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Seven smart ways to upgrade your ecommerce content marketing strategy

30-second summary:

- A marketing strategy that focuses on a unique target market is called a niche-hub strategy. Create a niche

website and document its progress.

- Use content formats that boost audience engagement and are easy to produce, such as blog posts, videos, lists, webinars, etc.
- People engage more with a site that loads fast. Therefore, improve site speed by using affordable options such as cloud storage and AMP.
- User-generated content makes your brand more personable. Engage with your audience by embedding their comments into your article, running contests, giveaways, or using a hashtag.
- Country of origin affects consumer behavior. Consider a country-specific blog content strategy to acquire traffic from specific countries.
- Make use of reverse content Pyramid strategy. Create one piece of “pillar content” and repurpose it into other pieces of content. Finally, distribute them on relevant social media platforms.
- Invest in dynamic Facebook ads and use the IGTV feature of Instagram to engage with your audience and convert them into consumers.

One of the best ways for ecommerce businesses to enhance their business presence is via content marketing. Around 92% of businesses consider content as their business asset. It’s no wonder that content marketing can offer up to three times more ROI as compared to paid search. However, a majority of ecommerce companies fail at content marketing. Here are the top seven ways to upgrade your ecommerce content marketing strategy:

1. Use the most popular content formats

The easiest way to identify the success of ecommerce content marketing is by measuring user engagement.

Every human thinks differently. Hence, you should create different content formats for the various needs of the users.

The below content formats have been proven to be most successful in enhancing user engagement:

- **Blog posts**: Companies that blog regularly produce 67% more leads. Create relevant, engaging, and comprehensive blog posts by targeting long-tail keywords that match the exact intent of the user.
- **Videos**: 82% of all internet traffic will be videos by 2022. Hence, text-based blogging will slowly be replaced by text+video blogging. Create videos for every blog post and prepare transcripts for every video.
- **Research articles**: Content related to original research that offers new and actionable insights for the audiences are the most linked. Conduct research by taking surveys or running tests and share the results with your audience.
- **Images and infographics**: People rarely share blog content without images. The scope of engagement is also limited. Hence, you should always create high-quality and customized images for your blog. Content with images receives 97% more views. Similarly, infographics are a great content choice because they cover heavy topics in an easy to understand way. People share them on social media leading to high engagement.
- **Webinars**: The average registration number of a webinar is around 260. You can run webinars by inviting popular influencers in your niche to increase the flow of registrations. Webinars are educational, and they help to convert viewers into customers.
- **Lists**: People love lists. Create listicles like top 10 or best ways and share them on social media. Listicles are psychologically seductive because it condenses the information into several points.

To have an idea about the best content format for your

website, you can take the help of Google Analytics. Here is a guide to add GA on your WordPress blog. Once installed, you can start tracking the traffic, bounce rate, and time on the top pages of your site. The information provided by Google Analytics can be used to identify and optimize the content on your site.

2. Adopt the niche-hub blog strategy

The niche-hub strategy focuses on making your ecommerce blog a resource for a niche topic.

The first step is adding a blog to your online store. WordPress is the best platform to start your blog because it offers different plugins to manage all your tasks.

Next step is choosing a web host to store all your blogging files. It is crucial to choose a web host that offers a strong uptime. Providers like GoDaddy are considered highly reliable, with more than 99% uptime.

For instance, if you are selling mugs online, then your blog can become a resource containing articles, videos, whitepapers, podcasts related to mugs.

For example, HubSpot is a niche for anything related to marketing, sales, support, and website. They create content that is relevant to the audiences of HubSpot.

Leveraging this strategy, they can acquire millions of traffic to their site. You can create a niche blog and start nurturing traffic to gain more customers.

3. Improve site speed for better UX

Site speed is a crucial ranking factor. If you are looking for a hack to raise the organic rankings of your content, then

take steps to improve your site speed.

Google Page Experience will be launched in May 2021. The update focuses on improving UX and site speed is an important factor under Page Experience.

The best way to improve site speed is to use a CDN. However, for small business owners, it becomes difficult to host content on a CDN because they are costly.

If you do not have great website traffic flow, your cost of CDN won't be justified.

In such a case, emulating the working of a CDN with cloud storage can be an affordable option.

All you need to do is to choose a cloud storage provider like Sync, Google Drive or P Drive and make all your files available for direct public access (leaving the confidential ones that are blocked by robots.txt).

Another great way to increase page speed is to create AMP versions of your content. AMP stands for Accelerated Mobile Pages. Here is a great guide to creating your first AMP page.

