

Internet Marketing for Contractors & Builders:

How to Triple Your Sales by
Leveraging the Power of
Online Marketing

Bob Vance

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my parents who have always been so supportive of everything I do. Thank you to my Dad for helping me grow and become the man that I am today. And thank you to my mom for always encouraging me to chase my dreams and never settle for anything less. Without the support and friendship of many family and friends, this book nor my success in digital marketing would have been possible. Thank you to everyone, you know who you are.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book is based on real world experience and case studies of companies across the country who are working with Home Remodeler SEO and who have doubled, tripled, and 10X'ed their revenue by leveraging the power of the Internet and getting their online marketing right.

The content contained in this book is based on years of experience and implementation of the best online marketing strategies employed by clients of ours in residential and commercial construction and remodeling, custom home builders, roofing contractors, windows installation companies, and many other home services businesses.

We are thankful for all of our home improvement clients that put trust in us initially and gave us the opportunity to handle their digital marketing and show what we could do in terms of elevating their online visibility and driving increasing revenue for their businesses year over year. We look forward to getting that opportunity to help your business triple their revenue too!

I also want to sincerely thank all of my wonderful clients that had trust in me to help guide their company's marketing efforts, and to hone and perfect my craft by working with their business. Watching your businesses grow and become more & more successful through the years brings me immense joy. Thank you for your confidence and support.

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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

In this book, we are going to do a deep dive into how you can triple your sales by leveraging the power of the Internet and getting your online marketing right for your residential or commercial contracting business.

Maybe you own a home services focused business, a home remodeling or custom home building company. Or perhaps you run a commercial construction firm that is looking to take advantage of the Internet's reach. This is the book for you if you're looking to take your company to the next level.

But first, I want to thank you for buying this book and taking an interest in how you can leverage the power and reach of the Internet in order to grow your business. It's great to see how many business owners are interested in growing their business and leveraging the power of the Internet to the fullest potential. Statistics show that 97% of consumers turn to the Internet in order to find the products and services that they're looking for, so it's no wonder that residential and commercial construction experts and contractors of all types have realized the advantages of driving brand awareness and more opportunities via the Internet.

I'm excited about what I have to share in this book, and I want to emphasize that this book is based on case studies and real life examples of clients that we've worked with.

All marketing strategies talked about in this book are extremely effective in helping you drive more revenue by a wide margin.

This isn't me throwing out hype either.

It's truly based on other commercial and home services businesses that we've been able to help double, triple and even in some cases 10x their sales. Imagine going from only 2 or 3 calls a month to being able to generate 10, 20, even 100 calls a month. I'm here to tell you that it's possible.

All of the information presented in this book is based on actionable tips that you can immediately implement for your company and feel confident that, if implemented correctly, these strategies will have an undeniable impact on the growth of your company.

Have you ever wondered?

I will start by asking you to indulge me on a thought exercise: have you ever wondered what it would be like:

- To have a dominant online presence that positions you as the top contractor in your specific industry and in your geographical area?
- To have a continuous stream of qualified prospects calling your business on a consistent basis because they found you online?
- To know that you were leveraging the power of the Internet to its fullest potential, in terms of generating exposure for your website and your brand, as well as generating more opportunities and more profit for your company?

What You'll Find in This Book

As you read this book, you will uncover:

- A blueprint covering the most important online marketing media that you should be tapping into for your residential or commercial contracting business.
- How you can get your residential or commercial contracting company ranked on page one of Google for the most important keywords for your service area.
- A proven strategy for getting ranked on the Google Map listings in your market.
- Our step-by-step strategy for getting more repeat and referral business by leveraging social media.

Again, it's based on real world examples and case studies of other residential or commercial contracting companies just like yours.

In some of the most important areas of your online marketing plan, I've provided in depth step-by-step detail and have separated it out into specific sections that give you actionable steps to implement for your own business.

What We Do

We are widely accepted as the premier experts when it comes to digital marketing for contractors, home remodelers, and residential or commercial construction professionals.

This is what we do. We specialize in working with residential or commercial contracting companies and

managing their Internet marketing strategy. We're not a generalist type of marketing agency where we work with clients from any and every industry. We chose to become experts and to hone our craft specifically for contractors,

both residential and commercial, and across several contracting industries that typically have a lot of overlap.

The most important takeaway is that we have gained our expertise through experience, through working with countless numbers of contractors just like you all across the country. We have been able to help companies go from relative obscurity and having no placement online in the search rankings to the point now where they're dominating their market. A lot of our clients have doubled, tripled, and even 10X'ed their sales by getting their Internet marketing right.

So, everything that I share with you from a training perspective is based on our real world marketing strategies that we implement for companies just like yours. Our expertise comes from experience and anecdotal proof that you can count on when it comes to growing your own company.

Our Marketing Strategy Overview

Here it is in a nutshell. We start by setting you up with a mobile responsive website, and then we ensure that you're optimized for the search engines in terms of user search intent, writing compelling content that engages your target client, managing your blog to keep you currently relevant in your markets, updating your social media profiles and building awareness through engagement, developing your authority via citation development, link building and reputation management, tracking your online rankings and progress, and then

quantifying your results to ensure you are driving a positive Return on Investment for your digital marketing efforts.

And we have an entire team dedicated to helping you become successful online. Our talented staff includes dedicated account managers for every account, content writers, SEO experts and link acquisition specialists, web designers and graphic designers, as well as experienced authorities in social media and pay-per-click marketing.

Working with You

Obviously, we would love the opportunity to work with you and to help you take your business to the next level. But that's not what the purpose of this book is. The purpose of this book is not to sell you on our abilities and expertise in a thinly veiled sales pitch aimed at gaining your business, but rather my mission is to equip you with the knowledge and know how that will allow you to implement these same strategies outlined to achieve a similar level of success for your own business.

I really want to give you our agency's best practices and knowledge on how to proactively market your residential or commercial contracting business on your own.

This book is meant to provide you with actionable material. If you were to take this information and implement it, I would want you to be able to take it and succeed with it.

That's what we're doing in this book, teaching you how to succeed online by getting your Internet Marketing right. If you follow the strategies set forth in this book,

you will undoubtedly achieve a higher level of success for your company than by ignoring the potential of the Internet.

On the other hand, if understanding the intricacies and nuances of Google's search algorithm that seems to be changing every day is not really your thing, then of course we would love the opportunity to work with you and show you what it looks like to dominate your market online.

So yes, we would love to have you as a happy client but that's not what this book is all about. It's about achieving success online using proven marketing strategies that have worked with countless other residential and commercial contracting businesses over time.

Speaking of time, I am grateful that you are spending this time with me. I know how busy life and running a business can get and you have many choices. And for you to have committed to reading this book, I know that you are someone that is serious about wanting more for your business and not just someone who wants overnight riches by luck or a shortcut. If you can find the time to read this book, you can find the time to start incorporating these marketing strategies into your business plan. If this book helps light the fuse to rocket your business to the next level, then I'm doing my job. You deserve all the advantages that you can get your hands on, and I have many great ones on the way.

Chapter 2: WHY THE INTERNET MATTERS

Let's jump right in. How can you triple your sales by getting your Internet marketing right?

Is it really possible to think one can double or even triple their business revenue just from the Internet alone?

Let's get some perspective first...the Internet is a big scary place for most folks and can be very confusing if you're just getting started with your Internet marketing journey.

One of my goals for this book is to help demystify a lot of confusion and lack of transparent information when it comes to the Internet. Through this demystification, I hope to shed some light on where you should be focusing your digital marketing efforts.

The bottom line is that in this day & age of technology, the Internet, and mobile devices and capabilities, you simply cannot afford not to adopt digital marketing into your overall marketing plan.

There is quite a variety of marketing channels and mediums to consider for your contracting business. Whether you're involved in residential or commercial work, or maybe both, this is the book to help you better understand user search intent and set up your entire web presence to maximize your conversions from your

website, social media, and online assets.

For the uninitiated, a quick first glance at digital marketing may seem overwhelming, especially considering all of the different marketing channels to choose from, in addition to the various ways to use each of those mediums.

First, there's the obvious choice, major search engines like Google and Bing, which both offer organic listings, map listings, and pay-per-click paid advertising. Think Google AdWords when we're talking about PPC advertising.

Then you have the whole confusing world of social media like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, and YouTube, not to mention so many others that come and go making it hard to keep up.

Then as if that wasn't enough, there are literally hundreds and thousands of options when it comes to marketing agencies, online lead generation companies like Home Advisor and Thumbtack, call centers, pay-per-lead marketing agencies, and on and on goes the list.

To call this a bit overwhelming would be quite the understatement for business owners more focused on running their company than on learning Google's latest algorithm change.

In order to maximize your lead flow from the Internet, you need to start with a marketing PLAN that covers all of the marketing opportunities available to you.

The purpose of this book is to outline a marketing plan that will transform you from an online marketing newbie to becoming the dominant player in your market for the services that you offer. Much like any new construction project and the importance of its foundation, it is crucial

to build a foundation that will support the rest of your marketing efforts.

Throughout this book, we will lay the foundation for building and mapping out your proven online marketing plan by:

- Putting together your online marketing plan (Website, Reputation, SEO, PPC, Retargeting, Social Media, etc.)
- Getting your Marketing Fundamentals mapped out right from the start for building Brand Awareness and Customer Engagement (Market, Message, Media)
- Setting up your mobile responsive website for maximum conversions and best practices for mobile responsive design and search
- Gain an understanding of how search engines work and the differences between pay-per-click, maps, and organic listings
- Learning how to optimize your website for Search Engine Optimization (SEO) so that you gain the best visibility in search engine results pages (SERPs)
- Understanding user intent and structuring your Keyword research around those insights
- Setting up your website and crafting your marketing message based on that user intent and the keywords being used to find your services

- Learning the art of link building in order to build authority for your website and brand
- Using blogging and content marketing to continually share your message
- Google Maps optimization in order to rank on page 1 of Maps results
- Citation development across hundreds of directories to enhance your Maps listing
- Building your 5 star reputation to share feedback for new potential clients
- Pay-per-click search engine marketing and expanding your lead flow
- Re-Targeting marketing efforts for building brand recognition and increasing conversions
- Using various tracking metrics in order to track, measure, and quantify your results to prove your positive Return on Investment

As you can see, there are a number of marketing channels for you to explore.

By now most people know how important the Internet is when it comes to increasing the success of your business. But there are still skeptics out there. They think their business is different, that the normal rules of online commerce and retail doesn't apply to them. They say

things like “Oh, people aren’t looking for my services online”, or “All of my business is based on referrals”. And it’s true, you might have gotten to this point in your business where all you’ve had to do is rely on referrals. But why limit your growth? Why just be an owner working a job, knowing your business declines every time you want to take a vacation or maybe you’ve even considered taking a month off to recharge your batteries and spend time with family.

The key to understanding and having success with online marketing is to create a road map for your marketing.

You need to understand all of the different marketing channels available to your company and to create a Marketing Plan that guarantees success for your company.

In the next chapter, we’re going to do just that...

Chapter 3: CREATING A PLAN FOR SUCCESS

Now that we've talked about why the Internet is so important for growing your business, let's dive into the specific strategies and I'll show you how you can create an action plan to apply in your own residential or commercial contracting business.



I'll first start with an overview of our strategies, what we call our Online Dominance Blueprint. This is the success blueprint that we follow and that has proven to bring success to many businesses before you.

I'll go into detail on some of the key elements of each of these channels so that you can apply them in your own business.

First of all, it's important to recognize that there are two keys to success with your website:

- **SEO**, which is making sure that your site is optimized to show up in the search engine organic listings when someone types in the keywords that are focused on the services that you offer. If you reverse engineer the acronym **SEO**, it essentially means to be ***Optimizing*** for the ***Search Engines***.
- **Conversion Optimization** may be a term that you're not familiar with but it is probably just as important. In other words, what is it about your website that resonates with your ideal customer that's looking for your services, and it resonates in such a way so that they pick up the phone and call you as opposed to bouncing out of your website in their Internet browser and continuing to scroll and search through other results and companies that they may want to check out instead.

In this day & age of the Internet, it's critical that you ensure your website is mobile responsive, meaning that your website will render correctly no matter what type of device a user accesses your website with. This could be a desktop computer, a mobile phone, or even a mobile tablet like an iPad.

It's a well-known fact that more people access the Internet from a mobile device than those using desktop computers, as well as the fact that search engines like Google score your website differently and preferentially if you have taken certain steps to optimize your website for mobile search.

Marketing Fundamentals

But before diving into your website and how to optimize it, and how to optimize your Google listing, and all of the fun technical stuff that relates to SEO, you must first begin by building your foundation. Specifically, your marketing foundation.

