Chapter 8
Digital Marketing Optimization

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ABSTRACT
Digital marketing is a proliferating field that has opened new challenges for marketers. These challenges address concepts of website navigation, searchability, and garnering online traffic—issues that are critical to any organization’s online presence. This chapter identifies website characteristics, studies the role they perform in the context of an organization’s virtual presence, and proposes the creation of a framework that aids organizations in optimizing their digital marketing strategies for better return on investment.

INTRODUCTION
The web has become a place where many live, play and work. It is the ultimate customer empowering environment and in the emerging world of ecommerce where customers are surrounded with myriad choices, organizations are faced with a challenge of meeting consumer expectations in a highly competitive world. In the new digital marketplace, consumers are using mobile, interactive tools to become instant experts on product and service offerings and their relative merits as they decide who to trust, where to make their purchases and what to buy (Berman, 2012).

Consumers can access a virtually unlimited selection of products, brands, and sellers. They can switch brands or try different products in a single click. However, consumers have limited time and unlimited choice. They would naturally stick to the Internet merchants who meet their needs and provide quality services (Cheung et al., 2005). Recent statistics showed that 80 percent of the highly satisfied online consumers would shop again within two months, and 90 percent would recommend the Internet retailer to others. On the other hand, 87 percent of dissatisfied customer would permanently leave their Internet merchants without any complaints.

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The Internet and web technologies created a new and unprecedented environment to govern-ments, businesses, educational institutions, and individuals enabling them to webcast any information using multimedia tools. We are seeing a proliferation of websites with enormous amount of information (Hassan & Abuelrub, 2008).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The foundation of every online business is the e-commerce website that it creates. Once the website captures the attention of the visitors, they should feel the need to explore further. This feeling comes with good design, speedy navigation on the site and easy to understand instructions. The e-commerce specialists know these facts and therefore, they have the right kind of tools with them to “read” the mind of the users and to set up a site that would be beneficial to the client. In such scenarios, the experts look at the already running website and try to determine the reason for the lack of traffic (Ezinemark.com, 2013).

The Digital World

The internet has been identified as the world’s fastest growing market place with an enormous increase in the globalization environment for marketing products and services (Domains, 1999). Projected estimates indicate that the worldwide internet population may reach 1.35 billion by the end of current year (Internet World Stats, 2010; eTForecasts, 2004; Gong et al., 2007). The internet today has been hailed as the single most important invention of the 20th century and digital marketing is transforming companies, customization and advertising (Majumdar, 2010). There seems to be rapid adoption of the internet by consumers for various purposes, including information search and online shopping (Ranganathan & Ganapathy, 2002).

Consumer behavior has changed dramatically in the past decade. The present day, consumers can order many customized products online, ranging from sneakers to computers. Many have replaced their daily newspapers with customized, online editions of these media and are increasingy receiving information from online sources (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2009). If nowadays, experts want to identify the most profound influences on consumer behavior in recent times, the answer would be the internet. One reason the internet is dramatically changing consumer behavior is that it helps us to search more easily and efficiently than ever before (Roger et al., 2006).

According to one report, internet household penetration in India reached 42 million households in 2007 (Internet Usage, January 2009), and there will be about 10.5 million broadband households in India by 2011 (e-Marketer.com, January 2008). Worldwide, more than 540 million people now have Internet access.

Websites

The very first website was posted in August 1991 by Sir Tim Berners-Lee (Lawson, 2009). There were 130 websites on the Internet in 1993 and 47 million websites were added to the Internet in 2009 bringing the total number of websites on the Internet to 234 million (Pingdom, 2010). This shows how fast the Web is spreading worldwide. The number of people using the Internet is growing exponentially world over. There were 1.8 billion Internet users by the end of 2009 representing 26.6% global penetration (Internet World Stats, 2010). The Internet is a virtual library containing an unlimited amount of information. Anyone is allowed to publish and access this information. The websites are not monitored, edited, regulated, or approved (Brown, Hickey, & Pozen, 2002).

A consumer’s intention to purchase specific products may vary greatly, and hence predicting general intentions to adopt the internet for