4. Involve your audience to create UGC (user-generated content)

UGC (user-generated content) is one of the best ways to generate buzz for your ecommerce brand.

85% of people are influenced by user-generated content (UGC) as compared to brand content.

You can start a photo or video contest on social media and ask audiences to share their best pic with your product.

You can get audiences to interact with your brand via branded hashtags, and the added visibility will help you to capture

more audiences.

For instance, the Sudbury Wolves hockey team ran a contest on Instagram to persuade people to share a caption for a photo to win two tickets for the opening match of the Ontario Hockey League. This is a great way to enhance brand visibility and consumer engagement.

Similarly, Adobe ran a campaign called the ArtMaker Series where they invited designers and artists to share their artwork created using any of the Adobe products. They used the UG content for product promotions and expert endorsements.

You can use UG content to upgrade your ecommerce content strategy. You only need to think of some innovative ideas and apply them to your main strategy.

5. Create country-specific blog content

Cross-border B2C ecommerce is expected to reach $4820 billion by 2026.

If you are an international seller, you should consider adopting a country-specific blog content strategy.

Country of origin affects consumer behavior. Here are some of the ways to make this happen:

- Share content that is locally relevant to your audience.
- Create articles written by local authors.
- Promote local products produced by local manufacturers.
- Target local events and reap in local influencers to market your content.

For example, Shopify creates country-specific blog content to target customers. Here is an example content piece that was written to target consumers during the IPL season in India,

which is considered to be a big event. The content was targeted for sellers and helped them gain insights on how they can increase their sales on their Shopify store during the IPL season.

6. Leverage the reverse content pyramid strategy

The Reverse content pyramid strategy is suggested by Gary Vaynerchuk. This strategy is useful to repurpose content to different channels.

You create a pillar content and distribute it on several channels by revising it according to the theme of the platform. For example, you can create video content and convert it into other content formats like an article or a podcast.

Besides, you should create lots of ‘micro-content’ to drive traffic to your pillar content piece. These micro-content pieces should be shared on social media platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other

channels where your target audiences are present.

For example, if you are a pet store owner, then you can create a long-form pillar content piece related to ‘small dog breeds’. After that, you can create several micro-content pieces on every dog breed mentioned in your pillar article. Micro-content can take the form of memes, quotes, or stories. All these micro-content pieces should link to your pillar content.

Now, you should share all these micro-content pieces on your social channels. Get insights from the community and create community-driven micro-content that your audiences would love to see. Redistribute the second round of micro-content. The reverse content pyramid model is a great way to strengthen the popularity of your pillar content, which would help it to rank for several related search queries to reach customers during their buyer journey.

7. Elevate social engagement and reach

Ecommerce businesses present on social media platforms have, on average, 32% more sales than businesses without one.

The key to social media is visual content such as infographics, images, and videos. For ecommerce businesses, social media is not just a destination for posting content but a powerful means of converting followers into consumers.

As per Sprout Social, 89% of marketers use Facebook in their brand marketing efforts. And, more than 80% of people say Instagram helps them discover, research, and decide to purchase new products and services.

Use the following latest Facebook and Instagram marketing strategies to elevate engagement and reach.

- **Invest in Facebook Dynamic Ads:** Dynamic ads allow merchants to reignite interest in consumers who visited your website, checked items, or added items to their cart. It utilizes the information provided through the tracking pixel to show those visitors the exact items they checked to pull them back in and earn a conversion.
- **Use Sales options on the Facebook Business page:** Create a “Shop” button on your Facebook business page to list several products that allow consumers to purchase merchandise directly from Facebook.
- **Start Using Shoppable Posts on Instagram:** Shoppable Instagram posts allow you to showcase your storefront within the social network. You can tag the products shown in your images.
- **Use IGTV feature:** IGTV gives you the ability to share videos that are up to an hour-long. It also notifies your followers when you share a new video. IGTV allows viewers to tap items they see in videos and complete their purchase through Instagram’s direct checkout feature or the seller’s website.

Conclusion

Ecommerce businesses should use content marketing to their advantage because it is one of the most ROI-friendly channels to attract relevant customers. Follow the strategies discussed in this article to upgrade your content strategy and grow your brand awareness, traffic, and eventually, profits.

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More about:

https://www.searchenginewatch.com/2020/12/17/seven-smart-ways-to-upgrade-your-ecommerce-content-marketing-strategy/

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Google: Keyword-Heavy Titles Not Against Our Guidelines

via @MattGSouthern

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Crowd marketing: A link building method that only 2% use to rank higher on Google

30-second summary:

- Link building still plays a prominent role in SERP ranking, even in 2020.
- Crowd marketing is a technique that is based on building backlinks on forums and communities.
- Most people don’t use it, and you can take advantage of that.