After working with countless construction and home improvement companies, one of the biggest insights that has stood out for me is that most business owners are getting their online marketing all wrong. Their focus on driving lead volume and revenue has them putting the cart before the horse, as the old saying goes.

Before you should even begin thinking about optimizing your website for conversions, before implementing SEO 'on page' strategies, before all of the link building that helps you build your authority, first you must align the 3 marketing fundamentals.

Those 3 Marketing Fundamentals are:

- Message (what)
- Market (who)
- Media (how)



When it comes to your **Message**, this refers to who you are, what your company provides, and do you have unique selling propositions (USPs) that set you apart from your competitors to encourage someone to do business with you instead of them.

Your **Market** is defined as your target market, those individuals, families, and commercial entities that are interested in the services that you have to offer.

And **Media** refers to the different marketing channels that you can utilize to capture the attention of your target market.

The different marketing channels that we talked about previously are the various sources that comprise your media options. These are your Website, SEO, Pay-Per-Click advertising, Re-Targeting, Directories Management, Social Media, and Video Marketing.

Back to The Basics

So again, you must start with these marketing fundamentals in mind before you begin investing in every marketing channel that inspires you. You need to take time to first craft your message and have that message directed specifically at your target market. Then you can decide on the various channels to convey that message.

The first key is crafting your *Message*:

- What is it that your company does that is unique or different or better than your competitors?
- Do you offer a different level of service or guarantee that will give more peace of mind to your clients?
- What benefits do you offer that may resonate with your ideal client?
- Do you have expertise and licensure in both residential and commercial projects?
- Does your project management and customer service exceed industry standards?
- What concerns might a potential client have when looking for a contractor?
- How do you go about addressing any concerns that your ideal client may have?
- Do you have a five star reputation that can complement your marketing message and reinforce your commitment to customer satisfaction?

The next key is understanding exactly who your *Market* is. This is what we call your Customer Avatar.

- Who is your ideal client?
- What goals and desires might they have for their construction project?

- Do they want to increase the functionality of their floor plan?
- What are their pains and frustrations?
- Are they worried about being ripped off or over-charged?
- Are they concerned with the inconvenience of the project and how it will impact their day to day schedule?
- Are they renovating with a strict eye towards future Return on Investment of their project?
- What are their dreams and aspirations?

Once you better understand your ideal client, you can craft your message and have more success with your marketing. It all comes down to the fundamentals.

Lastly, you have to consider the ***Media*** that you want to use:

- Will you be solely focused on your website and optimizing for conversions through the use of SEO?
- Or will Pay-Per-Click marketing be a part of your strategy as well?
- Do you have multiple locations where your strategy on Google Maps may be different?
- Will Video marketing become a part of building your brand and showcasing that online?
- Should Social Media factor into your marketing plan and ideas for customer engagement?

Once you answer all of these questions, you'll know you have your marketing foundation built on solid footing. It's the 3 core FUNDAMENTALS (Message, Market, Media) that will drive the engine of success for your

company's marketing before you even think about building a website and optimizing it for conversions.

Once you have your Marketing Fundamentals right, the next step is implementing these fundamentals and more into your website.

To help you get started with set-up of your website, we've created an online marketing checklist. The checklist includes topics that we'll cover in the next chapter. Topics such as choosing the right keywords, setting up your menu structure, choosing the service and location pages that you'll want to feature, optimizing your website for conversions, and much more.

Download the checklist here:

<https://www.homeremodelerseos.com/online-checklist/>

The checklist can serve as a guide for getting your Internet marketing right and giving you an action plan to follow. Remember, the goal of this book is to give you all the information that you need in order to create an actionable plan that sets you on the road to success.

Think about how all of this information applies to your business and think about what action steps you're not implementing or aspects of your digital marketing that might be weak or non-existent. Most importantly, think about what you can do with this information in order to 10X your sales.

Next, let's geek out and optimize your website!

Chapter 4: OPTIMIZING YOUR WEBSITE FOR CONVERSION

Nothing happens in the world of search without a properly set up and functioning website. Before you think about SEO, Google Maps Marketing, PPC advertising, or Social Media, you have to have a well-built website up and running.

How to Set Up Your Website

In general, there are three types of website platforms that most contractors will most likely already have:

1. **Template Site Builders** – these types of websites are considered turnkey. They provide you with the entire template, all you have to do is add in some text and your own images. These types of sites are popular because they're offered cheap or even for free from online companies such as GoDaddy, Weebly, Wix, and many others. But you get what you pay for. These sites lack the ability to integrate many common SEO strategies and elements, making these platforms less than ideal for your long term digital marketing plan.
2. **Content Management Systems (CMS)** – these types of platforms are noted for their ease of use and ability to make changes or add pages and

grow your website instantly. There are many options here, but the most popular are WordPress, Drupal, and Joomla.

3. HTML websites – This is how most websites were built back in the day. These are sites where the individual pages are created and then hyper-linked together, thus creating what we now call a website. Some developers still build websites in this fashion, but the downside for a business owner is that you will never have the necessary knowledge to manage your own website.

For our team and our needs, we prefer working on the WordPress platform. It's easy to use, it allows our clients to also engage with blogging or making simple changes if they want, and simply put, there's a reason why a lot of the biggest brands and online users rely exclusively on sites built with the WordPress CMS system.



Like mentioned above, a lot of companies use a site builder like GoDaddy, but your ability to edit, customize, and incorporate every SEO element necessary is the major drawback with these platforms. Using a CMS like Wordpress, all of this is already built into the code. And the user interface that they've created makes it easy for anyone, non-coders included, to easily build an entire website.

Another advantage of using a content management system is that you have a vast choice of plugins to use with your website. There are plugins built for almost

everything, but some of the more popular plugins allow you to schedule blog posting, add security for your site, pull in your social media feeds, embed YouTube videos, curate and feature all of your online reviews, and many, many other functions. Most of these plugins are free to use too.

Whether you're looking to build a brand new website or your goal is a re-design of your existing website, I highly suggest using a content management system. Choose WordPress and you can't go wrong. It's such an easy system to use, and is always being updated by developers that want to help maintain its status as the most popular CMS in use today.

Website Menu Structure

What pages should your website consist of? What is the proper navigational structure to showcase your services in the best light? In general, this is the menu structure that we recommend that will work best for any type of contractor:

1. Home
2. About Us
3. Our Services (separate service pages for every service that you offer)
4. Location (separate pages for each geographical location that you serve)
5. Photo Gallery (for all of your before & after photos)
6. Customer Testimonials
7. Blog
8. Contact Us

Again, these are the most basic pages that you should have for your menu structure. But you can also add more pages if you want. Google loves content, so there is no way of ever having too many pages.

Within some of these core pages, you might want to consider adding a drop-down menu for more specific pages. For instance, your ‘About Us’ page may talk about your company and company values, or maybe how long you’ve been in business. But you could also add more pages that talk about who you are as a company, including pages that might be titled ‘Meet Our Team’, ‘Why Choose Us’, or ‘Company News’.

Not only do these pages serve to give your potential customers a means for them to learn more about you, but you could also use pages for your recruiting efforts. A ‘Careers’ page offers the opportunity to showcase more about your company and to give you the ability to attract high quality talent.

Service and Location pages are useful for showcasing all of the specific geographical areas that you work in, as well as providing the opportunity to tie those locations to all of your target keywords. Isolating and targeting specific keywords is one thing, but you need to tie those keywords to each & every city that you serve in order for search engines to make that correlation.

Again, you want to make sure that you have your different keywords for the different services you provide on the different pages of your site. Those keywords need to be on the page for Google to know that is what the page is about.

For instance, if you’re trying to rank for a specific keyword like “bathroom remodel cost”, you can’t simply

have that keyword on your primary bathroom remodeling page. That primary page will be focused on its own keyword, i.e. “bathroom remodeling company”, and although you can list the second keyword on there, trying to target two different keywords on the same page and hoping that the page ranks on page one of Google for both keywords, that’s asking for a lot. It’s much better to build a new page for the second keyword and rank that page on its own. It gives you yet another keyword and web page of yours that is ranking in the search engines, which tends to have a cumulative effect for your authority and rankings.

There’s no better way to feature your company in the best light possible than by the use of a **‘Reviews and Testimonials’** page. This gives you the opportunity to ask for reviews through a ‘Leave A Review’ built-in feature of your website, and for those reviews to be broadcast on your website for all new potential customers to see. You also have the ability to pull in reviews found on Google and all across the web, thus aggregating all of your reviews into one location. If you have customers that are willing to go on video to leave your company positive feedback, you could also showcase those video testimonials here as well.

And, of course, having a Contact page is necessary for providing customers with your contact and office location information, in addition to being able to provide them a Google map with directions.

Optimize Web Pages for Search Engines

Moving forward, the next question is whether your website is optimized for conversion?

Once the pages are built for each of your core services

and sub-pages or location pages, each of those pages need to be optimized from an SEO perspective so that the search engines understand what the page is about and will list and rank you higher for those keywords.



It's really important that you don't just optimize for search engines and ranking results, but that you also optimize for conversion. By that I mean conversion from site visitor to caller. Simply being focused on keyword rankings is a recipe for failure. You can have all of the best rankings for all of your prized keywords, but if no one calls you after visiting your #1 ranked website, then it's all for nothing.

You can have the number one listing and you can get hundreds of qualified visitors to your website on a daily basis, but if the website is not compelling, or if you don't give specific reasons for someone to contact you versus the competition, you might not get any calls.

If you're not getting any calls, or you're not getting as many calls as you could, then you're leaving money on the table.

Here are some of the most important items that need to be taken care of for 'on-page' search engine optimization:

- Unique title tag on each page – get a keyword or two in here
- H1 tag restating that title tag on each page – again, add in the keyword + city
- Images named with primary keywords and geo modifier (your city)
- URL should contain page keyword
- XML sitemap should be created and submitted to Google Webmaster Tools and Bing Webmaster Tools

A key distinction to reinforce is that we are optimizing your website for the search engines in order to increase conversions. Basically, the definition of SEO. But the key here is turning website visitors into someone that converts to a prospective customer. They don't merely look at your website, they call or submit a web form in order to contact you. They are moving the conversation forward.

And it's the culmination of all of the elements that we talk about that leads to better conversions and better performance for your website.

Different Services and Locations

Again, you want to make sure that you have your different keywords for the different services you provide on the different pages of your site.

It's important to note, with the latest changes in the Google algorithm, your content has to be good, in addition to keyword optimization.

- It has to be compelling.
- It has to answer questions.

Great content is key.

Again, if you want to rank for full home remodeling or commercial construction, you need a specific page for that on your website. That page, of course, has the proper title tag, H1 tag and great content for that specific topic.

The other thing we find with remodeling and residential and commercial construction companies is that most serve between a 25 and 50 mile radius.

Within that 25 to 50 mile radius, there are a lot of smaller sub-cities and sub-towns, as well as the more commonly known suburbs. If you want to rank for those sub-cities in your area, then you need to have a specific page for each one of those.

Of course, the same optimization principles ring true for those pages as well. So, make sure that each sub-city page has a good title tag with your keyword in it, along with a good H1 tag and unique content.

This is something I want to really emphasize. The algorithm is constantly changing.

It used to be, for all your sub-city pages, you could just go ahead and change the city and have everything else be

the same. However, that's not effective anymore. Unique content is required nowadays.

You need to make sure that you're rewriting unique content for each and every single one of your cities if you want to wind up ranking well in those markets. So that's really the question, is your site properly optimized in every facet?

The things you want to look at are:

- Do you have your keywords in the title tag?
- Do you have pages for each one of your services?
- Do you have pages for each one of the brands that you serve?
- Do you have unique content on your website, on every single page as opposed to leveraging duplicate content?
- Do you have pages for each one of your sub-markets that you operate in?

These basic questions are the crux of your website optimization. If you can't check these items off on your optimization worksheet, I would circle them and either get with my team, get with an outside provider or get with somebody that could help you set this up correctly. That's the only way that you're going to get into Google's index for the keywords and the services that you provide, and if executed well, that will lead to improved rankings in the search results.

Website Functionality

Beyond making sure that your navigational menu structure is set up correctly, what other 'on page' elements do you want to have? What other elements will help with increasing conversions from site visitors? What

does previous user behavior tell you about how people are using your website?

Some of the more common elements that are widely accepted amongst online marketing professionals are the use of web forms and using a 'click to call' phone number for people to utilize.

A contact form, or web form, is an essential element for your website. It gives site visitors and potential new clients an opportunity to contact your office through the web and email versus making a phone call. Studies show that more & more people are using web forms as opposed to making phone calls. Everyone is in a different situation, with different work and personal responsibilities throughout the day, so sometimes it's just easier for folks to use a quick web form submission to get the ball rolling.

