*** ”

Remove the risk of unnecessary duplicate content by replacing each separate but *slightly different* product page with the option to simply choose a color, a size, a shape, and more from a drop down menu.

This will ensure each page, and each piece of content, has unique and significant value to users and to Google.

Share This Ebook!





LEVERAGING USER GENERATED CONTENT

Having engagement from your users gives you honest feedback, but even better, fresh content. User generated content (UGC) is a great way to add unique content, especially for eCommerce sites without copywriters that are struggling to re-write product descriptions to regain their rankings.

tech Posts Age

Topics about technology: computers, gadgets, phones, cameras, the Intertubes, or any other IT aspects of the world.

Do you use a mobile device for ALL your work? Tell me how!	5	31 Jan
Robots are taking our jobs!	1	11 Feb
MAC vs. Mac and the misuse of words	5	4 Feb

3 year 0 month 0 week

movies Posts Age

Topics about movies and television, including reviews, news, commentary and other discussion.

What upcoming movie are you most anticipating?	4	4 Feb
--	---	-------

1 year 0 month 0 week

videos Posts Age

Topics about any aspect of online video. Discussions about movies and TV should be in the Movies category.

Most important Sci-Fi movie of the 2000's?	6	31 Jan
Charlie The Unicorn 4	4	7 Jan
What is your favorite TED Video	13	4 Feb
What was your favorite Superbowl 2013 Commercial?	4	5 Feb

4 year 0 month 0 week

general Posts Age

General discussion topics not specifically fitting any other category. If you're not

Product reviews, forums, comments sections, and discussion boards make it easy for customers to share their opinions, ask questions, get answers, engage each other, and more—giving your site free, fresh content and increasing your likelihood of conversion too.

Share This Ebook!



The Power of Rich Snippets

Recently, [rich snippets](#) have been gaining a lot of traction as an often overlooked, but incredibly effective, means of boosting your exposure in the organic search results; an essential SEO element on the rise.

Fantastic. That's great news... But what exactly is a rich snippet anyway?

Oftentimes in the world of SEO, a buzzword arises or a concept is deemed the “new big Internet marketing move,” all while most people have yet to learn what exactly that tactic, tool, or strategy even is.

Little Water Cantina - Eastlake - Seattle, WA
www.yelp.com › Restaurants › Mexican
 ★★★★★ 90 reviews - Price range: \$\$
 90 Reviews of **Little Water Cantina** "Three things are on my list when I eat out: great food, atmosphere, and [Vegetarian Vegan Pizza No Cheese\) Recipe - Food.com - 248865](#)"

Vegetarian Vegan Pizza No Cheese) Recipe - Food.com - 248865
www.food.com/recipe/vegetarian-vegan-pizza-no-c...
 ★★★★★ 2 reviews - 1 hr 32 mins - 242.9 cal
 Aug 26, 2007 – This is from my dad, who developed some **vegan recipes** esn't have any cheese, and you

Leonard Cohen – Free listening, videos, concerts, stats, & pictures at...
www.last.fm/music/Leonard+Cohen
 Watch videos & listen to **Leonard Cohen**: Suzanne, Hallelujah & more, plus 132 pictures. **Leonard Cohen**, (born September 21, 1934 in Montréal, Quebec, ...

Track	Duration
Suzanne	♫ 3:48
The Darkness	♫ 4:29
Going Home	♫ 3:51
Hallelujah	♫ 6:12

Share This Ebook!





WHAT ARE RICH SNIPPETS AND HOW DO YOU IMPLEMENT THEM?

Rich snippets are essentially microdata, HTML coded bits of information that make it easier for search engines like Google to comprehend what searchers are capable of inferring naturally.

When a user reads the meta description accompanying a link in the search results, they can infer things like names, places, products, and more. Things that search engine crawlers, no matter how much they've evolved—and they've definitely evolved—still can't quite separate from the other words in a sentence.

