

# Web Based Marketing

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## The Big Idea

In the mid 1990s, the markets were shaken as the internet found its way into private homes. In fear of missing out, many panicked corporations took action despite lacking clear strategies. Yet others seized the opportunity and profited from the implementation of up to date strategies. The big losers at the market were those corporations which employed classic concepts destined to fail in the new market environment of the internet era. Almost immediately after the IT-boom with its typical online marketing was understood, a new discipline was introduced: Social Media Marketing.

Every corporation knows that the market constantly and rapidly changes. If there were to be a basic principle of economics, it would be the fact that corporations do not remain unaffected by constant technological and sociological development. And social media is the showcase field of such development, as it combines modern technological advancement with a serious dose of sociology.

## **Intended Learning Outcomes**

The aspect of marketing strategy enjoys a special part in this course. The students are to learn that online-campaigns must be based on existing marketing strategies. The goal is to communicate how strategies defined by the corporation can be realized into actions, in such a way, that they remain strategy-compliant.

In order for students to select the appropriate instruments, they are introduced to the most important channels of online-marketing. We will begin with the corporate website, which faces special challenges in today's communication-era regarding its content. Another aspect is the corporation's discoverability on the internet, causing us to introduce students to the field of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) / Search Engine Marketing (SEM).

In the course's essential part, students are to be brought closer to the area of social media marketing. The purpose is to teach students the criteria according to which they are to select the necessary social media channels. Based on a chosen social media channel, students are to learn how to devise a plan for adequate social media involvement.

## **Strategy**

In the Balanced Scorecard a corporation's strategy and vision are listed at the top, "strategy" referring to the corporation's main goal. It is provided by the upper levels of management and serves as a kind of mission statement of the corporation. All corporate activities fall under this regard, including all of marketing, as well as communication, subsidiaries of strategy. Hence all marketing- and communication-activities must be strategy-driven. If activities, actions and operational budgets are not part of the strategy, they are detached and to be considered sub-optimal.

Inevitably, web-based marketing must adhere to the predefined strategic guiding principles in terms of planning and execution to the point of harmony. In a corporation which lacks strategic specifications, web-based marketing will fail to yield results and thus becomes a blind flight.

The first challenge a person in charge of online-marketing faces is to understand the strategic specifications and to translate these into online actions. This is not limited to formal guiding principles such as corporate identity. A special focus lies on the method of external communication and product-strategy.

## **Process of strategy formulation**

The corporation's visions and goals recorded in the main strategy must be formulated in such a way, that an individual taking on the responsibility of web-based marketing can understand them and translate them into strategy-driven actions. If the corporation lacks such formulations, it is the duty of those in charge to discretely create them prior to planning web-based marketing.

## **Planning**

Planning of web-based marketing must consider two components simultaneously: On one hand the instruments available in the field of online marketing must be known. The large variety of available instruments often makes oversight a challenge, especially since the addition of social media. On the other hand, available resources must be taken into consideration ahead of employing respective online-instruments. Social media channels are considered to be especially resource-hungry.

As part of this planning, a prioritization of respective instruments is to be performed. Prioritization should particularly lean on compatibility with the strategy, meaning: Online-instruments which best correspond with the strategy's idea should be preferred.

## **Implementation & Rating**

Successful implementation of plans into action depends on good planning. Another important aspect of implementation of plans is keeping a journal of actions taken. These are to enable a more efficient repetition of action at a later time. It's also the only way to avoid mistakes in the future and can further be used to make note of "lessons learned" and repeat successful actions.

Supervision is essential during the implementation. Figures and metrics play a role in supervision. Indicators such as visits and page impressions are often useful in classic online-marketing, yet these traditional online-figures are nearly irrelevant when it comes to social-media-activities. Other indicators are of importance, which can reveal the success of a social-media-campaign and reach far beyond visits and page impressions.

## **Web Based Marketing**

### **Introduction**

Web-based marketing includes all online measures for achievement of an economic corporation's marketing goals. When selecting instruments, the corporation has access to all possibilities of the internet. Categorization takes places as follows:

Bought/Paid: Most corporations can directly purchase their web-publicity with the help of external online-service providers. Instruments in this category include banners (classical online marketing), Search Engine Optimization (e.g.: use of purchased AdWords from Google), social media advertisement (e.g.: Facebook Ads), as well as for example press releases. These procedures, being tied to a predefined budget, are usually limited in duration.