Crowd marketing: What’s that?

Crowd marketing is one of those often neglected link building methods, that can give you a competitive edge in Google ranking. It is often called forum or community marketing because that’s where those backlinks come from.

In this article, we’re going to discover why this link building strategy is still useful in 2020, the best practices to apply, and things to be aware of. Stay tuned!

Content created in partnership with Crowdo.

Why would crowd marketing benefit your SEO strategy?

There are tens of thousands of **niche-relevant forums** with a large number of visitors and great metrics. Crowd marketing does not only provide pure SEO gains, but also indirect benefits. Some of the advantages are as follows:

- **A stronger and diversified backlink profile:** Links from niche-specific forums can strengthen and diversify your backlink profile. As an outcome, you'll rank higher on Google Search.
- **More views and more brand awareness:** You will get a lot of eyes on your website which is great for brand awareness.
- **Increase in website traffic and prospective customers:** Since we're interested in targeting very specific online communities, you can expect an inflow of traffic to your website, and possibly more leads and customers.

As mentioned above, this technique has been largely underestimated, and that's actually great! That means you can take full advantage of it and **possibly outrank your competitors.**

Digital community marketing and its types

There are a dozen sources that could be relevant to perform crowd marketing campaigns. Those include but are not limited to:

- **Blog (comments section):** Heavily overused and no longer effective way of building backlinks. Why? Because blog

comments aren’t usually moderated well, meaning that it’s an open book for spammers, and that’s not what we are after.

- **Social media and Q&A Websites:** Once again, probably effective for brand awareness, not so much for a boost in SEO. Why? Again, low moderation and the fact that all the links from those platforms don’t build up any authority of a backlink profile.
- **Forums/communities:** Bingo, we’ve just reached our sweet spot! There is a multitude of forums for every niche, with real human visitors and a high emphasis on moderation and helpful content. That’s what we’re after, as links from those sources can give you a solid boost in SERP.

Forum link building: A checklist and best practices

1. Search for niche-relevant forums

Context is king, and this rule holds for link building as well. Make sure to do a thorough search and handpick only those communities that discuss subjects relevant to your niche.

Here are some tips that can help you along the way:

- **Avoid the so-called "hello threads"** where people greet each other and discuss literally everything. Those are useless for SEO purposes.
- **Search for niche-relevant forums**. Let's say you have a car shipping business – you should only search for resources that discuss vehicles.
- **Keep in mind, that there is a limited number of websites relevant to your business.** No need to be upset though, because you can also find relevant threads on common forums. For example, if you trade cryptocurrency – you can search for specific threads about crypto on IT forums.
- **If you find any local websites, that's even better.** If you offer a local service and you happen to find a digital community right in your area – that's an additional bonus point for backlink building purposes.

2. Look at the amount of traffic

You should target popular websites with real human audiences. Websites that receive a high volume of traffic and user engagement look trustworthy in the eyes of Google, and can also put your business right in front of your target audience.

You can use tools like SimilarWeb to estimate the amount of

traffic a website receives. There is no right and wrong here, but at Crowdo we would advise you to aim for forums with at least 30,000 visitors per month. Usually, it’s not a good sign if a forum does not receive a lot of traffic, this may indicate that it’s no longer active or it became a hub for spammers with no human audience whatsoever.

3. Look at the metrics (here we go, SEO nerds)

When you decide whether a certain forum will be useful for your backlink campaign, make sure to take a good look at its website metrics. Let’s have a short overview of the important metrics to keep in mind:

1. **DA/DR:** This figure indicates the overall strength of the domain. The higher, the better, try to look at websites with 50+ DA.
2. **TF:** This metric is based on the trustworthiness of a website, based on the **quality** of its referring domains. For example, links from educational websites or Wikipedia would have a much higher ranking weight, than links from social profiles.
3. **CF:** This figure is based on the **number** of referring domains. It is useful to see how trendy or viral the webpage is, but it does not say much about the quality

of information.

4. **PA/UR:** This metric is calculated the same way as DA, but limited to a specific webpage. It comes in handy when you’re looking at a particular forum thread, as it’s a separate page (hence a separate URL).

4. Check whether a forum is properly moderated

In our case moderation refers to the extent to which forum content is being reviewed/removed by admins, as well as their tolerance towards self-promotion or even spam.

Whilst you can use tools that assess the “spam score” of a

certain website, it’s better to stick to your judgment. Just spend some time and skim around the forum, look at what people post and what they talk about.