Making it easy for people to contact you using a web form gives you more opportunities to talk with more potential new clients. It's a lower pressure situation for the potential customer, and it allows them to reach out to you at their convenience.

Next, it is widely accepted that you want to have your phone number in the top right of the website. This is the naturally accepted position where most people have been trained to look for your phone number. And now isn't the time to be unique or 'eccentric' and decide to put your phone number in some other obscure place that people aren't looking for. Follow widely accepted guidelines, they are born from experience and success.

I also mentioned having your phone number appear with 'click to call' functionality. By building in this functionality with an extra line of simple code, you allow

mobile users to directly tap a button on their mobile device and initiate a call to your office. The easier that you make it for people to contact you, the more likely you are to increase booked appointments and closed jobs.

Social Media and Your Website

Another crucial element to add to websites is the ability to connect your site visitors to your social media profiles. By adding social media icons onto your website, and then having these link to your social media pages, you give site visitors the opportunity to engage with your on social media, ask you questions on something they may have just read on your website, as well as collecting some new followers, subscribers, and ‘likes’.

When I speak of social media, I’m talking about sites like:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- Twitter
- Google Plus
- LinkedIn
- YouTube

We know that social media is important for building brand awareness and engagement, but it’s also good for giving people a better look into your company, your company values, and your team members. This helps create a sense of authenticity and relationship when your customers engage with you on social media or at least get a sense of who you are by reading your content.

Social media is not just for kids or for people that are looking to get sucked in for hours scrolling through everyone's feed.

The way I like to explain it, and the way I like to help emphasize the value of social media, is by asking, "Right now, if you just stop and think, what's the number one source of business for your company?"

If you've been around for any period of time, if you have a strong company and reputation in the community, but you haven't ramped up your digital marketing efforts yet, I can say 80 percent of the time that the answer to that is repeat and referral business.

If your previous customers aren't using your services again, then chances are that your previous customers are at least referring you to their friends and others. And the close rate for booking those jobs is usually pretty high, much higher than other marketing channels because of the nature of the referral.

Social Media is a tremendous avenue for taking that repeat and referral business to the next level, and really maximizing that word of mouth and repeat and referral business.

The reason I say that is because there are 2.37 billion users on Facebook as of the writing of this book; the average user has 338 friends and checks in fourteen times per day. That's a lot of opportunity for getting your company's name out there.

If you can get a strategy or process in place to get your real customer – not some random person in a faraway country or some random individual out in cyberspace, but your real customer base, the people that would refer you,

the people that have used you in the past – if you can get them to press “Like,” by virtue of that “Like,” they’ve exposed you to all 338 of their friends in this example.

It’s almost as if they have hand written a note that said, “Hey, I found this great remodeling company or home builder in our market. The next time you need those types of services, I highly recommend these guys.” It’s a nice little advertisement for your company, and quite the endorsement.

In addition to that, they’ve given you permission to remain top of mind with them by engaging with you on social media and following you.

They’re checking in fourteen times per day. That’s hard to wrap my head around. But as long as you’re putting out relevant, non-obtrusive, non-obnoxious updates on a consistent basis, every time they check into Facebook to see what’s going on with the grandkids or to connect with friends, they see your logo.

That remains top of mind. They’re seeing you more often. That’s what brand awareness is all about.

Do you think if they’re seeing you a couple times a week as a result of the posts you’re putting out on Facebook, they’re more likely to remember you the next time they need your services? Or the next time somebody asks if they know a good remodeling or roofing company?

That’s really the power of social media. It has quite the extensive reach in terms of branding and marketing.

So, you want to make sure that you’re set up on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Google Plus, LinkedIn, and any other new social media platforms that inevitably become the next big thing.

It's also important that you're updating those profiles often with quality and relevant material. Posting daily would be ideal, but weekly would be a minimum frequency if you want to stay 'top of mind'.

It really comes down to, what's the point in having a lot of your real customers on social media if you're not putting out updates on a consistent basis?

Showcasing Customer Testimonials

In the same way that linking to your social media profiles builds engagement and community, you also want to showcase your **Testimonials** and online reviews. Nothing builds more trust in your company than what previous clients have had to say after working with you. Studies have shown that 93% of Internet users trust online reviews as much as they trust recommendations from family and friends.

The key is to have a page on your website for all of your reviews. Optimally, you will want to use a software system that pulls in your reviews from all of the online review sites, such as Google, Yelp, and Facebook, amongst many others. By pulling your reviews into your website in real time, your website is always featuring the most current reviews that you've received from happy clients. You can also link those newly acquired reviews to that particular review site. This creates more authenticity and reinforces the great online reputation that you should stay focused on building.

You also want to feature credentials and accreditations that you have for your company. Featuring a BBB logo can be a boost to your authority, as well as other achievements and status levels that you may have reached with other Internet platforms or local chambers of commerce or industry associations. These sources all lend

to giving your company more credibility and showing that you are committed to offering a higher standard of service.

Feature Your Map Location

It's fairly obvious that you should have your company name, address, and phone number listed on your website, usually in the footer. This is not so much for people that want to come and visit your office, but it's more so for satisfying google and its' search algorithm. One element that I see left off of websites all too often is a map of where your office is located.

As we'll talk about in the chapter on Google Maps optimization, you'll see how important it is for search engines like Google to correlate your map position with that of your Google My Business listing. This is also a contributing factor with Name, Address, and Phone Number consistency, what we call N.A.P. consistency, which is a major factor in determining where you'll rank on the Google map.

The best place to list your company information and have a map embedded onto your website is in the footer section. By adding this contact information in the footer, that means it gets shown on every page of your website. This is even more important when we talk about adding several location and service pages to your website, where each location should have its own map embed for that specific location.

Your Website and Your Personality

An often overlooked element of your website is how to share who your company really is. How do you infuse your personality and company values into your website?

One of the best ways to do this is through photography and video. All too often we see websites utilizing the same old stock photography that you see on every other website. Not surprisingly, this doesn't instill any sense of who you are as a company, much less instilling confidence in website visitors to want to work with you.

Showcase pictures of your team, pictures of your owner, pictures of your staff at work in the office or maybe pictures of your graphics-wrapped trucks. By using authentic imagery, this gives site visitors an opportunity to get to know, like, and trust you before they even pick up the phone to call you. This is a time-proven tactic and trust me folks, it works time and time again.

One of the best tactics for optimizing your website but also one of the hardest to talk business owners into is to add videos to their website. Video converts at 7 times the rate of non-video content. Think about all of those cat videos that go viral. Your videos work the same way. People would much rather watch a short video of the owner speaking about his company and company values as opposed to reading ten pages of web content.

Think about this example. A family is looking to find a custom home builder, someone they need to trust to guide them on this all important journey. In our example, they have two websites to choose from. One site has stock photography and bland industry-speak for its content. Your website, on the other hand, has pictures and videos of the owner, pictures of the team, and your potential new customer can literally get a sense of who they will be working with on such an important decision for their family. Which do you think they are going to choose?

Don't underestimate the power of authentic imagery and videos that feature your team. This type of authenticity can increase website conversions by as much as 10X.

Crafting Your Message

Recall how we talked earlier on perfecting your marketing message and understanding your ideal customer. This concept continues here by making sure that your marketing message includes reasons why a potential new customer should choose your company over your competitors. Help walk them down this path on why they want to work with you, how that experience will be better, and exactly what they should be looking for in a contractor or home builder.

Make sure your marketing message also features your online reviews that we just spoke about. Tie those previous customer experiences into your way of doing things, your overarching philosophy when it comes to customer satisfaction and offering a higher standard of service. This type of message converts and gives a site visitor more than enough reason to pick up the phone and call you.

Mobile Responsive Website

We've already touched on the fact that your website must be mobile responsive. That means that any user connecting to your website from any device will all see a functional and aesthetically pleasing website. An example of a website that is not mobile responsive would have your full website showing as a miniaturized version on a mobile phone, meaning a user wouldn't be able to read anything without constantly zooming in and out. The

harder you make it to access and enjoy your website, the more likely it is that you'll lose site visitors to your competitors.

We know that there are 4.8 billion people around the world that now own mobile phones. And statistics tell us that three out of five consumers search for local businesses from their mobile devices now versus using a desktop computer.

So, you need to make sure that your mobile site is not the same as the desktop version of your website. It will be a similar version, with similar information, but the site will render a mobile version, which will have modified access to your navigational menu as well as rendering your pages differently. Part of this unique rendering of your website is to push the images to the bottom of the mobile website or to delete them altogether in order to make for an easier to read website as well as a faster loading website.

To answer a question that I am often asked, there is also a difference between a website that is mobile-friendly versus mobile-responsive:

- **Mobile-friendly** would mean that someone goes to your website and it redirects to a mobile-optimized version of the site.
- **Mobile-responsive** is a site that's built specifically for all devices. Whether you get to the site from your desktop or you get to it from your mobile phone, it's the same site, the site shifts and reconfigures itself in order to fit the screen of any device.

Your mobile website should also feature the aforementioned 'click to call' function so that mobile

users can use one tap of their phone and initiate a call with your office. Make it easy for them to contact you and your chances of more jobs coming your way increases exponentially.

If you don't provide a good mobile experience for users – where they can browse up & down, or simply press a button to call your office as in the example above – you could be losing traffic.

A report by Google shows that 40 percent of mobile consumers turn to a competitor's website after a bad mobile experience.

If you don't have a mobile version of your website built, if your current website is not mobile responsive, you could be losing a lot of traffic. Inadvertently, you could be sending your potential new customers to your competition.

Understanding How Google Works

1. **Paid/PPC Listings** – In the paid section of the search engines, you are able to select the keywords that are relevant to you and then pay to be listed in this area. The reason it is referred to as PPC – or Pay-Per-Click – is because you pay each time someone clicks on your link rather than paying a flat monthly or daily fee for placement.
2. **Map Listings** – The Map listings have become very important because they are the first options that come up in the search results for most locally based searches. If someone searches “Remodeling contractor + your city”, chances are the Map listings will be the first thing they look at. Unlike

the paid section of the search engine, you can't buy your way into the Map listings. You have to earn it. Once you do, there is no per-click cost associated with being in this section of the search engine. Ranking well here could be pure gold.

- 3. Organic Listings** – The organic/natural section of the search engine results page appears directly beneath the Map listings in many local searches, but appears directly beneath the paid listings in the absence of the Map listings (the Map section only shows up in specific local searches). Similar to the Map listings, you can't pay your way into this section of the search engines and there is no per-click cost associated with it.

When it comes to the question, "How am I ranking in search?", I'm more interested in whether you are showing up on the Map and in the organic listings.

Are you showing up in those non-paid listings where the majority of traffic goes?

I mentioned earlier that more than 80 percent of consumers, when they're searching, their eyeballs ignore the paid listings and go straight to the Map and the organic listings.

Choosing Keywords

So what keywords are you or are you not ranking for?



It's easy to say "I show up for my company name".
Obviously, you should show up for your company name.

But that's not very relevant, that's not going to help you drive more calls and more leads.

The key is that you have to think through what people are typing in when they need your services.

If you want to obtain lists of the most commonly searched keywords for contracting businesses, you can download a list of the most commonly searched contracting and remodeling keywords by going to the links below:

www.homeremodelerseos.com/remodeling-keywords/

www.homeremodelerseos.com/construction-keywords/

www.homeremodelerseio.com/roofing-keywords/

So, on the home remodeling side, people are going to use a variety of different keywords when looking for your services. Some of the obvious keyword choices are:

- “Your city” home remodeler

- “Your city” home remodeling company
- “Your city” custom home builder

Then you have many more specific choices like:

- Kitchen remodel cost
- Kitchen remodeling
- Bathroom remodeling
- Room additions
- New home construction
- Luxury custom home builder

There are most likely a lot of different services that you offer as a company, so what you really need to determine is whether you are showing up in the organic or maps listings for the services that you offer?

Look on Google, Yahoo and Bing and see if you are ranking on the Map and/or in the organic listings for these keywords.

If you're not, I'm going to be showing you how to get ranked, but you want to make sure that you start to put a strategy in place to show up in that area for the various keywords that you want to target. Remember, to rank well in the map section versus the organic listings, or vice versa, requires you to focus on different strategies at times.

Map listings and organic listings work in synergy with each other, but again, the same concept rings true. Start to develop your list of keywords, this is where to start, and test yourself and find out where you rank currently.

If you're not aware whether you're ranking well or not, you might not realize there's something that needs to be fixed.

There's no way that your website is going to show up in the search engines if it's not optimized in a way that Google understands the pages, and specifically, understands what keywords your pages should be showing up for in search results.