Owned: This category defines a corporation's ability to create their own channel. In this case, the instrument itself is owned by the corporation. The advantage of such a procedure is the fact that the complete supervision and the rights remain with the corporation. Examples are corporate blogs, bulletin boards and Apps.

Earned: One of the greatest challenges corporations face in the era of the social web are provisions which spread themselves – usually due to viral sharing by the online community. This category primarily refers to activities in typically external social-media-sources and -networks, such as for example currently Facebook, Twitter, Bulletin Boards, Blogs, Google+ and YouTube.

## **Corporate Website**

In the social web age, the website no longer acts as a corporation's mere business card or product booklet. Traditional advertising messages, advertising slogans formulated in typical marketing lingo and digitally beautified product pictures result in consumer distrust. This is primarily due to the huge availability of consumer generated content. Using video- and rating portals such as forums, consumers often discuss, review and rate products more authentically than the manufacturers themselves.

The user's purchase-decisions no longer depend solely on the corporation's website. According to a survey conducted by TNS-Infratest, 90 percent of consumers rely on the entirety of the web to do their product research. Even if this research leads consumers to the corporation's website, consumers will often continue to seek further information from other sources.

Henkel concerned themselves with this issue in the early part of 2011. An analysis revealed that every year there are 16 million google-searches regarding "Hair". One important finding was that the inquirers weren't primarily interested in products, but sought solutions instead.

Thus traditional websites must compete with the abundance of information offered by the social web nowadays. For the most part this information includes:

- Background-information
- Answers to specific questions
- Personal and authentic user reviews
- Experienced data
- Solutions

Users demand more and more relevant content instead of advertisements, causing traditional corporate websites to face new challenges.

Another technical and sociological challenge corporations are facing is the aspect of cross-linking with other social-media-platforms. By now consumers have gotten used to entering discussions with corporations, rather than simply consuming the information provided by corporations. The comment-function, link to the corporation's own social-media-channel, as well as real-time chats are all aspects which can be found on corporate websites these days.

## SEM/SEO

### Definition

Search Engine Marketing (SEM) includes all measures which contribute to a website based on HTTP being efficiently listed as a result to popular search inquiries. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) are measures involving the target-website, which help provide SEM the necessary technical framework.

### Introduction

General search-engines such as Google have made it their goal to index all information available on the internet. Given the large amount of automatically indexed information, search-engines are forced to present the user with a quality list of results. Search-engines attempt to better service users by making calculations based on the inquiry which are then used to rate some websites higher than others. This means that the goal of a search-engine goes beyond simply listing quantitative information. User satisfaction achieved by listing relevant information is key. This is also a main reason for Google's success.

Delivering relevant information means that the search-engine is forced to rate websites based on relevance and quality. Thus search-engines, including the market-leader Google, use specially designed algorithms to perform automatic rating of websites.

### Natural Listings

Websites which are already well-known and more importantly ones that are frequently linked to by other websites (for example large corporate portals such as businessweek.com, cnn.com) will automatically receive a high rating and even land at the top of the result-list for certain inquiries. A website highly rated by search-engines has the advantage that it doesn't cost anything and can be found by keywords. Creation of websites which will receive a top spot in the result-listing of natural searches on Google must however meet certain requirements. At this point in the course, students will learn the most vital and up-to-date rating-criteria used by Google.

### Sponsored Links

Corporations which seek to obtain a top spot in search-results have the option to purchase a position relating to the search. However, sponsored links are separated and marked as such. Google for example does this by highlighting the result and adding "Sponsored Links". At this point in the course, students are to receive a short introduction relating to the topic of "Sponsored Links".

## Social Media Marketing

### Social Media Audit

These days Social Media has gained significance across all departments of a corporation. Many departments make use of the instruments of the social web. However, this may lead to interference and double-actions. Thus a social media audit becomes necessary. Social media audit is a method of rating and reviewing social-media-channels already implemented by the corporation. A social media audit will further determine whether a corporation has already set strategic goals. If the corporation is lacking such goals, a formulation of goals must be performed.

### Formulation of goals

The social media manager or person responsible for online-marketing must go on a quest to find out whether the corporation already has existing plans and goals regarding social media involvement. Should such goals not be defined, it is his or her duty to define holistic plans and goals for social media involvement as part of the social media audit. This includes designing the message, reputation, and image such engagement in social media shall reflect.

Social-media-measures can be issue-oriented, meaning that the corporation determines the need to intervene with the social web due to a negative or positive impact of their target-audience. Such acute cases, especially regarding negative impact, can often stem from pressure originating from the top levels of management.