The screenshot shows the Google Webmaster Tools interface for the Rich Snippets Testing Tool. The page title is "Rich Snippets Testing Tool ^{Beta}". The main heading is "Rich Snippets Testing Tool ^{Beta}". Below the heading, there is a description: "Use the Rich Snippets Testing Tool to check that Google can correctly parse your structured data markup and display it in search results." There is a "Test your website" section with a text input field containing the URL "http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-hobbit-and-the-lord-of-the-rings-boxed-set-j-r-r-tolkien/1002078041" and a "Preview" button. Below the input field, there are examples: "Examples: [Authors](#), [Reviews](#), [People](#), [Events](#), [Recipes](#), [Products](#), [Music](#), [Applications](#)". There is a "Google search preview" section showing a search result for "BARNES & NOBLE | The Hobbit and the Lord of the Rings Boxed Set" with a star rating and price. Below the preview, there is a note: "The excerpt from the page will show up here. The reason we can't show text from your webpage is because the text depends on the query the user types." There is also a note: "Note that there is no guarantee that a Rich Snippet will be shown for this page on actual search results. For more details, see the [FAQ](#)." There are sections for "Extracted Author for this page" (Page does not contain authorship information) and "Extracted rich snippet data from the page" (book, title = The Hobbit and the Lord of the Rings Boxed Set, description = Available in: Paperback, Other Format. This four volume, deluxe paperback boxed set contains J.R.R. Tolkien's epic masterwork HOBBIT and the three volumes of THE LORD OF THE RINGS (THE...), type = book, uri = http://www.bn.com/w/the-hobbit-and-the-lord-of-the-rings-boxed-set-j-r-r-tolkien/1002078041, image = http://img2.imagesbn.com/images/13700000/13707117.JPG, site_name = Barnes & Noble).

Share This Ebook!



Let's look at an example of a Rich Snippet for an eCommerce

Product:



Awesome Lawn Mower

Company A

Even more adept at mowing lawns than our Original Lawn Mower, the Awesome Lawn Mower takes the act of trimming grass and turns it into an art form.

Category: Lawn Mower
Product #: 2341

Regular price: **\$259.99**

Sale: \$189.99

A person reading a description of an eCommerce product would be able to isolate terms like “Awesome Lawn Mower” and assign a meaning, like “product.” See a phrase like “on sale now,” and think “offer,” see a name like “Company A,” and conclude “brand.” While people are able to read, analyze and categorize all this information accordingly and almost immediately, it’s not always as easy for search engines.

Share This Ebook!



Here is the same content and product description, but with the rich snippet coding denoting the Product and Offer properties, so that Google can understand:

```
<div itemscope itemtype="http://data-vocabulary.org/Product">
  <span itemprop="name">Awesome Lawn Mower</span>
  <span itemprop="brand">Company A</span>

  <span itemprop="description">Even more adept at mowing lawns
than our Original Lawn Mower, the Awesome Lawn Mower takes the act
of trimming grass and turns it into an art form.</span>

  Product #: <span itemprop="identifier"
content="mpn:925872">2341</span>

  <span itemprop="offerDetails" itemscope itemtype="http://
data-vocabulary.org/Offer">Regular price: $259.99<meta
itemprop="currency" content="USD" />$<span itemprop="price">
189.99</span>
</div>
```

It may seem like a lot of symbols and words, but it's not too complicated once you get the hang of it. Essentially, all you're really doing is adding a bit of coding into the <head> section of your HTML. For more information on implementing Rich Snippets, visit [Google's Webmaster Tools](#).

Share This Ebook!





WHY ARE **RICH SNIPPETS** SUCH A POWERFUL TOOL FOR ECOMMERCE SITES?

Google wants to show searchers the most relevant results, and rich snippets help you show Google that you're relevant and by extension, worth ranking at the top of the results page by giving them all the information they need.

By alerting Google to what's a product, an offer, a price, it's availability, it's rating, it's reviews and more within your meta description, your pages will not only be indexed more accurately, but also ranked more highly, and displayed more noticeably. Rich snippets even help Google in embedding images into your search results too, which help catch searchers attention and drive even more traffic to your pages and your products.

When you're trying to get your eCommerce site, and more particularly your products, exposure in the organic search results—rich snippets are the perfect way to give your eCommerce SEO the extra boost it needs.

Share This Ebook!



Meant for Each Other: Why eCommerce and Social Media are a Perfect Marketing Match

eCommerce sites have brought products and services straight to customers like never before. Whether it's to save time, to cut back on driving, to find cheaper prices or more—the fact is: more and more customers today are shopping for products online.