Getting your remodeling or contracting company listed in the organic (non-paid listings) section of the search engines comes down to two core factors.

It is important to have the proper 'on-page' optimization so that Google knows what you do and the area you serve so that Google can index those pages for the right keywords. You do this by having pages for each of your services and then optimizing them for specific keyword combinations (Ex. Your city + main service, your city + service 2, your city + service 3, etc.)

You must create enough authority and transparency so that Google ranks you on page one (rather than page ten) for those specific keywords. Ultimately, it comes down to having credible inbound links and citations from other websites to your website. It usually comes down to having the ***most*** credible inbound links, citations and reviews to rank well in the search engine results pages (SERPs). Remember the mantra:

“He who has the MOST authoritative and relevant links wins.”

How to Map Out the Pages that Should be Included on Your Website for Maximum Results

Previously, I asked you to spend some time thinking about your most important keywords in your area so that you can start to map out the pages that you should add to

your website.

Keep in mind that each page on your website can only be optimized for 1-2 keyword combinations.

If you came up with 25 keywords then you are going to need at least 12-15 pages on your website.

You need to be sure you have each keyword mapped to a specific page on your site. Here's an example:

Keyword	Mapped to what page
Main Keyword	Home
Main Keyword 2	About Us
Keyword 1	Services – Keyword 1
Keyword 2	Services – Keyword 2
Keyword 3	Services – Keyword 3
Keyword 4	Services – Keyword 4
Keyword 5	Services – Keyword 5

So, for your remodeling company, you might come up with the following keywords:

Remodeler, Remodeling Contractor, Kitchen
Remodeling, Bathroom Remodeling, Basement
Remodeling, Room Additions.

And then your menu structure can start coming together like this:

Keyword	Mapped to what page
City Remodeler	Home page
City Remodeling Contractor	About Us page
City Kitchen Remodeling	Kitchen Remodeling page

City Bathroom Remodeling	Bathroom Remodeling page
City Basement Remodeling	Basement Remodeling page
City Room Additions	Room Additions page

Now, this isn't a fully developed menu structure for your website, it's only a partial example. So, make sure that you have thought out and researched all of the keywords that are going to come into play for optimizing your website for all of the different services that you offer.

Once you've gotten to this point and you've mapped out the pages that need to be added to your website, and you've implemented all of the optimization and conversion strategies that we have talked about in this chapter, the next step is building authority for your website. This is what we call 'Off Page' optimization, or 'Off Page' SEO.

'Off Page' SEO is where the real magic happens!

CHAPTER 5: OFF PAGE SEO - BUILDING AUTHORITY

In this chapter, we're going to look at how to build up the authority of your website so that you can rank on page one for your most important keywords. You can hit on most of the SEO elements for your website, but if you're not building authority, ranking on page one of Google will be extremely difficult if not impossible.

Once the pages of your website are built out and the 'on-page' SEO is complete, the next step is your 'off page' SEO, which translates into building authority for your website in order to gain popularity with the search engine algorithms that determine where you rank in search results. And where you rank in search results ultimately affects the volume of phone calls that you get.

The best way to build authority is by building inbound links to your website. These inbound links are references of your website that are found on other more authoritative websites. The authority that this other website has built for itself then passes that same authority to your website by mentioning your website. This mention of your website on this other authoritative site can come in many forms, but usually it's a mention of your website contained within an article, blog post, or guest comment on those websites.

Everything that we have done in building and optimizing your website up to this point is essentially the job of laying the groundwork for your digital presence. Building authority is where the work begins but you do have to have the pages properly set up on your website in order to be competitive in ranking high in the search results. Both ‘on page’ SEO and ‘off page’ SEO go hand in hand. They are not mutually exclusive.

But building out the necessary pages on your website is just the beginning. The only way to get your website to rank above your competition is by having MORE authority than they have, and that authority comes in the form of quality inbound links and citations pointing to your website.

And this is where the real work begins in helping you develop authority for your website and increasing your overall digital presence. Gone are the old days of creating thousands of irrelevant links to your website and winning with Google’s search engine algorithm. Back in the early days of search via the Internet, the old mantra used to be “He who has the most back links wins!” But thankfully that is no longer the case. Google realized that thousands of links from China and Uzbekistan were typically not relevant nor high quality links.

Now, the key to cracking Google’s algorithm is in the number of QUALITY inbound links and web references to your website, this is what will determine your placement in the search engine results pages (SERPs).

30% of SEO is ‘On-Page’ optimization. The other 70% is Authority Development, Citation Development & Link Building.

This is where your website becomes important for building your authority. That's because your website is the center of all activity online. Your website is the hub of everything that you do, it's where all authority is passed to your website from various sources, including other websites, social media channels, and video platforms. It can even include local news from your community, passed from a local news outlet and into the digital world.

And the way to rank above your competition in the search results is to build more authority than them using as many relevant sources as you can.

If there's any secret sauce to ranking well in the search engines, it is authority.



The major caveat however is that you can't just create irrelevant links. Having a thousand links is not the answer and in fact may even lower the authority and ranking of your website.

And I'll say it again because it's worth repeating. The only way to win in the search engines is through link building and authority development of your website.

All other things being equal, your authority is driven by the relevancy and the quality and quantity of links back to your website.

Things to consider:

- Do you have somebody on your team managing this?
- Do you have somebody looking to see if you have bad links pointing to your website?
- Do you have somebody proactively building new relevant, quality inbound links to your website?
- Is there somebody responsible for updating your blog, or updating the content on your website on a consistent basis?

In the absence of these action steps, your website is going to sit where it's at, without really progressing its way up the rankings.

You have to have a strategy where you're consistently building that authority and building those links.

The latest algorithm changes involve Google trying to prevent spam and spam links that are used to manipulate the search engine algorithm. A lot of Internet marketers

and SEO specialists realize it's all about the links, and this of course is what Google's algorithm was built upon. But many marketers have figured out ways to get a variety of links with random anchor text pointed back to the pages that they want to have ranked.

Those links, however, are not considered relevant and come from websites that really don't add any value to the Internet or to your website, and Google has recognized that. Bad or irrelevant links that are coming from suspect sites can actually hurt your ranking more than help it. It's about building quality and relevant links back to your website through content creation and strategic link building. How do you get these links? Where are the best places to get these links from?

Take a look at the visual below as a reference point.



This is kind of like your website being the 'circle of life' on the Internet, which are all of your linking opportunities to keep your website alive and thriving in the search results:

- 1. Association Links:** Be sure that you have a link to your site from any industry associations that you belong to (Remodeling Association, Chamber of Commerce, Networking Groups, etc.).
- 2. Directory Listings:** Get your site listed on as many directory type listings as possible (Angie's List, Yahoo Local Directory, Judy's Book, Yelp.com, etc.). There are hundreds of these.
- 3. Create interesting content/articles about your industry:** This is probably the #1 source of inbound links because you can write an article and put it out to thousands of article directory sites each containing a link back to a specific page on your site.
- 4. Competitive Link Acquisition:** This is the process of using tools like Raven Tools, Ahrefs and others to see what links your top competitors have, and then get those same or similar links pointed back to your website.

Directory Links

There are a number of link sources that I like to call "low-hanging fruit," which are links that are easy to get without much knowledge or work needed. It all starts with your online directory listings.

Some examples include Google Maps, Yelp, Yahoo Local, City Search, Angie's List, Judy's Book, Best of the Web, YellowPages.com, Hot Frog, Home Advisor, Manta, and the list goes on.

All of these online listings let you list your company name, address, phone number and a link back to your

website. Some of these citation sources even allow reviews to be posted on their platform.

For the most part, you can add all of your company information to those directories free of charge. And the goal with these numerous and varied online directories is to have your information added to as many directories as you can for building more authority. The more places that you're found online, the more authority that search engines will attribute to your website.

These directories serve to create authoritative links back to your website and thus more brand recognition for your company. And that's why you want to make sure that you have your company listed on as many of those online directory listings as you can.

These directory sources are also valuable from a Google Maps optimization perspective because they give you what are known as citations, which are a very important aspect for getting ranked on the Google Map.

A great way to find additional online directories to add your company to would be to run a search on Google's search engine for the search query "Your Company Type – Business Directory," or "Your City – Business Directory". This will give you a great list of potential directory sites that you can add your company to.

There are also tools for this such as BrightLocal or WhiteSpark that will provide you with a list of directory resources based on your industry. This is where you want to start when it comes to building authority, your online directory listings and specifically online directories associated with your industry in general. From there, you want to look at any associations that you're involved with or could become involved with.

Types of Directory Links

Association Links

I'm assuming you are involved in some type of contractor or building association, whether it's a national industry association, the local chapter or some other group affiliation. Visit the websites of those organizations and get listed in the member section on those association websites. These listings on their member directories become citation sources for you and the opportunity to link back to your website, and these also happen to be very authoritative links that pass a lot of authority back to your website.

Affiliated Industries and Local Businesses that are Non-Competitive

You can also work with colleagues that have affiliated industry type businesses that are not in competition with your business. If you're in home remodeling, go to the roofing contractors in your area and ask if they will post a link to your website on their own site and vice versa. Utilizing your resources and teaming up with similar and relevant companies will add more authority to your website. You can also offer to write an article for them to post on their website that contains a link back to your website, thereby creating a win-win situation for both of you.

Materials Suppliers

Another avenue that you could look at is the suppliers that you purchase from. Look towards the companies that supply all of your building supplies and materials, maybe the manufacturers of the windows that you offer for instance, or companies that provide cost estimating or construction project management software. Try to

develop relationships with these companies and see if you can coordinate a deal with them to share some linking authority.

Social Media Profile Links

The other “low-hanging fruit” links are through social media profiles. The power of social media and how you can harness it to get repeat and referral business is unquestioned, but social media platforms also provide a great opportunity for you to get highly authoritative links from websites that are at the very top of Google’s list when it comes to website authority rankings.

Simply from a link building perspective, you should set up a Facebook page, a Twitter account, a professional LinkedIn profile, Google Maps listing, an Instagram profile, a Pinterest profile and a YouTube channel and then place a link to your website on each of those platforms. Each one of them will allow you to enter your company’s name, address, phone number, a description and, of course, a place to put your website address, which is what creates the authority link.

Local Associations

Other local associations that you’re involved in are also a good link source. If you’re a member of the Chamber of Commerce, a local networking group like BNI (Business Networking International), or if you’re involved with a local charity, find out if they list their members on their websites.

Competitive Link Acquisition

You might be surprised that if you really tackle all of these elements and you don’t do any of the other things that we have discussed, you will notice that you probably

have enough links to outrank your competition in your area.

I want to share some additional thoughts and strategies on how you can accomplish even more from a link building perspective. By taking a look at some more advanced strategies, you can find comfort in knowing that you're probably going to out-rank 90% of your competitors.

A very powerful strategy that you can implement is called Competitive Link Acquisition.

The way I like to think of it is that if quality inbound links are the secret sauce to outranking your competition, and if we could figure out who's linking to your competition or what links that your competitors have, and then if we can get those same or similar links pointed back to your website, then you can out-rank them. You can out-rank them simply because you'll have more authority at that point because you will have matched all of their links plus have your own unique links.

Competitive link acquisition is the process of figuring out who is in the top position for your most important keywords, reverse engineering their link profile to see what links they have, and getting those same or similar links pointed back to your website.

A simple way to do this is to go to Google.com and type in "your city + your service," and find out who is in the top few positions. For example, let's take a look at the number one placeholder, the company that is in position #1 of the organic rankings.

That company is there because their website is well-optimized and Google feels that they should be ranked

higher in search based on the quality and quantity of inbound links compared to all of the competition.

Once you know which company is ranking number one for the keyword that you want to rank for, you can use a couple different tools such as Majestic SEO, Raven Tools, Ahrefs, Back Link Watch, etc., and you can take your competitor's URL, input it into your tool of choice, run the report, and get a list of links that this competitor has.

So, your number one competitor is "Competitor1.com", for example. The link research tool that you're using will give you a list showing that they have, for instance, 297 inbound links:

- They have a link from the local Chamber of Commerce
- They have a link from a local building association
- They have a link from their local BNI chapter
- They have a link from an article they posted in the local newspaper
- They have a link from a press release that they syndicated on news sites
- They have a link from the local networking group

By analyzing the types of links that they have, you can systematically replicate those links and get those same links pointed back to your website as well.

Don't just do this for your first competitor, but also for your second and third and fourth and fifth competitors. You will also want to do this for all of the various high value keywords that you want to rank for because different keywords will give you different competitors that are ranking for those various keywords. It's rare that

one competitor will be in the number one position for all keywords.

By doing this on a consistent basis, you can systematically start to dominate the search engines for your most important keywords.