Only after such preparations can a success-driven action take place in the social web and additionally controlled and measured.

### Identification

As part of a social-media-measure, a clear analysis of the social web must take place. Such analyses should take place individually according to the corporation's inquiries and should define the target audience. This enables a goal-oriented approach. Before initiating the social media involvement, the target-audience appropriate corporate social media channels are selected (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, Corporate Blog, Forum).

### Planning

Prior to active measures being executed in social media, such as through social media marketing or social-media-communication, a proper process of planning must take place. At this point in the course, students will learn which processes must be incorporated in this act of planning.

### Action

Social media involvement can essentially be defined as direct involvement of the corporation into the activities taking place in the social web. This involvement may consist of one or several social-media-activities. In essence, it is the desired activity which defines the planning.

## Social Media Measurement

During the action it is important to monitor operating figures in order to stay in control. This ensures that the responsible person will recognize early on whether the set goals will be reached, or whether adjustments during the involvement are necessary. If discrepancies are detected, corrective actions during the action become necessary.

A measurement also serves the purpose of recognizing factors which can ensure the project's success afterwards, for example through use of Key Performance Indicators.

## Didactic Concept, Schedule, and Assignments

### Launch: Class Lecture No. 1

- There will be an introduction of the course, and the schedule of the whole course will be shown by the lecturer. The 2nd part of the course will be the overview to the three aspects of web based marketing "bought / paid", "owned" and "earned".
- A classic website will be shown where classic advertisement language is being used. And then, a much more up-to-date website will be shown, which takes into account that communication and content since social web has changed.
- Introduction to strategic aspects of a company will be shown. In this occasion, some social media channels of enterprises will be compared, whether they follow a strategy or not.
- Comparing 360°-Marketing with a 360°-Social-Media-Marketing – in this occasion, recent and important Social Media Channels will be introduced
- Introducing Principles of Marketing and Strategy Implementation

### *Paper (2 Pages): Creating a Marketing Strategy*

1) The students will have to choose a business of their choice. An existing business and must describe the business briefly.

2) A communication strategy for this business must be created.

### Social Media Marketing: Online Lecture No. 1

- The students will receive feedback for their paper. Several pages of the paper will be presented by the lecturer as screenshots or similar. The lecturer will discuss the pros and cons of the ideas that were presented by the students (constructive and also critical feedback).
- Feedback and questions from the students will be discussed and answered by the lecturer.

- Main aspects of social media communication (service support, listening process, entertainment, competitions, objectives, target groups, content and value, timeline, roles and responsibilities, communication guidelines)
- Discussing the social media strategy
- One of the major role playing social media channels will be introduced. The students will prepare 10 advantages and 10 disadvantages for using this channel for marketing purposes in compliance with their created communication strategy. The pros and cons will be prepared in break outs online. Also, a scoring table will be presented by the students.

Meeting room: <https://webconf.vc.dfn.de/wbmol1/>

*Paper (5 Pages): Marketing Plan*

The students will have to create an engagement plan as homework:

- 1) Workforce: how many people must be engaged in the workforce, how much time will they spent?
- 2) What are the success rates for a good engagement in this channel? What do you have to do, in order to call your this involvement in this channel a marketing success?
- 3) How can you measure your success?
- 4) When will this channel will be ready and successful (what is your time schedule)?

Maximum: 5 sheets

### **Case and Practice: Online Lecture No. 2**

- The lecturer will answer questions, which have come up so far. Feedback will be provided.
- Different social media channels will be presented.
- Social media guidelines
- Social media engagement process
- Online break outs: Case will be given with a certain question:
- Identify the right social media channel for this case
- Develop a plan how to engage

*Paper (1 process graphic): Marketing Process*

The students have to prepare a process for their individual process containing the whole marketing process

### **Measurement: Online Lecture No. 3**

- Introduction: Search Engine Optimization / Search Engine Marketing (SEM/SEO)
- Introduction: measurement methods
- Break outs: starting to complete the whole marketing plan for the final results



## *Paper: Online Marketing Plan*

The students will have to develop a report, which will contain of 3 parts.

Completion of the whole paper in one sheet:

- 1) Business and communication strategy (already done)
- 2) Marketing plan (already done)
- 3) Keyword identification for SEM/SEO
- 4) Measurement of the success (new task)

In order to do this, the lecturer will present a measurement methods for success. The measurement of the success must be based on the communication strategy.

## **Examination**

The marketing plan paper serves as base for the grade.

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