10%
GROWTH EACH YEAR
2012 - 2017

According to Forrester, online retail sales are slated to grow 10% each year between 2012 and 2017. In fact, as more and more sales move online, growth in eCommerce is even expected to surpass the growth at local retail outlets within the next 4 years as well.

Share This Ebook!



This enormous rise in online shopping isn't just because of rising numbers of e-tailers alone—many local retailers have recognized that their customers shopping habits have changed and have chosen to move online along with them, making the online market more competitive than ever. That means in order for eCommerce sites to stay successful, it's essential they stay on their toes and ahead of the curve.



WHY YOUR ECOMMERCE SITE NEEDS A SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Surprisingly enough—or perhaps not so surprisingly—part of this steady increase in online shopping is related to the growing realization that social networks are, in fact, extremely powerful marketing tools for both brick-and-mortars and eCommerce sites alike.

Many eCommerce sites have failed to embrace social media and all that it can do for them, partly because they don't understand how it can relate to their industry or how to implement a campaign geared to get more than just likes and tweets, but actual, measurable results.



Share This Ebook!



Amazingly, nearly 20% of items purchased online happen after the customer has investigated the product on social media sites—which makes social media the perfect platform for eCommerce sites to boost their business and gain valuable exposure.

More and more customers are finding that Twitter and Facebook are two of the easiest ways to gather information on the companies offering the products and services

they're after. And many of these potential customers base their decision on whether or not to engage in business with you on what they hear from others online. That's why it's important to be monitoring what people are saying about you around the web, especially what's being shared on some of today's most frequented sites: social platforms.

20%
**OF ONLINE PURCHASES HAPPEN
AFTER A CUSTOMER HAS RESEARCHED
THE PRODUCT ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

By having a **Social Media presence** on these platforms you can help to create positive engagement and minimize any negative comments made about you and/or your products—boosting **customer loyalty** and fostering trust in potential leads.

Share This Ebook!



Having a social media presence isn't going to magically increase your revenue, however. That's not to say that you won't make any sales straight from your social media accounts. 44% of marketers have reported finding new customers on Twitter. But one of the great parts of Social Media, is that you just have to catch your prospective customer's eye enough to get them to follow you. Once you do that, they're 50% more likely to buy from you than one of your competitors when it comes time to make a purchase.

44%
**OF MARKETERS FIND
NEW CUSTOMERS
ON TWITTER**

Just like with any other Internet marketing strategy, there are many factors in play. Social media has a number of benefits that will factor in further down the line, but it's not simply a matter of getting your foot in the door—social media takes time, strategy, maintenance and more before you can start seeing significant results.

Share This Ebook!



3 Social Media Essentials for Every eCommerce Site

When it comes to social media marketing as an eCommerce business, there are three simple tips you need to ensure that you're getting the most out of your social media profiles.



BE VISIBLE

Far too many clients come to me with existing social media profiles that are nearly impossible to find. Integrating the profile with your website should be one of the first things you do after creating it.

LIKE

FOLLOW

Every website should have visible “Badges” that link to your profiles from your site. We've all seen Badges on websites; essentially, they're just JPG images that link to a specified URL. Instead, or preferably, in addition to these badges, you can add “Like” or “Follow” boxes, which, as long as someone is signed into their profile, will instantly allow them to follow your account.

Share This Ebook!



The downside to using these instead of “Badges” is that there is no standard size or look, each platform has created their own and when you put them all next to each other it can often make your site look unorganized or busy. Working with a designer to best layout your social media integration is key. As with any campaign, aesthetics, planning, and strategy are key. You don’t just want to throw them up there, make sure that your site design matches your brand’s image.

Don’t stop there, putting share buttons on your product pages and blog posts is essential too. By adding a share button it makes it easy for someone to share a link to a product that they like on their own social media profiles or to others through email. Most consumers are a bit on the lazy side, if you don’t provide these opportunities to share your products to them then most won’t share your product on their own!

Insider Tip

When implementing “Share” buttons, make sure that it opens up a pop-up box. This way they can comment on the link that they have chosen to share. This will greatly increase the chance of their followers seeing the update!

Share This Ebook!





KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

When a new client comes onboard there are standard questions that we ask during our first conversation. One of them is “who’s your target audience?” Far too often business owners haven’t invested time into understanding their audience and have no answer. In order to be successful in any online marketing campaign—especially a social media campaign—you first need to take a long hard look at your customers.

Once you have an answer to that question, the next step is finding out where these customers are spending their time are online. Do they spend time on Facebook or LinkedIn groups? Google+ Communities? Are there any forums that are popular amongst your clientele? Which platforms have been proven to drive results for your industry? That’s where you want to be.

Insider Tip

You aren’t restrained to creating a business page. Instead or in addition to, try creating a group or community! Once you’ve done this start asking questions and take part in conversations to start growing your authority in your industry.

After you’ve decided where to be then it’s time to start posting creative content for your customers.

Share This Ebook!





ENTERTAIN

The majority of people are using social media profiles to be entertained. This means that the spotlight is on you. First you need to know your brand! If you're still trying to figure this out then take a few days and think about the image you want to convey to others before you begin posting. When posting information about your products and business use photos, videos and the almighty attitude.



If you want people to follow you and share your content you need to catch their attention. It's important that your accounts have a consistent voice that your fans equate with your brand. Typically photos and videos have the best engagement rates as well, if you don't include them in your posts then it's likely people will often end up ignoring your updates. This can cause a problem on Facebook because their algorithm could then make your updates invisible to your followers. Asking questions in your updates and running polls help drive engagement too. Everyone has an opinion--ask your fans what theirs is!

Share This Ebook!



Many business owners make the mistake of thinking that the point of their social media profiles is to create leads and generate sales. This isn't true. For the most part, your fans won't always be in need of your product, so you want to catch their attention and engage them. Once you've done this then you're in their mind when they do need to make that all important purchase. More than 50% of consumers will purchase from a brand they are following online vs. the brands competitor.

Insider Tip

Want to draw eyes to an image? Create a quick meme! Using a free meme generator site such as quickmeme.com can add that extra 'tude needed to keep engagement up on your page.

If you haven't noticed it yet, there have been two interconnecting underlining themes to the above three points.

Know yourself and your audience.

Create easily shareable entertaining and engaging content that makes sense for your brand.

Share This Ebook!



Once you've done that then it's time to start establishing yourself as a community leader and expert in your industry. People will look to your profiles for entertaining and knowledgeable information, allowing you to stay top-of-mind when it comes time for them to start shopping.

How to Use Facebook Marketing to Boost eCommerce

Facebook has more active users than any other social media platform out there and is the second most visited site in the world. But how can you use Facebook to grow your brand and drive engagement?

Facebook is unique in that all pages have customizable "Tabs." On each of these tabs you can add your own unique content, from contests to storefronts to video streams— if you can think it up you can add it. The majority of Facebook's 1.11 billion users actively engage in applications every month, so if your business isn't utilizing apps, then you are missing out on a potential untapped market.



Share This Ebook!



When deciding on your application theme, it's important to remember that the best applications are the ones that allow you to share information, all while increasing interaction on your page. Keep the following steps in mind:

Don't take what your business does into account when creating the application, focus solely on what you want it to do. The point is to grow your Facebook audience, keeping it simple and focused will help this happen naturally.

After it's been created, focus on the aesthetics. If a lot of people are going to be looking at your page, it better look good. Tie in your brand by using your logo or colors from your site to emphasize your own particular feel and look.

Test it thoroughly before releasing it, so you don't risk losing fans.

Don't require the user to do anything for you. Don't ask them to click on a link, watch an ad, or make a purchase—engage them, don't bombard them with sales pitches.

Share This Ebook!



Entertain! Don't forget the primary reason your consumers are on Facebook in the first place is to be entertained. Using photos, videos, music and/or special effects are a great way to catch their attention; it's also a good idea to do this so that they share your app with their friends.

Give them something. People like to feel accomplished. Create some custom images that they get once they've completed the process, or give out a promo code.



4 EXAMPLES OF **SUCCESSFUL** FACEBOOK CAMPAIGNS

Here are some examples of business' that have used Facebook Applications to help grow their brand.

1. Be Playful With Your Brand

A number of brands have found that their customers love the opportunity to customize or even create products.

Share This Ebook!



To take advantage of this, creating an app where your consumers can either customize your current products or submit new ideas to you tend to be very popular.

