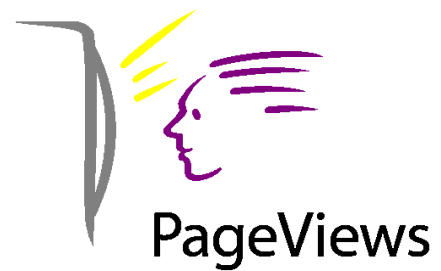


# B2B Search Engine Optimization and Marketing

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## Document Summary

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### Overview:

People turn to search engines to research what they are looking for. Studies consistently show that 80-85% of web users find websites they are looking for through search engines. Search engines help make sense out of the millions of web pages available. The challenge with this is that there are millions of pages that will never be found because of a myriad of issues including the actual construction and promotion of the site. The research firm BrightPlanet released a report claiming that there are more than 500 billion individual documents on the web. The NEC Research Institute states no single engine is indexing more than 60 percent. Many B2B sites fall into this category.

Research indicates more online purchases originate from search engine listings than any other source (NPD Group). Customers find websites primarily through search engines — more than email, banners, or any other promotional strategy. Not only that, search engine listings outperform banners for brand recall, favorable opinion rating, and purchase origination (NPD Group). Reputable SEO companies depend on a number of tactics to help their clients find success with their search engine visibility. Link building, keyword analysis, search engine submission and verification, in-depth analysis, and monitoring ensure a solid search engine strategy.

There are several ways to ensure success in the search engines. The following paper presents ten straightforward techniques that will turn your B2B company's website into a powerful lead generator.

## Introduction

It is getting more difficult and expensive to get in front of B2B buyers and to keep the sales pipeline filled with qualified prospects. Direct mail and print costs are on the rise each year and are difficult to measure.

Telemarketing is getting regulated out of existence. Email is more often than not viewed as spam – If it gets through the filters and lands in the intended recipients mailbox.

In the spring of 2007 research firm Marketing Sherpa conducted an observational study of the search engine optimization of *the web sites for the 44 largest business software firms in the U.S.* These are technology companies with ample budgets and presumably web savvy to understand the importance of SEO. Their findings were that **28% of them were not adequately search engine optimized for the keywords central to their business.**

These big famous companies did not appear anywhere in the first page of organic rankings for their technology type, in a marketplace they dominated.

The lesson? No matter how famous your brand, you may be able to get better rankings and traffic, not to mention brand perception among prospects if you outsource to an expert.

### Consider this:

- 36% of search engine users believe that the companies whose websites are returned at the top of the search results are the top companies in that field.
- 62% of search engine users click on a search result within the first page of results, and 90% of search engine users click on a result within the first three pages of search results.
- 82% of search engine users claim that when they launch a search that does not yield their desired result, they re-launch a modified version of the original search using the same search engine as they used for their initial search. This indicates the importance of getting found for “long tail” keywords. You have to get found for your top search keywords or you are invisible.

**Business to business marketing is easy to get started but to be successful at it you need more than a text ad, a web site and a credit card.**

Many of the popular keywords in the Google Adwords program are so expensive it is next to impossible to have a positive return on investment. 10% of Google marketers pay an average of \$12.62 per click! The moment you stop paying for the ads the leads stop. Setup and management of a pay per click campaign is time consuming and labor intensive. Still, according to a 2007 ad spending survey conducted by Outsell, Inc. Online Advertising Penetration will exceed 90% in 2008.

The length of the sales cycle, target market attributes, different goals and strategies make the entire B2B marketing challenge different from B2C models. B2B products and services are more expensive, have longer sales cycles, more than one person is involved in the decision and the sale itself does not typically take place online. B2B search engine optimization and search engine marketing is done for lead generation making the importance of measuring results even greater.

Some B2B products are sold like B2C goods. For example, some commodity goods like paper may be purchased online. The consumer visits a site, adds a ream of paper to a shopping cart and checks out.

It is important to understand that the B2B sales cycle is longer and that you must reconnect with the potential buyers at multiple points in the buying process. In this manner, reaching prospects at different times of the buying cycle dictates creating keywords and keyword phrases that are used in different stages of the prospects research.



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Unlike B2C marketing where you must understand who the buyer is, in B2B *you must also understand what the roll of each person involved in the purchase is.* This means mapping out the buyer roles of each person involved in the purchase and mapping out the keywords or phrases that each one would be interested in at different stages of the sales cycle.

Because the B2B sale is often complex and an expensive business decision made by several people, each in a different role, it is important to provide these decision makers as much information as possible when they are

looking for it. The B2B market is much harder to focus on because you are selling an entire solution and not just a product. Marketing a solution requires more documentation through white papers, video demonstrations, screen shots etc. Support materials can and should be made search engine friendly.

## Target Audience

Search marketing for B2B companies is very different from B2C marketing. There are a limited number of prospects and their experience with making similar purchases varies. With over 85% of all business buyers using the internet during the purchasing process, it is critical to implement a search engine marketing strategy to reach even the smallest of niche markets.



B2B companies who engage in search marketing must consider both high experience and low experience buyers for their solutions. This means that focusing on their niche requires expanding past buying ads on Google. While this may reach the buyer with a low experience, high experience buyers or someone further along in the purchase process may have a greater tendency to turn to a niche or vertical search site such as Business.com or ThomasNet.