If you build out your website for your various services and sub-services, optimize the pages using SEO best practices and then systematically obtain inbound links, you will start to DOMINATE the search engines for the contracting, construction, and roofing related keywords in your area.

Content Marketing Strategies



Another highly important factor in SEO is adding relevant ongoing updates to your website. In the Internet age, content is king.

Google loves fresh content. In some cases, with the daily and weekly changes in their algorithm, just because you have a great website with the right title tags and all the best authority links, your site may get discounted if they're not seeing fresh information posted on a consistent basis. It's not necessarily a Google penalty, but

it certainly isn't helping your case to be ranked on page one of search results either.

It is important to have a methodology where you are creating and posting content to your website on a consistent basis. My goal is to give you a framework for figuring out what kind of content you could write, why you should create content, and how you can do it consistently.

First, you need to understand and accept that you need to become a subject matter expert. You might not consider yourself a writer or a content creator, but you are a subject matter expert and that's what matters in the eyes of Google's algorithm as well as potential clients looking to you for your expertise.

There are things you know that the general population does not. You're a builder, a roofer, a home remodeler, and you have a team of people that are experts in this area as well. This is the opportunity where you can then create content on those topics that you know the most about.

Content Creation Made Easy

You should also consider that your content needs don't have to be limited to written articles and blog content. Content can come in a variety of forms, and that includes photos, audio files and podcasts, as well as videos. And any type of content that is in audio or video form can be transcribed and put onto your website. Stop and think about what content creation method works best for you.

Some people are great writers and that's their strength. Other people like to be on camera. I personally like them both. I have always enjoyed writing, and I also like to

create videos. I'm very comfortable doing either. It doesn't hurt that I know that content and video content are two of the biggest factors that can drive the success of your business.

You probably know other people that can talk your ear off about whatever topic they are passionate about. Without even knowing it, they have become the subject matter expert. Now that person can create content on many different topics and deliver that content in many different ways. Because it is what I enjoy, I'll use creating videos as an example.

As a contractor or builder, you can set up a camera and record yourself explaining the differences between various building methods or code regulations in the same manner that you would explain it to a customer if talking to them in person. The only difference is that a camera is pointed at you.

In this manner, you'll have multiple pieces of content. You'll have a video, which can be uploaded to YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook, Instagram, etc. That one piece of content can create multiple invaluable links to your website from those different sites.

You can also take that video, save the audio portion of it, and now you have an audio clip. You can upload that audio file to your website and post it on other various sites. You can use a transcription service like Castingwords.com, for instance, where you upload the audio or video file and somebody converts it to text.

For a couple of bucks, you'll have a complete article comprised of what you said. Now you have a piece of content that you can post to your blog. You can put it on eHow.com or place it on one of those other article directory sites that we mentioned earlier.

But the key is that you want to create content on a consistent basis, using the blog on your website as the hub to post the content to, but then you also want to syndicate it to various other sources as well. Syndicate it to article directory sites if it's in text form, and syndicate it to video sites like YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook and Instagram if it's in video form.

Doing this keeps the content fresh on your website/domain and creates a lot of authority, which is really going to help with the overall ranking of your website on the various search engines.

Ultimately, the key is to make sure that you're appropriating each one of these link-building opportunities to maximize your rank potential in your geographical service area. You might be surprised to find that contracting and home services are highly competitive from a SEO perspective.

It should come as no surprise that there are a lot of contractors that want to rank for the same keywords. And many of them have invested heavily in the Internet from the beginning and have been focused on getting themselves higher in the search engines. So, it won't be easy.

Now that you've built out a great mobile responsive website, you've optimized it for the search engines using a variety of high level SEO techniques, and you've built authority to your website through the use of back linking and content creation, what are the next steps? Next up on your marketing checklist is to optimize your Google Maps listing and to make sure you're ranking high on the Google map for your area.

We're all familiar with the ever-present Google Map rankings that we see on page one of their search engine.

This is a great opportunity to capture a significant amount of new opportunities.

Google Maps Optimization is undoubtedly a strategy that you will want to understand and utilize. It's an entirely unique topic of Local SEO that stands apart from organic SEO, and is worth devoting some more time to.

CHAPTER 6: GOOGLE MAPS OPTIMIZATION

Google My Business (GMB) has become increasingly important for contractors and remodelers over the past several years.

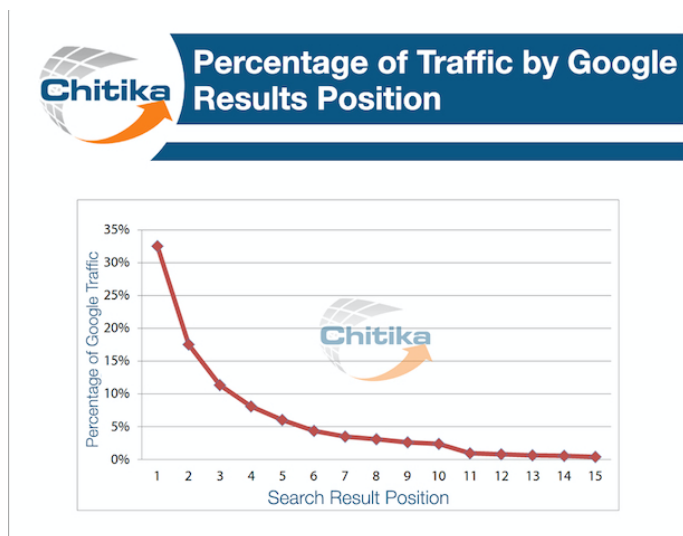
Formerly called Google Places, the Google 7 Pack, the Google 3 Pack, the Google Snack Pack, and probably many more iterations to come, a properly optimized GMB listing ensures that your business will show up in the Maps listings for your area when homeowners and commercial entities are searching for your contracting services online.

Office and service locations in the remodeling and contracting industry tend to be less important than for medical professionals and attorneys, for instance. Most of the time, you will be servicing your client at their home or business as opposed to them coming to your office.

Your location in the Google Maps results becomes such a valuable part of your Internet marketing strategy because a) the maps section stands out prominently with its reviews stars and prime middle of the page placement, and b) users can click straight through to call you directly from their mobile device. If you recall, this is why we said it is so important to be optimized for Mobile Search, a key focus of Google's ever-evolving algorithm.

Thus, the Google Maps listings can be a powerful tool to increase the number of qualified leads that your contracting business gets from the Internet, so it is definitely an area to focus some of your marketing budget on.

Not convinced? Consider this: Chitika, a leading market research firm, reports that as much as 66% of phone calls can come directly from Google Maps “3 Pack” listings.

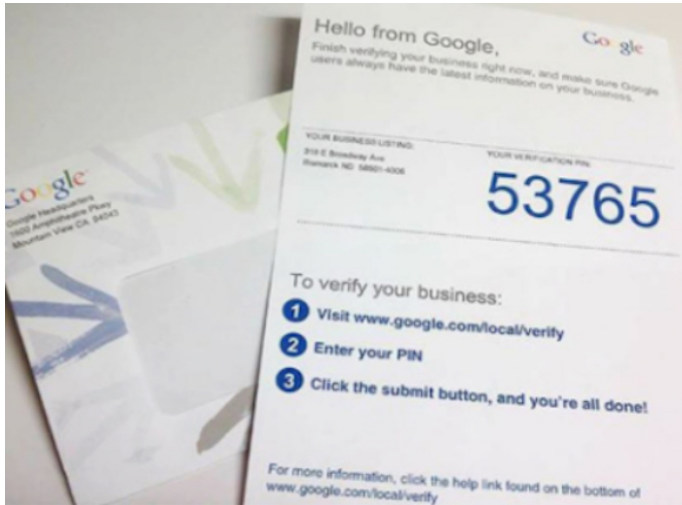


That graph should easily tell you how important it is to be ranked in the top 3 positions of Google Maps, or at least in the top 5 positions or so. Everyone knows that very few people if any are searching beyond page one of search results. This graph further illustrates that going beyond position #10 probably means you’re missing out on almost all calls being driven by the Internet.

This chapter will show you how to set up and optimize your GMB listing so that your business shows up in Google’s 3 pack, the most desirable location of search position rankings.

PART ONE: SETTING UP YOUR GOOGLE LISTING

Step #1: Getting Verified on Google



The first thing in this process of getting verified is to get your GMB listing verified through their business center. You will want to go to **www.Google.com/business** in order to claim your Google My Business listing. As part of the claiming and set-up process, you will input your company name, address, phone number, choice of category, and other contact and business info.

Once all information has been submitted, Google will send a verification postcard to your business address. This card usually arrives within a few days, but sometimes it can take up to a month or in worse case scenarios, you may have to request a second postcard.

Once you receive the postcard, sign back into your GMB dashboard and input the verification code that is on the

postcard. You have now claimed your GMB listing! You're now on the right track in dominating search for your target keywords. But there are a few more steps to follow.

Step #2: Verify Your Company Information

Once you're verified, you can now edit business information in your listing, including adding hours of operation, a business description, and adding photos and videos.

One of the crucial things that you need to pay attention to with your Google My Business listing is to make sure that the business info that you have here is the same exact business info that you add to other directory sites. This is crucial for the consistency of your Name, Address, and Phone Number. This is what is called your N.A.P. and it must be consistent all across the Internet. If there is inconsistency in your N.A.P., this will play an important role in how your Maps rankings are negatively affected.

You also want to make sure to not spam your company name. By that I mean, don't add in several keywords and city names to your company name, perhaps using dashes to separate all this out. This violates Google's terms of service and is not worth the risk for your own rankings and visibility.

Another key that you want to pay attention to is that you need to use a local number in the phone number field. Google wants to know that you're a real business, local to the community that you serve, and so it is frowned upon to use a toll free number.

And if you are using a tracking number, you have to make sure to use that same tracking number on every directory site and social media platform in order to keep

consistency with your N.A.P. across the Internet. This could serve to defeat the use of the tracking number, so you must decide what is best for your business needs and goals.

You also want to add your company's website URL to the directory information if you haven't already. This will allow users to click directly on a button that takes them to your website.

Step #3: Choosing Business Categories

In the section dealing with business categories associated with your company, this is where you want to make sure that your Primary category is the most important for the services that you offer. For instance, if you're a roofing company, your Primary category would be Roofer versus being Roofing Supply even though you might want to choose that second category as a secondary category for your listing.

You can also add additional categories to your GMB listing if you offer additional services, such as a home remodeling company that also offers roofing, windows, and siding. But again, the most important aspect is to make sure your primary category is exactly the one you want for your company.

Step #4: Add Hours of Operation

The next step would be to add your hours of operation. Most likely you work normal business hours, perhaps half days on Saturdays, so you want to list your hours as accurately as possible. If you're a true 24/7 provider, where you have an answering service to handle all incoming phone calls, then you can use 12:00 AM to

12:00 AM as your hours of operation.

Step #5: Service Area & Radius

Particularly for home remodelers and other home and commercial property improvement specialists, you will want to set the service area for the entire geography where you offer your services.

Add all of the cities that you serve by adding them one by one, or set a particular radius for your service area, for example, 30 or 45 miles radius from your business location.

Another recommendation to consider is to select the option of customers visiting you at your business location, even if it's your home location. By choosing this option, it will allow your location to show on the Google Map as a red map pin alongside your competitor's map pins, thereby giving you better visibility and opportunity to capture the attention of a potential new client.

Step #6: Add Pictures and Images

You now have the ability to upload as many images as you want, and you'll want to maximize this new opportunity. If you were on the previous iteration of Google Places or Google+ Local, you were limited to only being able to upload 10 photos.

With the current iteration of Google My Business, you can upload as many photos as you want, so you will

definitely want to maximize this opportunity. Every photo gives you an opportunity to optimize the meta data of that photo for different geographical locations near your business address.

Another one of Google's best practices is to use imagery on your Google My Business listing that is as authentic as possible. It's easy to upload 15 or 20 pictures that have no resonance, that don't really have any value. Make sure to have your logo, a picture of the owner, a picture of the team, a picture of your office or graphics-wrapped vehicles, and then some before and after photos of your projects that showcase your craftsmanship.

Step #7: Business Description

In terms of the description that you want to write for your business, this is a great opportunity to really showcase all of your services while also getting a few high value keywords into your business description. But don't go overboard here with keyword stuffing.

Use intelligent copy that speaks to somebody that's trying to find an expert with your experience. This is your opportunity to sell your company's expertise to a potential new client. This is also where you are able to add a Unique Selling Proposition (USP) if you have a proven sales method and message that has worked for you in the past.

Step #8: Reviews

One of the biggest impacts that you can make for your GMB listing is to get customer reviews. Obviously, your goal will be to get 5 star reviews but remember that all reviews will have an impact on the rankings of your

GMB listing.