On the [Ford Mustang](#) page there's an app that lets you fully customize your own Mustang.



[Victoria's Secret](#) recently ran a contest asking their fans to submit designs for a new beach tote. The winner won a \$500 gift card and now the company has a new product to sell this summer.

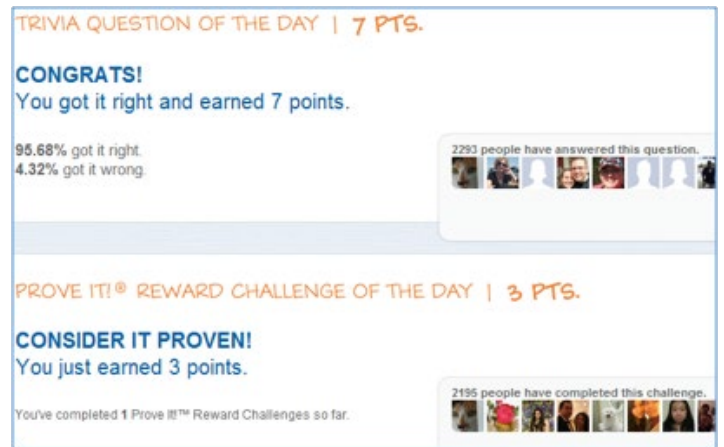


Share This Ebook!



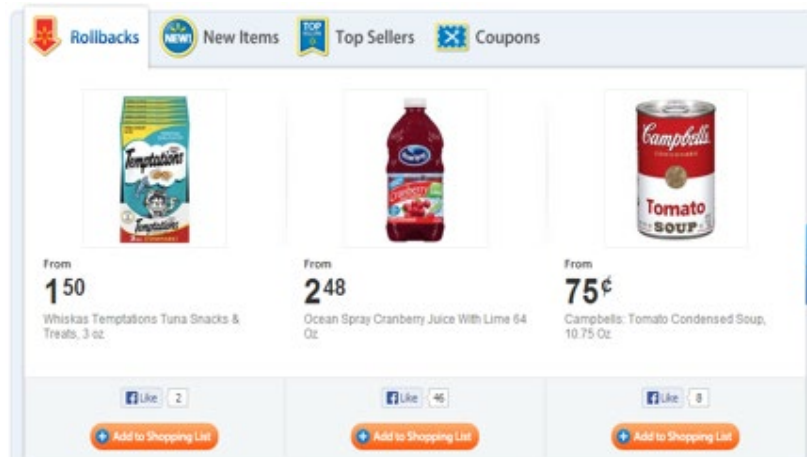
2. Engage, Engage, Reward

[Bioré](#) has a special app that allows you to answer questions and meet challenges. Every time you complete a challenge, answer a quiz question correctly or you get a few points. As you stockpile your points you can start cashing them in for Bioré brand goodies.



3. Be the Local Mom

If you have multiple locations then creating an app that your customers can view to learn about what's happening at their local store can be beneficial. [Wal-Mart](#) has created a great app that serves this purpose. Customers can see new items, coupons, and special deals. They can even create a shopping list to bring with them.



Share This Ebook!



4. Interaction with an Added Advantage

Get your fans to advertise for you! Offer a prize for a photo or video contest relating to your brand. [Red Lobster](#) offered a \$25 gift card or free lunch for a year to contestants who posted pictures of themselves eating the new lunch special at their local Red Lobster.

You can do anything with a Facebook application. Take the time to think about it and try it out. Remember: be playful and have fun!



Take the
RLunch
Challenge

Try a new \$7⁹⁹ **RL**unch Special.
Snap a pic. You could win a \$25 gift
card or free lunch for a year!



Share This Ebook!



How to Manage a **Profitable** Social Media Campaign

Starting out with a full-scale social media campaign can be overwhelming. Like most parts of life, a helping hand is the key to success, and there are a number of 3rd party services that are ready to work with you to make the most of your campaigns.



MEDIA MANAGEMENT

Keeping track of what's happening on all of your accounts can become a daunting task, especially if you're trying to sign in and out of your social media accounts all day long so that you can monitor activity and post fresh content. The best thing to do is to find a management service that you feel comfortable with and stick with it.