Ideally everyone within the company works together to achieve the search engine optimization goals. Usually this is tasked to the technology team because they have been the closest to the web site content and functionality. A better fit is for the marketing team - the people who know the customer and their online behavior best to be supported by the technology team.

## Professional Site Audit

Every well executed Search Engine Optimization Program begins with a thorough understanding of the web sites construction, needs and unique challenges. Most B2B marketers are juggling many responsibilities including online and off line marketing programs. With the search engines continually changing their algorithms and SEO best practices quickly evolving along with search marketing competition it makes sense to get an outside opinion. With SEO Services “one size” does not fit all. Therefore, we rely on a comprehensive SEO Needs Analysis Report to discover your unique requirements and outline all the necessary services that will deliver a successful result.

## Keyword Research

People who are making a consumer purchase are emotionally involved in the purchase. Those making a B2B purchase are making a purchase that is a part of their job. The purchase becomes a rational decision rather than an emotional one. As a search marketer this means that the purchaser is further removed from brands and base their decision on the real needs and benefits the product provides. Because of this, search marketers must focus more attention on pain based keywords. Words must be chosen to reach the buyer at different stages of the sales cycle and reflect the solution or the pain they are experiencing. For example, to the seller of CRM solutions this means being found under words that appeal to both the pain based keywords: *organize sales leads* and the brand name for the person who has a better understanding of what exists: *Salesforce customer relationship management*.



The traffic your site attracts is directly controlled by your keyword selection and the ad copy written for pay per click campaigns. Frequently B2B companies are content with top rankings in the search engine results pages for words that are not converting to leads. More clicks increases costs and do not necessarily mean success in generating quality leads. Keep in mind that the best words are the words that are being used by prospects and customers when they describe your product/service and the solutions it provides. A quick way to find the best converting keywords is to run a pay per click campaign across a broad range of keywords and monitor what works best.

## Server Issues

Even if you have a site perfectly optimized for search engines, if they can't get into it because the server has been banned or is set up incorrectly, your site will never get ranked well in the Search Engine Results Page (SERPs). Common issues are servers using 302 redirects telling search engines that a specific page or entire site has been temporarily moved. Many servers inadvertently deliver duplicate content.

## Competitive Research

One successful search engine optimization method is to analyze on-site and off-site characteristics of top ranking pages for the keywords you want to be found under. By analyzing competitive sites you can identify what they are doing well and where they have left the door open for your improved site to overtake them.

## Site Construction

Most corporate websites are created to look good and make updating as easy as possible. Unfortunately, many of these sites have elements such as flash, databases and frames that hinder the engines ability to crawl, read and index the pages of the site. Every language including HTML has its own grammar, vocabulary and syntax. If a page does not follow these rules, the search engines are restricted from parsing the code of your site to find the relevant content. If your code contains errors, search engines may not be able to find everything on each page resulting in lower rankings for the keywords on the page.

## On-Site Optimization

These are the factors that you can control on your website. This is what most people think of when it comes to website optimization and primarily consist of HTML Elements. Unless you are ready to blow up your site and start over, optimization must be done page by page for a set of words, usually one to two words per page. Unless you are prepared to rewrite each page, you must optimize each page for the content that already exists on the page.

## Content/Copy Writing

The only thing that search engines can read is words. If best practice SEO is implemented and the site presents frequent updates and useful original content, it will obtain a significant amount of organic search traffic. When a site has useful content, other webmasters will naturally place links to the site, increasing its popularity and flow of visitors.



Each page should contain at least 250 words and be optimized for the main “theme” of the page focusing on only one or two words per page. If you have more keywords than pages, the best option is to create more pages with useful content. If your product provides solutions for several different industries it may make sense to create a new site with unique content and keywords to enhance the customer experience and deliver the right content for the target user.

## Off-Site Optimization

There are only so many on-site factors you can optimize to help your rankings. Off-site optimization simply refers to the things that are off your site but influence your page ranking. Incoming links determine a pages link popularity. However, popularity is only part of the equation. All major search engines also take into account the quality and context of

the links to establish each pages reputation. The more popular and the better the reputation the higher you will be ranked. Inbound links from directories, niche sites, vendors, customers, articles, press releases, social media sites etc. all contribute to your popularity and reputation. The *inbound links to your site must be from relevant sites using the correct keywords as anchor text* – the link you click on, to be of maximum benefit.

## Website Analytics

With some simple math, you can determine exactly how much a customer is worth to you so you can maximize your revenue. By monitoring the incoming and outgoing traffic, using web analytics, to see which parts or pages of your site are popular trends, such as one specific page being the most common exit point can be identified. Unless we spend the time measuring our activities and documenting them there is no way to understand what is working and what is not. Measurement allows you to identify successes and expand on them.



## About Us

Years of experience, discipline in best practices and innovative thinking are what separate Page Views, Inc. from average online marketers. Since 1998, Pageviews has been delivering turnkey search engine marketing solutions to customers that want honest, no B.S. (*blue sky*) answers to their search engine optimization challenges.

We specialize in working with B2B companies and understand what it takes to get top search engine ranking results for the words your prospects and customers are searching for. We stretch your marketing dollar and improve your ROI by leveraging your PR or ad agency creative to deliver a consistent message that attracts qualified traffic to your site from the search engines.

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