Besides Google liking the fact that your business is getting a lot of reviews, potential customers looking at your business will also be able to rely on that feedback when it comes to choosing to do business with you. This is the social proof that 91% of people rely on when looking at companies online. And more often than not, consumers will visit more than one review platform in order to get to know a company better. That's why it's important to get as many online reviews as you can, and to get them on as many different review sites as you can.

A crucial piece to this puzzle is to have a system in place for gathering reviews from your clients on a consistent basis. There are many software systems available, as well as systems that marketers use, and the key feature to these systems is that they provide a direct link to send to clients that will redirect them straight to your GMB listing so that they can provide feedback on your company.

One other recommendation is to always respond to any and all customer reviews that you receive. Whether a good review or a bad review, your public response and engagement with a client shows others that you're a company that can be trusted and counted upon to properly address your needs.

Step #9: Google Posts

This is a newer and certainly important feature to enhance your Google My Business listing.

By creating posts, it gives you yet another opportunity to stand out for potential customers, as well as to continuing

building your authority with Google. Your Posts can be about the services that your company offers, it can be about company updates and news, a press release that you've syndicated, industry and market changes or trends, really, almost any topic that you want to write on.

Another key is that the images that you add to your Posts can be geo-tagged with a specific location in your service area, thus giving you an extra boost to your SEO efforts.

Step #10: 'On Page' SEO of Your Website

Although most people will see their website as a different marketing channel than that of their Google My Business listing, the harsh reality is that your website must be well-optimized in order to correlate and enhance the authority of your GMB listing.

Knowing how important that your GMB listing is to your overall marketing strategy, make sure not to skip the highly important SEO strategies that we've previously talked about.

Schema Markup and Map Embeds

One of the most often overlooked methods of linking your Google Maps listing with your website is through the use of a Google Map embed code. This map embed is typically accomplished by placing a map in the footer of your website.

To do this, you'll want to go to Google Maps and search for your company and location. Once you find your company, it will give you an option to "Share" your

location, and one way to do that is with a map embed code. You copy the code that Google gives you and then paste that code into the footer code of your website.

By adding a Google Map link from your website to your GMB listing, you will create strong local signals through your Google Maps optimization strategies, i.e. using Google Posts, that pass that authority back to your website.

Avoiding Duplicate GMB Listings

Beyond the basics of claiming and optimizing your Google Map listing, one of the reasons we see companies not ranking in the Map section of search results is due to there being a duplicate Google My Business listing that you may not know about. Sometimes these duplicate listings were already in existence, and other times they are created randomly by Google with no rhyme or reason.

Always make sure that you don't see a duplicate listing pop up in your Google My Business dashboard. And if you have time, do a monthly search of the Internet and Google Maps in order to make sure a duplicate listing hasn't appeared without your knowledge.

If you do find such a listing, make sure to request its removal as quickly as possible. A duplicate listing will dilute your authority and perhaps even lead Google to believe that you're trying to game the system by creating additional listings.

But don't act hastily if you think you've found a duplicate listing. No matter what:

You don't want to accidentally delete your primary Map listing.

Getting Your GMB Listing Ranked #1 on the Map

Now that you have your GMB listing properly set up, you will want to spend time optimizing your listing with what we call Local SEO strategies. The goal is to get your listing ranked #1, and there are certain steps to take to optimize that GMB listing that are different than website SEO.

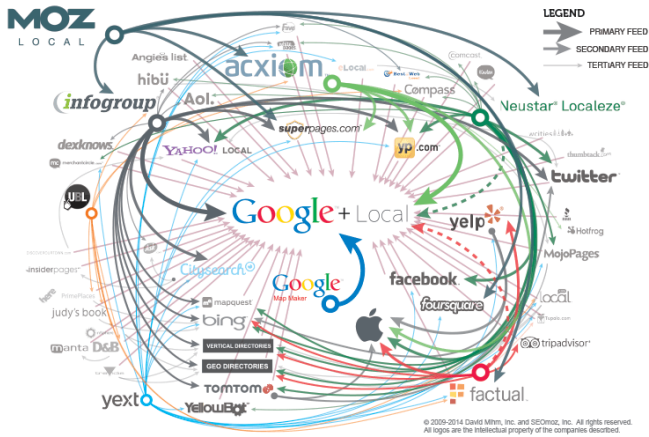
Optimizing Your Google My Business Listing

We have already talked about how to claim and optimize your Google My Business listing within your dashboard, so make sure to review anything that you are unsure of. It is these crucial set-up and optimization steps that lay the foundation to how powerful your GMB listing can be for your business.

Establishing Your N.A.P. Consistency Around the Internet

As discussed previously, one of the most important ranking factors for your GMB listing is to have a consistent N.A.P. within your directory citations that are found all around the Internet. The biggest factor here is making sure that whatever business info that is listed on your GMB listing is the exact same info and format as found on all other directory citations.

The Local Search Ecosystem (United States)



This N.A.P. consistency of how you're being referenced across the web is crucial for Google's algorithm and establishing trust with you. If this information isn't matching precisely, you can be assured of a much tougher if not impossible path to ranking #1 on the Google Map.

What I see in a lot of cases though, unfortunately, is this inconsistency of your name, address and phone number. Typically, I find that it's companies that are very large, very well established, and who have been in their area for quite some time, but they aren't ranking well on the Google Map listings.

The answer is usually because of N.A.P. fragmentation of how their company is being referenced across the Internet. If you go into one particular directory listing like Manta.com, you may be listed with one name, address and phone number combination, but if we look at your Yelp listing, it may be a different name, address and phone number combination. And if you look at your CitySearch.com listing, it could be yet another combination of your business info.

If your goal is to rank really well on the Google Map listings, you need to spend some time isolating any inconsistent listings that you find on the Internet, and then take the time to gain access to each of these inconsistent directory listings and to make the necessary edits in order to match the N.A.P. associated with your GMB listing.

Some of the citations that you want to make sure you pay attention to include:

- Bing Local
- CitySearch
- Manta.com
- Yahoo
- Angie's List
- Judy's Book
- Local.com
- Merchant Circle
- Yelp
- YP.com
- DexKnows

But realize that ultimately there are hundreds and hundreds of directory listings that your company may be listed on, most of which you will have no knowledge of.

You want to make sure that you're in all of the major online directories and that you have the correct information for your listings.

Best Practices for Your Online Listings

Again, to recap some of the best practices for your GMB listing:

- Company name should just be your company name as it appears on a tax return.
- Add your Website address, it's a great link.
- Do not use 800 numbers, use a local phone number.
- Use your real, physical location as opposed to a P.O. Box, or a Mail Boxes Etc., or a UPS store.
- Upload authentic photos. Leverage your team and your company personality.
- Pay attention to your categories and your hours of operation. Make sure it matches up with the actual details of your company.

PART TWO: IMPROVING YOUR RANKING

So, what are the new ranking factors that determine where you appear in search results?

Well, unfortunately, Google does not publish a document that says, "This is how we determine who is going to rank in the Google Map listings." They don't let their secret recipe out for public consumption. That's all part of their secret sauce. Imagine the chaos if everyone could game the system.

Basically, you have to rely on conjecture that is out there based on all the blog posts and SEO experts that you follow and trust. They are the folks that are the leading analysts and thought leaders out there that live and breathe SEO and the Internet, and they're always keen to decipher and share all of the recent information on what Google is looking at to determine who is going to rank the highest on Maps.

It's also based on our experience with our clients, testing what works and what doesn't. That's the cool thing about marketing, you're always testing, always tweaking, always on the hunt for perfecting your mastery of this voodoo topic that we call SEO.

If you're authentic and more authoritative, that means you're going to rank better in the Map listings, all else being equal.

Tracking Your Data

Within the Google My Business dashboard, you're able to see your online reviews. You're not only able to see what your star rating is, and how many reviews you have on Google, but Google is also now scouring the Web and pulling in your reviews from other sites, like YP.com and MerchantCircle.com.

All of those reviews from across the Web really is a pretty cool indication of how many reviews you have that Google is recognizing. That's a major factor in how your company is going to rank in the Google map listings.

One cool feature here is when you click the 'Manage Reviews' button, you'll see all your reviews that have been left on Google. You can respond to them right there within the dashboard, which is convenient.

If someone says something positive, spend a few minutes to leave a response such as, "Hey, thanks for the review, really appreciate the opportunity to serve you."

If they write something negative you should still respond. You can write back with something like, "Hey, I'm really sorry to hear things didn't work out, we're trying to provide the best service possible. What could we have done differently?"

Being proactive with how you respond to even negative feedback can have a great impact on how people perceive you in your marketplace.

Right there within 'Insights', in the dashboard you can see how many people viewed your listing, how many people clicked on it, how many new Followers you have, and other metrics.

This is cool to look at, but really what I want to emphasize in this section is that Google is tracking all of this data and activity.

Google has the data, they can see how many clicks you received on your listing, they can see how many Followers and what the velocity of new Followers is. And if Google can track it, they can definitely apply it to their algorithm.

You want to pay close attention to see if you are getting new Followers to that Google My Business listing on a consistent basis. Are people interacting with what you're posting?

Some of the things that we know, the tried and true ranking factors, these things go back years and years. These are the factors that we've found to really determine whether a company will rank on page one, or whether they're going to be ranking on page six or page seven.

It's really about having a claimed and optimized Google listing on Google My Business, having a lot of citations that reference your company's name, address and phone number, and having online reviews.

Ranking Problems

If you're not ranking on the Google Map right now if someone types in your city, it's probably because you're listing is not authoritative enough.

It goes back to the same three steps we discussed.

- Do you have it properly clean on the Google Map listings? Had you cleaned up any and all duplicate listings that might exist and be affecting your ranking negatively?
- Do you have citations? Is Google just seeing you on Google My Business or are they seeing you all across the web?
- Do you have several legitimate, positive online reviews?

If you have 20 or 30 or 50 or 60 other companies right in your same neighborhood that provide the same services, Google has to determine who's going to be in Spot 1 versus Spot 2 versus Spot 3. This is what is currently known as the coveted 3 Pack.

All of those things being equal, the company that has more citations, has more followers, has more positive online reviews, will appear to be more authoritative. That's what Google is going to serve up in their result pages because they want their customer who are searching on Google, looking for information, to get the best information possible.

That really forms the basis for what you need to be focusing on and what will help drive what you need to be doing as far as claiming it, making sure that you don't have any infractions, making sure that you cleaned up your duplicates, and putting a process in place to get consistent online reviews.

I can say with a high degree of confidence, if you follow this process and employ these strategies, you'll be well on your way to ranking very well in the Map listings in your market.

Are You Leveraging Email Marketing?

The next piece of your web presence optimization plan is whether are you leveraging email marketing? When I'm talking about email marketing, I'm really talking about whether you have a strategy in place where you're collecting the names and email addresses of your customers, and then are you sending out updates on a consistent basis to your past customers?

The key to email marketing is consistency and relevancy. No surprises there, right!

You want to be sending out monthly email newsletters to your entire list, including emails that you may have collected but they're not active customers yet. And you want to make sure to infuse your personality into the content, to talk in your own voice as you offer tips and suggestions that can help solve customer's needs or to inspire them to call you for a consultation.

By leveraging email marketing and sending regular newsletters out on a monthly basis, you can be sure that this marketing channel will contribute to your bottom line sales numbers.

By remaining top of mind, by communicating consistently with your customer database, you can improve your customer loyalty.

You'll also find that email marketing helps in another way. By staying top of mind with your customer list, this serves to increase your referrals and repeat business. This can have a tremendous impact on your company as that brand awareness affords people the opportunity to pass your name or email along to a potential new customer.

Sending emails is also one of the lowest cost methods for remaining in contact with you customer base.

If you are not doing email marketing, you are missing a tremendous opportunity. What are some of the tools you can used for email marketing? The most common ones are:

- Constant Contact
- Aweber
- Mail Chimp

These are low cost tools that run between \$10 and \$20 per month. These email marketing providers give you the ability to collect the names and email addresses of your customers, to put together attractive email newsletters, and to push them out on a monthly basis.

I highly encourage you to leverage email marketing to send a newsletter, but there are other goals that you can accomplish with email marketing.

We'll talk about this in more depth in the next section, but using emails to request reviews is a time-proven strategy that works quite well.

We talked about the importance of having online reviews from your real customers in your true service area.

What better way to get those reviews than to make sure

an email goes out after every job requesting a review and making it easy for the customer to leave that review for you?

Another email marketing strategy would be to leverage email as a tool to get your customers to engage with you on social media.

There is no reason you can't send an email a week after each completed job, and just say something like, "Hey, we're really active on social media. We have a great following and we would love to have you join our online community and stay in touch with us."