Before deciding which service is right for you you'll need to answer a few questions first.

1. What platforms am I utilizing?
2. Do I need to manage content on your site as well?
3. Do I need help designing new pages on my site?
4. Do I need help analyzing website traffic?

Share This Ebook!

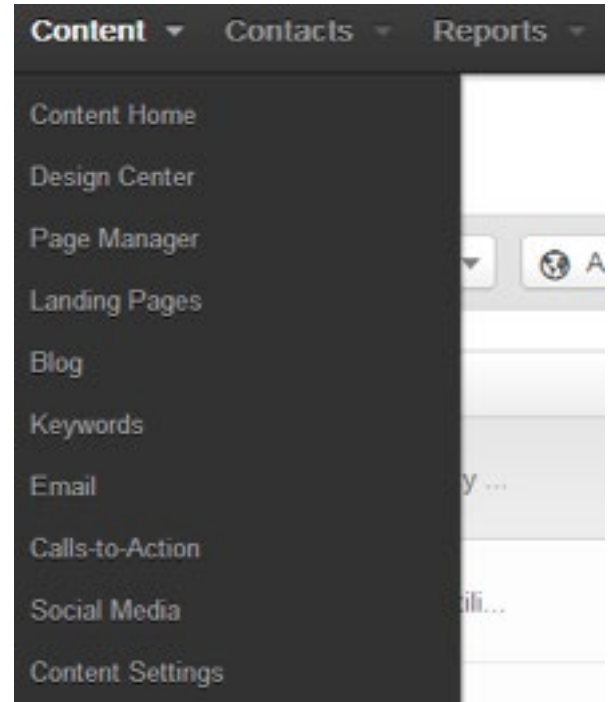




THE CONTENT CREATOR

If you're looking for an all-inclusive service that will help you do all of the above then using a service like the one offered by [HubSpot](#) would be a good choice. With a HubSpot account you can manage and monitor what's happening on your Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn accounts.

Unlike with many other automated posting services though, you can also manage other parts of your website straight from your dashboard. Being able to manage your social campaigns from the same place that you post content to your site, design new pages, monitor analytics and more is a need that many have. Without having to sign in and out of multiple accounts you can save a great deal of time, not only that but by having all of your information in one place it allows for some great reporting capabilities.



Share This Ebook!





THE MEDIA MAVEN

If you're planning on utilizing a number of social media platforms and expect to be conversing throughout the day then [HootSuite](#) is a great option for you.

The Hootsuite dashboard (pictured to the right) is customizable to your needs and allows you to track keywords, messages, streams and mentions all in one place. You can also of course schedule your posts for a variety of platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn and more.

You have access to more than the main staples listed above. HootSuite's app directory allows you to add in even more accounts, to monitor and/or post to including Tumblr, YouTube, Instagram and Pinterest.



For those of us that love analytics, the HootSuite customizable reports are wonderful. They have over 50 different modules that you can add into your reports allowing you to easily track your social progress across all platforms. There's a reason they're considered to be a top dog in the media management industry and since they offer a free version of their platform I would suggest that everyone try it out.

Share This Ebook!





THE OVERACHIEVER

For those of us who want to do even more, there are business' out there who have created unique products to add onto your current campaigns in order to help you generate leads.

PinMail by the great team at PinLeague, for example, has devised a way to leverage your Pinterest account to help create [profitable email marketing campaigns](#). When you sign up with PinMail you need to already have an email list in place. Once the team has this information they can find out which of those people are already on Pinterest and what their interests are based on the Pinterest activity. This allows you to create targeted email campaigns based directly on your customer's interest.

These emails aren't just limited to Pinterest either. For your customers that prefer to stay on Facebook the PinMail team can create emails based on the clients interest that encourage them to like or comment on certain posts. Thereby directing more fans to your Facebook page and increasing your engagement!

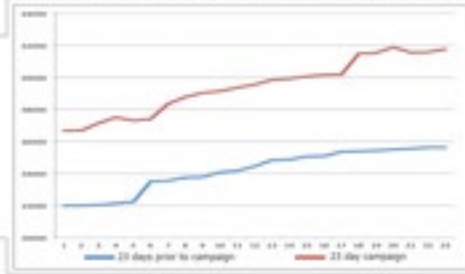
Share This Ebook!



