How can brands use SEO to capture new users and markets?

The tale of the online giants can largely be put into two boxes. The first box is the Amazons of the world – you create a landing page, the landing page ranks and you control a new sector of the market.

The second box is the online giants that don't need SEO. This latter box is based more so on success than failure however with questions such as "well, what more could we do?" or "where's the value in it?" the second being a particular point for brands with big budgets for their Google Ads campaigns.

Now, while these points aren't without merit if you run the world's biggest shampoo brand and you rank number one for the word shampoo you might wonder where else you can go.

Well, with effective CRO, SEO research, market share analysis, and technical optimization, the answer is just about anywhere.

Large scale websites online

Quite simply the scale of data available online provides bigger brands, particularly in the ecommerce industry, with so many numbers that it can at times be difficult to attribute

organic search traffic to business performance without running through multiple channels of content groups, product groups, and user definitions.

However, by simplifying the data in the first instance, and therefore uniforming tracking across business, the top level statistics provide the basis of obtaining a share in new markets.

1. Content definitions on Google Analytics

Use URL or page rules to build content area data on Google Analytics – this can work right through to a product level and will tell you some key points.

Firstly, and perhaps more obviously, you'll get to understand the areas of a website that perform better across the basic metrics. Whether it is page views, organic landings, or time on site.

Dig deeper and you'll find highest converting pages, for ecommerce this will, of course, include values. Now, this is helpful as it will immediately identify large subsets of data on performance from the entrance to conversion, that can then be investigated for improvements.

This can also be linked with internal data to work out profit based on the target conversion rates (or missed profits where there is none).

2. Query data in the Google Search Console

The Google Analytics data should then be paired with the Google Search Console data to determine which subset of content on site is performing best in SERPs.

This again will give you top-level impression data but more so it will identify issues with the types of keywords you're ranking for, whether these are voice first, buying terms, or position 0. What this provides, paired with the above, is an ability to understand your users (or potential users) in the research phase, therefore identifying where your business currently sits.

3. Search volume data

Now simply pair this with search volume data and seasonal trends. This will highlight any areas where search volume is high but traffic (or engagement once onsite) is low.

This might seem obvious, but large brands (in my humble experience) can sometimes fall victim of looking inwards at what they have and not always what they could have on top.

Pair monthly volume data with the average value and you'll get an estimated value of each content segment on your site vs actual value to a business.

4. Build a data studio dashboard

Google Data Studio is going through somewhat of a revolution and all of this data can be connected to give you insight to your brand data.

Utilizing blended data layers will give you the ability to merge all of the above for auditing and highlight where changes (or additions) to online campaigns can be made for an organic benefit.

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Auditing your data

1. Using your dashboard

At each point of your research and marketing planning, you would be looking at data in the account from Google Data Studio.

Using filters in the account will allow you to target subsets of data that correspond to the needs of your business.

Depending on the immediate needs the Google dashboard timeframe feature can be extremely helpful. For example, using it to identify current campaign patterns by day of the week, around television or news advertising will give you immediate feedback.

Long term attribution modeling will tell you more about how these campaigns impact your KPIs. Then, pair it with ranking and search data to know what planning should be included in your next campaign.

2. Looking at user behavior

Next, it is important to identify user behavior within the data and ask questions around whether one group of users are interacting differently with certain content groups or campaigns, if this is impacted by device type and whether you should be looking to identify in more detail specific quirks such as behavior flow through the website.

For example, if search volume for a group of search phrases is 10,000 but you only see 100 users per month on your website, losing a potential increase in business, you can audit the data to identify:

- Positive vs negative rankings
- Search terms and seasonal trends
- Online changes to match the above
- Organic CTR (Click-through rate)
- Organic impressions

This, simply, can be merged with the data on average sales to account for potential revenues.

Phase one

*Search volume * organic market CTR*

Phase two

*Potential traffic/average conversion rate * value*

= Potential market value at your current site conversion rate

Of course, this is way before we even consider UX.

Conversion types: Do they differ across markets?

Finally, once you've captured the 32 percent of organic uses from position 1, there is a need to ensure how different users also convert (or if they're even converting), whether search trends match these conversion types, and where the great exits before conversion are.

For example, if you capture 90 percent of a market for a specific product, but only 10 percent of market sales then there could be something wrong with any of the following:

- The conversation path
- The product
- The intent of search terms
- Device use
- Buying terms' rankings
- The overall user experience on site

Now by auditing this data and understanding what you lose through attributable blended data, you provide yourself with an opportunity to outline core areas to not only shape the campaign but shape the brand itself.

The power of the data should not be underestimated.

Driving change at the end of this, there is a need to highlight change and for me, that is very simple. Once you've

identified the value of the search group, you unlock the value to the business.

If one keyword has a potential value of £10,000,000 per year and you rank page two, should you really be going after just the long tail variants? SEO in 2019 looks to be driven by Google search platforms coming into their own for marketing managers and SEO agencies. So watch this space.

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