That's a great way to get that engagement and get those real customers to press the "Like" button.

Action items for leveraging email marketing:

- Do you have a database where you're collecting email addresses?
- Are you sending out a monthly email newsletter?
- Are you leveraging email to get online reviews and to draw customers into your social media profiles?

PART THREE – ONLINE REVIEWS

We talked about claiming the Map listing and we talked about establishing consistency of your name, address, and phone number, being in the online directories.

We also mentioned that the next really critical element is online reviews. Reviews are one of the biggest ranking signals for your Google My Business listing. The more 5

star reviews that you can get, the better that your business will look to Google as well as to potential new clients. Online reviews provide excellent social proof for people deciding whether to do business with you.

So, how do you get real reviews from your real customers in your true service area?

The best way to do it is to have a process in place where you're asking for reviews on a consistent basis. There's a lot of tools that can help automate this. I'm going to be talking about a tool that I think works really well. Even if you don't have any technology, if you're not doing anything fancy, all you have to do is develop the process and systemize it in your business.

What we find to be a good practice is to do it in two different ways.

Contacting All Past Customers

The first way is to develop the names and email addresses of all your customers, your sphere of influence, your past customers and put it into a simple document like an Excel spreadsheet.

Put together a basic email that just says, "Hey, thank you so much for your business throughout the years. We appreciate the opportunity to serve you. We're in the process of trying to develop our reputation online and we'd love if you'd take a few minutes to write us a review."

Give them the direct link to the various places where they can write your review.

Of course, not everyone has a Google account, and not everyone wants to create a Google account just to write a

review for you. I don't necessarily think you want to force them to Google. You want to give them options. In that email you would say:

- Click here to get to our Google listing.
- Click here to get to our Angie's List listing.
- Click here to get to our Facebook page.
- Click here to get to our Yelp listing.

Give them five or six options, and people will gravitate to the online profile that's most comfortable to them.

If they're a Yelp user and they write Yelp reviews after every restaurant that they go to, they're going to see that Yelp link and just jump right on Yelp in order to leave a review for your company.

Give them options and let them choose. That's the first option. Send an email out to the customer base stating, "Thanks for your business. We'd love it if you'd write us a review."

Here is a template you can use for emailing your existing customers to request online reviews:

Email Subject: Thanks for your business!

{Name},

I wanted to shoot you a quick email to thank you for your business and let you know how much we appreciate the opportunity to serve you!

Our goal is to provide 100% customer satisfaction and exceed your expectations every step of the way. I certainly hope that we did just that! If so, it would really help us out if you'd be willing to post a

review for us online at one of your favorite online review sites. Below are a few direct links where you could write a public review about your experience with us:

- Google – {insert your Google My Business link here}
- Yelp – {insert your Yelp link here}
- Facebook – {insert your Facebook link here}

Thank you again! We really appreciate your support!

Best Regards,
{Owner Full Name}
{Company Name}

Systematic Review Process

The second option, and I think probably the more important effort, is to make sure you've got a process where you're systematically thanking your customers after service and giving them options on how to write you a review and leave online feedback for your company.

In that specific way, we're trying to take two approaches.

The first is the analog approach. Print out some business cards or some postcards or thank you cards and say, "Thanks for your business. We'd love it if you'd write us a review. If you would, go to yourcompany.com/reviews." On that page have those links where they can write you a review.

That's an easy process. Also make sure to train your project managers and employees to ask for the review.

It's simple, all they really need to say is something along the lines of, "Thank you so much for your business. Here's a card I'll leave with you. If you'd take a few minutes to write us a review, we would really appreciate it. All you have to do is go to this website address and choose the profile that you like and write us a review. We would really appreciate that."

That in and of itself will increase the number of reviews that you're getting on a consistent basis even if that's all you did.

Now, the way you take that to a level that is going to generate even more reviews is to send an email after the job or service provided.

Have a template developed. Set up either MailChimp or Constant Contact or just a basic web form on your website where you can enter the customer's name and email address and, after every completed job or service call, have that email go out.

"Thank you so much for your business. We appreciate the opportunity to serve you. Our goal is to provide 100 percent customer satisfaction and if we didn't deliver that, please give me a call and let us know. If you had a great experience, we'd love it if you'd share that and, if you would, go to one of these various online review platforms to write us a review."

That's it, it's not too difficult, and it's something that you can easily set up.

Have an email go out after each completed job and you'll be amazed at how the velocity of reviews that you have within your business increases.

Ideally, we want to get your project managers, technicians, and other employees involved in this process. They're checking in, then they go back to their smartphone, they hit the "Request Review" button, and an email that's already queued up goes out to the customer.

We've found this to be a very effective way to make requesting and getting reviews a systematic part of your business.

If you think of how many jobs and service calls that you're doing on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis, it's pretty easy to see how you can get a consistent stream of reviews coming in for your company

It's unquestionable. Most people don't leave a review simply because you have not asked them to. So, it comes down to what you can do as a company to accelerate this process, and in turn, you'll see that building up your online review count can really help with your rankings.

That's how you start to develop a database of emails. Start with their email address so that you can send a message after the job is completed thanking them for their business and asking them to write you a review.

The number of reviews that you have from actual customers is going to increase exponentially if you repeat this process regularly.

This is how you are going to start to really dominate the

Google Maps listings because reviews and citations work in harmony for ranking, with both of those factors being major contributors to where your company lands in the search results.

Sample ‘Review Us’ Landing Page for Your Website

You want to direct your customers to a page on your website, thereby making it easy for them to write reviews on your various online listings.

When I’m talking about optimizing for the Google Map listing, Google is not just showing your Google Maps listing reviews, they’re showing reviews that happened on YP.com, on Citysearch.com, on Yelp.com, and on Facebook.

Google has the ability to pull reviews from across the web, and they’re looking at the overall online reputation, not just your Google My Business reputation. Let people choose the review profile where they want to write those reviews and get them online. Any positive review left on any platform is always a good review.

Leveraging Technology

One of the methods that we found that would be really beneficial for getting online reviews is to leverage technology.

There are many systems out there that can help you with review acquisition and review monitoring, and even some systems that can help automate the review request process. The more automated that you can make this for your own company, the more consistency and success you’ll have with building up your online reputation.

Reputation Monitoring

The other tool that you should consider implementing on the back end is a reputation monitoring system or a reputation filtering system.

The way reputation monitoring works is, first of all, the system will scour the entire Internet in order to find all your reviews. This is very similar to how Google searches the entire web and finds other reviews for your company that it then brings into your GMB listing.

The reputation monitoring system will find the reviews that you have on Angie's List, Facebook, CitySearch, and Yelp, for example, and it also provides a widget that you can put on your website's 'Testimonials' page that shows all those reviews, as well as where all those reviews came from across the web.

The system then keeps track of all of the reviews that are accumulating for your company. For instance, it will say, "Right now, you have 80 reviews." Then it goes from 80 to 81 to 82 and so on, continuing to update as new reviews are added. The reviews page on the site also gets updated with those new testimonials that you're receiving.

By doing this, you're showing your customers that you're an authoritative company. It allows you to showcase your online reputation, which is the social proof that people are looking for. Being able to see a company's online reputation is the best way to showcase your company's expertise and thus attract new customers.

Now, you also want to be paying attention to what people are saying in these online reviews. Are they saying good things about your company? Or are they saying bad things? What's the overall pulse of your reviews and any trends that you might see developing, good or bad?

That's where a reputation monitoring system really comes in handy. Typically, these systems have alerts that you can set up so that when you get an online review, good or bad, on any platform, you'll get an email or text alert to let you know. This is a great way to stay in tune with what's going on and the quality of work and customer satisfaction that you're offering.

A reputation monitoring system also serves as a reputation filter of sorts. If you do get that errant one-star review or two-star review, you'll get an email, you'll be alerted that's there's a bad review, and you can take action. If you do get that one-star or that two-star review, you can address it immediately with the customer.

If you do get a negative review, the first thing to do is to respond to that review online on whichever review site that the review was left on. In this manner, you're reaching out to the dissatisfied customer to try and find an amicable solution that leaves everyone involved happy with the result.

But the other goal of this public response is to show other potential new clients that you value your customers and you value their satisfaction and are willing to go the extra mile to find resolution. I highly recommend responding online to all of your reviews, good and bad. By thanking someone for their kind words that they posted in their review, your engagement and gratitude will be appreciated. It also serves to show Google that you're actively managing your GMB listing, which makes Google happy.

I also always recommend talking to the customer directly in order to resolve any dissatisfaction, which usually solves the issue. After posting your response online, you can also talk to the customer offline in order to offer an apology and to see what you can do to rectify the

situation. This usually goes a long way in assuaging the customer's dissatisfaction and typically can lead to them taking down their negative review, or at least adding a couple extra stars to the rating. Remember, a 3 star review is a heck of a lot better than a 1 star review!

A negative review can actually have a very positive impact if you handle it correctly.

It's just as important to take action on the negative reviews as the positive reviews.

Proven Reputation Results

Time and time again, we have seen great success with our clients that become proactive in asking for reviews. Reviews matter to Google, and in a big way.

Don't sleep on this aspect of your online marketing. It can undoubtedly help your rankings in the Google Maps listings, and if you're using embedded schema on your website, the organic listings for your website will also show those pretty gold review stars. Talk about a new client magnet for your website!

Here may be many of you reading this book that are too bashful to ask for a review, or you tell yourself that you don't have time, you're too busy. Too busy? Too busy to grow your company's brand and reputation? Seriously?

Trust me folks. Take the time to invest a little bit of effort and energy into your review acquisition processes. The results will speak for themselves. Future potential customers will love being able to learn more about your company from other customers' previous experiences.

And Google loves reviews, good or bad in fact, so as we always say in the world of digital marketing, do what Google wants you to do!

Build Strong Foundations Before Buying Advertising

Everything we've talked about to this point is all foundational. It's strategies like:

- Setting up your website correctly
- Optimizing your website for the search engines
- Making sure your website has compelling content
- Making sure it has the right conversion elements
- Having a strategy in place to get more online reviews
- Properly optimizing your all-important Google Map listing
- Leveraging email marketing and social media

But none of these tools are really advertising. They're just part of an effective online marketing strategy and your overall marketing plan.

You have to have these strategies in place, and you also need to be doing them correctly. I always like to emphasize that these elements should be the foundation of your online marketing strategy.

When it comes to advertising though, you must make sure that these foundational elements are in place and well thought out and executed.

What I'm really trying to communicate here is:

You should never even consider paid online advertising, pay-per-click advertising, or paid ads, before you have the right foundation.

Paid Advertising Online

The reason that I say all of these foundational elements need to be in place before considering paid advertising is because all of your digital marketing works in synergy with the other elements. For example, if you don't have your website set up correctly, if you don't have online reviews showcasing a great reputation, or if you don't have compelling messaging that makes somebody choose you versus the competition, then why would you want to pay to get people to your website?

You're going to be wasting advertising dollars that aren't going to convert correctly, or at all in some cases.

The other reason is that I've found the quality of the traffic you get from being properly optimized and ranking in the non-paid listings is significantly greater quality than the traffic that you get from paid listings.

Once you get your entire marketing equation right, you're going to have additional opportunities coming your way. And with additional opportunities comes additional sales and increasing revenue. You're going to have additional profits that you can and will want to reinvest into the business, but not until you have your marketing foundation right.

On so many occasions, I've talked to remodeling companies and various contractors, and they have this marketing equation backwards. By that I mean:

- They're spending a lot of money on Pay-Per-Click advertising on Google.
- They're heavily invested in YP.com and Angie's List or even Home Advisor.

BUT...

- They don't have their website set up correctly.
- They don't have their messaging right.
- They don't have a proactive email or social media strategy.

You can really get off track and waste a lot of money on PPC without having your marketing foundation perfectly executed, so I want to make sure that you've thought about having a sound foundation and really building your online marketing strategy based on these principles.

Once you have those firm foundations in place and once you have them set up and optimized correctly, that's when it starts to make sense to look at paid online marketing opportunities like:

- Pay-Per-Click campaigns on Google or Bing
- Paid ads on Facebook, Angie's List, YP.com or Yelp

Successful Pay-Per-Click

The fact is, most pay-per-click campaigns fail.

As I talk to remodeling companies and construction contractors throughout the United States, a lot of them say they've given up on pay-per-click advertising.

They spent thousands of dollars. They got very little or no return on investment and it was a big failure for them.

I want to encourage you, that if you set up pay-per-click advertising correctly, it can be very effective and it can be profitable.

The reason most pay-per-click campaigns fail is because there is a failure to understand the way the AdWords auction process works.