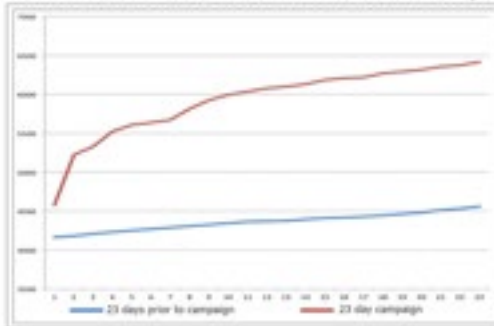
These marketing campaigns have proven to be very profitable according to some case studies that PinLeague has released. Check out these stats from one of their campaigns below:

Repin Growth Before and After Campaign

Engagement Growth:
 Daily average growth pre-campaign: **134.7**
 Daily average growth post-campaign: **170.2**
 Average monthly repin growth of **224%**
 Repin count went from **35,630 to 41,842**
 Total engagement on Pinterest went from **88% to 94%**

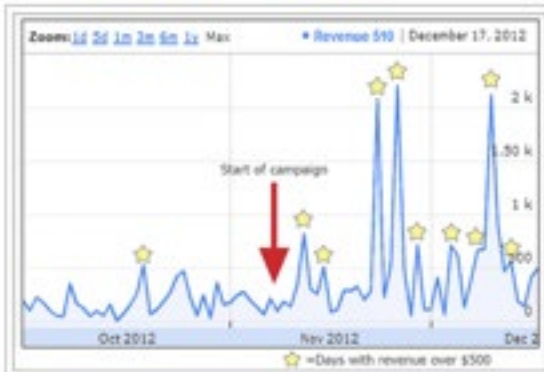


Audience Growth Before and After Campaign



Follower Growth:
 Daily average growth pre-campaign: **18.7**
 Daily average growth post-campaign: **69.2**
 Average monthly growth of **419%**
 Follower count went from **4,560 to 6,606**

Revenue Growth



Revenue Increases:
 Daily average pre-campaign: **\$200**
 Daily average post-campaign: **\$537**
 Average monthly growth of **204%**
 Revenue grew from **\$5,145 to \$15,656**

Share This Ebook!



Everyone knows that offering discounts to your followers is a great way to grow your online fan base. But what about rebates? The team at [Social Rebate](#) has devised a way for eCommerce sites to profit from the need all customers have for a great deal.

All you have to do is add their product to your shopping cart, then everytime someone makes a purchase they will immediately get a pop-up offering them a rebate up to a percentage of your choosing in exchange for sharing their purchase on their social media channels.

You choose a max limit on the rebate then for every time your customer



shares the post that you create in a predetermined period of time they will get part of the rebate back. They even have the option to earn more when their friends click on the link back to your site.

The above business' are just a sampling of options available to online retailers and there are always new start-ups cropping up. In order to stay up-to-date on the most recent offerings I'd suggest.

Share This Ebook!



Conclusion

Driving organic traffic to your online store doesn't happen overnight, and it doesn't come with a one-size fits all approach. It requires an on-going commitment to SEO, an innovative approach to social media, and of course, taking strategies like these and customizing them to your own business.

Ultimately, the eCommerce sites that win are the ones that don't rely solely on PPC, or any one marketing channel for that matter, and instead recognize the long-term viability of organic exposure.

By building your online presence in organic channels such as search and social, you are safeguarding yourself against sudden shifts in the market, such as the Cost Per Click of a keyword skyrocketing and exceeding your budget.

Also, you are building your brand by acquiring customers from inbound channels that build brand loyalty among your customers and help generate future upsells and referrals.

The value of organic traffic is undeniable. Yet many eCommerce merchants fail to take advantage of it because they're impatient. But if you give yourself a few months to implement these strategies, you will see your inbound traffic and your revenues explode.

Share This Ebook!





Get a Free Internet Marketing Assessment and Strategies That Have Boosted Sales for 1,500+ Businesses!



National Positions is an industry-leading online marketing agency that's helped many brands large and small increase their online visibility and grow their business.

Contact National Positions today and receive a 100% free marketing assessment from industry experts!

[Request a Hubspot Demo](#)

[Free Marketing Audit from National Positions](#)