Chapter 2
Technological Background
Knowledge to Use the Internet as a Marketing Tool

ABSTRACT

Websites are the cornerstone of digital marketing, the online premises of brands and companies, therefore, this chapter focuses on them. Making web design decisions stretches far beyond personal aesthetics, and there is compelling evidence that customers respond and evaluate the overall online experience differently even when a slight detail is changed. This chapter reviews the school of thoughts and models that apply to strategic website design, from the marketer’s point of view. Later, we present the main concepts on Search Engine Optimization, since it is significant to website success and tightly bonded to the website architecture. The chapter concludes with a glance at fundamental metrics, as an effort to explain and decode how website related decisions are quantified, measured, evaluated and related to marketing objectives.

Questions

- Why are over-confident marketers threatening website success?
- Which are the 7 dimensions of a website?
- There is always a catch: what is it?

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- Why is the website personality crucial for our internet marketing decisions, and why is this so important for the brand experience?
- How many layers do websites have?
- How can we know what constitutes a positive web experience for our user?
- How do the search engines measure relevance and importance?
- What is the golden rule of Search Engine Optimization (SEO)?

CONSUMER CENTERED EFFECTIVE WEBPAGE DESIGN AS A MEANS TO INCREASE WEBSITE REACH AND LOYALTY

In the physical brick and mortar world, the website can be regarded as the equivalent of the store window; but in this new era, with so many dot.com businesses, on plenty occasions the website is the whole store itself. Designing and updating a complete and useful website is not a matter of choice any more (like brand presence can be sustained without any digital presence), but a decision that determines the present and future success of brands, since consumers are migrating online and mobile in their overwhelming majority. According to livestats.com (2016), more than 3 billion people around the world have access to the internet today- a figure approaching 50% of the world population, while, back in 2006, internet penetration was as high as 17.6%. In the United States, 88.5% of the population have access to the internet compared to 79.3% in Europe. Figure 1 presents the countries with the highest internet penetration in 2016 with islands, small countries and Scandinavia to be leading the table:

In fact, probably everyone we know has access to the internet. This understanding clearly calls the marketers to quickly adopt- if not done yet- an online marketing strategy, starting from building a website that meets their stakeholders’ needs. In this process, a strong synthesis between technical and marketing know-how is required; no part can produce a sufficient and competent outcome without the other. This is due to the website being a multifunctional tool as it serves, amongst others, diverse functional/ informational, sales and marketing and social/ relational purposes. Its success is the sum of integrated technological, design, business and marketing excellence. As proposed by Smith and Chaffey (2005, p. 172) a website may have 3 levels of objectives:
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