If you see tons of lookalike comments that include the exact same promotion, poor wording, and links, this is a warning sign, that the forum is not being moderated, and thus probably contains a lot of spam – this clearly is a *“no go”*, because backlinks from those websites are toxic and will do more harm than good for your SEO in the long-run.

On the other hand, forums with aggressive moderation will never let you place any link, even if it fits the context and the discussion. To conclude, medium moderation is usually preferable, because it means that a link can be included ONLY if it’s relevant.

Action time: Writing solid forum replies

Now you know everything you need to pick decent websites for link building. Yet, you’re not a guru of crowd marketing if you don’t know how to use them properly.

Let’s take a look at some do’s and don’ts when it comes to posting replies with a backlink to your website.

DO’s:

1. **Use proper language, grammar, and jargon if applicable**. The word “crowd” is here for a reason. If the community you’re targeting uses specific vocabulary, then use it as well. Proofread your comments and check for any grammar issues.
2. **Analyze the discussion before posting anything.** Your comment should blend in with the rest of the thread. Make sure to read other user’s replies to get a better idea of the subject matter.

3. **Link back to your website in a natural way.** Once you've written a solid comment, use this chance and include a backlink naturally. Use appropriate anchor text and don't even try to do clickbait or push users to visit your website aggressively.

DON'Ts:

1. Attempt to hide a backlink. This is black hat and will be punished by admins (or even by Google, if used excessively).
2. Use software for mass posting. This doesn't work anymore and will likely get you a Google penalty.
3. Copy-paste the exact same answer template with your link. Context surrounding the link is important, so make sure it's unique and sound.

Forum links: dofollow or nofollow?

"Nofollow links are useless" is probably one of the most common SEO misconceptions you will ever come across. In fact, having a natural mix of dofollow and nofollow links is very beneficial.

It is already confirmed that Google treats "nofollow" as a hint, that can potentially result in higher rankings, depending on the context, anchor text, and the referring domain. For example, everyone claims that Wikipedia backlinks are useful, although they're always nofollow.

The main takeaway is

If you see that all the links posted in a particular forum have a nofollow tag, that's not a reason to quit, as they might still be helpful for your ranking. Other than that, people click on the links regardless of their tag, so for traffic-generation that does not play a role at all. Just ensure that not all of the backlinks you build are nofollow, because this also doesn't send Google the right signal.

Crowd marketing: So is it black hat or white hat?

The technique itself is entirely organic and white hat if you use it the right way. Basically, any SEO method can be turned into black hat if it's abused.

For example, the same words can be said about outreach guest posting. If you genuinely reach out to website owners, propose interesting content, and use the opportunity to build a few links – that's great and won't ever get you penalized.

Now if you're building a blog network solely for link-building purposes (for example, PBN), this is a black hat scheme that won't go unnoticed.

The same logic can be applied here. If you're writing genuine and helpful replies, that benefit the community and include relevant backlinks to your website, then you're doing everything right. A well-carried crowd marketing campaign is not based on spam or volumes, quality is still key.

Don't try to fool Google and use automated software and spam all night long, because that's black hat and that's punishable.

That’s great but looks like there are so many things to keep in mind…

Crowd marketing is definitely time-consuming! Let’s just summarize some of the things that you need to set up for a successful crowd marketing campaign:

- You have to do a lot of research to find relevant forums and communities.
- You have to check their metrics, traffic, and level of moderation.
- You will have to create an account for each of them. In most cases, you’ll also have to build up some reputation before posting any links (or anything whatsoever).
- In some cases, you will have to pay a membership fee to join an online community.
- You have to search for niche-specific threads and write helpful replies for each of them.

As you can see, this does require a lot of time, resources, and dedication. That is why more often than not, SEO enthusiasts prefer to outsource this task to reputable link building services like Crowdo. There’s no one restricting you from doing this yourself, but soon you’ll find that it’s hard to do on a large scale.

In any case, don’t fall victim to shady backlink providers or freelancers, who are willing to do the job for cheap. You’ve just seen that doing it “the right way” is not easy, so if you see suspiciously low prices, that often means that either software was used or no research was carried along the way. Both of these will diminish your genuine SEO efforts.

Conclusion

We hope that you've learned everything there is to know about forum link building. If you would like to leave this job to professionals, you're welcome to check what Crowdo has to offer with a 10% discount, exclusively for SEW readers!

If you want to find out more about forum link building, make sure you read their latest report here.

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More about:

https://www.searchenginewatch.com/2020/12/15/crowd-marketing-a-link-building-method-that-only-2-use-to-rank-higher-on-google/