A lot of people think it's just a function of bids – that, if you pick your keywords and if you bid more than the other guy, you're going to be at the top. And that, if you are at the top, you're going to get the best results.

That doesn't take into account the fact that Google has a quality score in place. That quality score is really built to make sure that even the paid listings are relevant to the customer.

Paid Online Marketing

If you are going to play the pay-per-click game – and I recommend that you do – do it when your foundation is strong. You have to make sure you do it in this way, that you are strategic with how you set it up. That's how it will make sense for you and give you a positive return on investment.

Action items to think about:

- Do you have AdWords set up?
- Are you specifically targeting with ad groups, text ads and landing pages?

- Do you have a premium ad on Angie's List, YP, and Yelp.com?
- Are you taking advantage potentially of pay-per-lead services like Home Adviser?

Now, notice how I mentioned Home Advisor last? That's because it's really just a lead source if you want to get some additional leads. It's the lowest quality lead you can get though, as some of you reading this may be able to attest to. However, if you do it correctly and if you have a strategy specifically for those pay-per-lead options, it can be profitable.

By that I mean, you have to have somebody dedicated to responding to those leads the moment they come and that you're aggressive with the way that you follow up.

Maybe you have a lead follow up sequence in place for those people that you call back that you don't get on the phone. Or maybe they get a three-part email series for remaining top of mind until they do take action.

If you do it like this, you can do a little bit better with those pay-per-lead services. However, it's definitely not where to start building your online marketing strategy.

When it comes to paid advertising, most often you're going to be thinking in terms of Google AdWords, possibly Bing ads as well.

Since PPC marketing is a bit more complex and requires a lot more experience and oversight, I've dedicated the next chapter specifically to Pay-Per-Click advertising.

CHAPTER 7: PAY-PER-CLICK MARKETING - PPC

In this chapter, we're going to look at why you should have Pay-Per-Click marketing as part of your overall online marketing strategy.

Benefits of Pay-Per-Click Marketing

Why should Pay-Per-Click be part of your overall marketing strategy? The main reason is that because you can get online exposure very quickly. This is one of the benefits of Google AdWords versus Search Engine Optimization.

With PPC advertising, you can simply pick the keywords that you want to target on Google's AdWords platform, and after your ads campaign set-up and some tweaking of your ads and advertising copy, your ads will begin showing immediately in the paid ads section of the search results. The advantage here too is that ads typically show on the top of the page, so that gives you more visibility for all of the people searching for your services.

PPC advertising also gives you the opportunity to show up as often as possible where people are looking for you.

I mentioned earlier the differences between the paid listings, the Map listings, and the organic listings. By

adding PPC advertising to your marketing strategy, this gives you the opportunity to claim more page one ‘real estate’, thus maximizing your visibility across PPC ads, Google Maps, and Google organic listings.

A lot of people also choose to not spend a lot of time scrolling through results and are more inclined to choose the first listings they see at the top of the page, which is where PPC ads are shown.

Either way, you want to show up as often on the page as possible for the keywords people are typing in when they need your services. Having a pay-per-click strategy in place gives you the ability to show up in the paid listings and then show in the organic and maps listings as well. In essence, PPC ads give you another placeholder to showcase your brand.

What is PPC?

PPC is an acronym that stands for Pay-Per-Click marketing and refers to an online advertising model whereby you pay an ad network like Google for each time a user clicks on your ad. Once these users click on your ad, they are then directed to your website where they can evaluate your services and see if it’s the right fit for them.

PPC is a term that is broadly used to refer to the different advertising networks:

- Google AdWords
- Bing Ads
- Facebook and Instagram Ads

If done correctly, and monitored consistently, PPC ads can produce extremely quick, affordable, and consistent leads for your business. But if not done correctly or monitored daily, the results can be catastrophic to your marketing budget.

Know this before you jump in: Google Ads are built to take your money as quickly as possible, and although you can still get a good Return on Investment for your ad spend dollars, it also means you can burn through a lot of cash in a very short amount of time.

PPC Benefits - Geographic Keyword Targeting

One of the most widely accepted benefits of PPC is that it gives you the opportunity to show up for non-geo-modified keywords. Google is always tweaking their algorithm and showing more specific searches depending upon where you search from. However, for the most part, if you go to your computer right now, and you type in “home remodeler”, “home remodeling contractor”, or “custom home builder,”, you may see natural results for those keyword terms that include nationally known brands as well as local companies.

So, you’re going to be competing against national websites as opposed to just the people in your local area, versus if they typed in a geo modifier along with the keyword term, for instance, “Denver home remodeler”, “Denver home remodeling contractor”, or “Denver custom home builder”. Now your search query is more localized and leaves you competing against only local companies in your market that are strictly going after local customers like you are.

In a lot of cases, you won’t show up for the non-geo-

modified keyword searches. But with a Pay-Per-Click marketing strategy, you can. This is all based on the IP address of where the user ran their search from, but more importantly is the fact that you can target specific cities with your PPC advertising.

Importance of Mobile

Having a Pay-Per-Click marketing element to your overall online marketing strategy does give you the opportunity to show up for more keywords, but most importantly it provides you with a handy ‘click to call’ function from mobile devices. More and more people are accessing the Internet from their mobile devices, from their iPhones, their Android phones, iPads, and all the other mobile devices out there, than those that use desktop computers to access the Internet. This has been a big paradigm shift over the last several years, and don’t expect this trend to change anytime soon.

On mobile, if you run a search right now for “your city remodeler”, you’ll notice that a lot of the real estate is taken up by pay-per-click listings and very little space is given to the organic listings.

For this reason, I think the propensity for someone to click a paid listing is higher in a mobile search than it is in the desktop search.

And so, with a pay-per-click strategy specifically targeting mobile, you can actually set it up for users to easily call your office directly using that ‘click to call’ functionality.

Once they see your text ad, all they have to do is press the ‘Call’ button, and immediately they’re calling your office with that simple push of a button. No scrolling, no searching through results endlessly, just a simple click of

a button and you now have a new customer. For this reason alone, I believe having a pay-per-click strategy specifically set up for mobile devices is an essential piece of the puzzle and it's a great way to get calls.

These are some of the reasons you want to make sure that you have pay-per-click as part of your overall strategy, assuming you have the foundation soundly built for the rest of your website and overall marketing strategy.

The Different Pay-Per-Click Networks

As previously mentioned, PPC is a broad term and it applies to a number of different Pay-Per-Click networks.

However, the two main ones are Google AdWords and Bing Ads (Microsoft).

A quick word on social media platforms and paid advertising. When someone mentions paid advertising, you often think of Facebook advertising as well. But the downside to running PPC ads on a social media platform is that the user is not actively looking for your services, and so they may see or even look at your ad as they're wasting the hours away, but it's more of a distraction to them more than anything. And this is the main factor in contributing to decreased conversions using Facebook ads.

On the other hand, Google and Bing are both search engines and are based on users searching for exactly what you may have to offer them. So, Google and Bing are the two ad networks that we focus on primarily for our clients marketing budgets because they are search-based and thus offer more targeted user intent.

With Google AdWords, you are able to run a variety of different ad formats such as search ads, display network

(ad images placed on Google's partner sites), and video ads as well using their YouTube platform. Google really provides the biggest opportunity simply because it has the most use amongst all search engines. As of the writing of this book, Google is still maintaining approximately 90% or so of market share for all search engines.

Bing ads are very similar to Google ads in how they function and display your ads, but they usually yield less results mainly due to less people using the Bing search engine. There can also be differences in demographics of those using Bing and this can result in variable results as well.

The bottom line is that with Google owning roughly 90% of the search engine market share, we suggest allocating most if not all of your advertising budget here. If you do want to advertise on Bing to compare results, we suggest allocating no more than 10% of your budget to Bing ads.

The typical cost-per-click on Bing's ad network has generally been found to be less expensive than that of Google ads due to much less competition, which is the primary driver of ad click pricing. And so, with this knowledge, you may find that Bing offers you some hidden opportunities that can make this ad network a bit of a secret weapon for you.

How the Process Works

Let's talk about how the Google AdWords process works.

First, Google AdWords is an auction-based system that places your ad in certain positions on the search results pages based on several criteria.

Most people assume ads are positioned solely on the basis of the maximum cost-per-click (CPC) that an advertiser is willing to spend, but this is only one of several criteria. Unfortunately, or maybe fortunately,

Google ads are not as simple as bidding higher to achieve the first position. This serves to give everyone a fair chance at having success with ads irrelevant of your advertising budget. But this is also not to say that someone with a \$300 per month ads budget can have much success versus a competitor with a \$3,000 per month ad budget. That competitor would simply be able to show their ads much more frequently, giving them a decided advantage.

As mentioned previously, Google primarily cares about showing users highly relevant ads based on their search query. Because of this, they won't just allow the highest bidder to take over the top position in ad search results. Instead, they use what is known as the Quality Score in order to help determine ad placement.

In reality, the more users that click on your ads, the more money that Google makes, so this is their incentive for using a Quality Score indicator in order to serve up only the best and most relevant ads based on the searcher's intent and specific search query.

More importantly, understanding how a Quality Score is derived is the key to how you can leverage that knowledge to your advantage, which in turn will help you become more relevant than your competition and thus get a lower cost-per-click.

Quality Score

Quality score is a metric that rates your ads based on keyword targeting, ad copy, and landing page quality and relevancy of your ad campaigns. The rating is based on a scale of 1 to 10, with a higher number being better.

The quality score of your ads has additive benefits that can increase your ad effectiveness exponentially. By this I mean, a good quality score will reduce the cost that you pay per click desired for a certain ranking position, whereas a lower or bad quality score will increase your costs in terms of what you spend to achieve that same ranking position.

Your Quality Score depends on multiple factors, including:

- Ad click through rate (CTR)
- Keyword relevancy
- Landing page quality and relevancy
- Historical performance of your ads
- Ad relevancy compared to keyword query

As well as a variety of other factors...

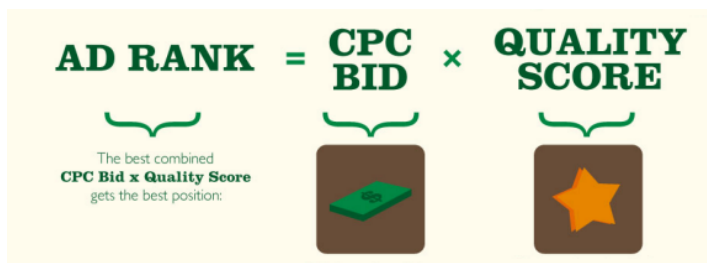


Only Google developers know exactly how much each factor weighs in your overall quality score, but it is a

well-known fact that CTR plays a very important role in the success of your ads campaign and your Return on Investment.

The higher your CTR is, Google will typically reward your efforts with better positioning of your ads, in addition to lower overall costs per campaign. What that boils down to is, what is your click through rate? Of the people that see your ad, how many of them click through to your landing page?

The better your ad is, the more users Google gets, and more users being served exactly what they want in ad results means more happy users and more money for Google. It makes sense, it's just smart business.



BETTER QUALITY SCORE = LOWER COST PER CLICK FOR TOP POSITIONS

This is why most Pay-Per-Click campaigns fail. Inexperienced advertisers ignore the quality score, and they only set up one text ad for all of their services, one ad group that lumps everything together, and the landing page probably isn't that compelling either. Or worse yet, they run all of their ad traffic to their home page instead of setting up specific landing pages, which we'll go into

more detail on.

So, what happens is they take all of those duplicate text ads for various keywords, then take all users to the home page of their website. That results in less interested traffic, resulting in a lower quality score, meaning more cost and lower or even poor results. This is the recipe for failure. Knowing what you're doing is a key factor on determining the success of your paid ads marketing efforts.

Achieving Great ROI from Pay-Per-Click Marketing

How do you make sure that you get this right?

How do you maximize the effectiveness of your pay-per-click marketing strategy?

The first thing I recommend doing is setting up different ad groups based on specific services and the accompanying keywords.

Here is the best way to break those down:

- Write a specific and compelling text ad that matches the keywords or those groups of keywords. Do not take this step lightly as ad text can make or break the performance of your ad.
- Then, build a dedicated landing page for the traffic that comes through pay-per-click for each ad group, and remember to make very specific landing pages for all of your different ad groups. Recall, it's about specificity and relevancy.

If you take these steps starting out, you will have a better quality score, and in the long run, you're going to be a lot more successful with your AdWords campaigns.

Creating Ad Groups

Within the home remodeling industry, what ad groups should you set up? I'll give some examples here, but you'll want to go a lot deeper with your keyword research and ad groupings. Consider this a primer for the sake of helping you understand how to start building your campaign.

Home remodeling services: For instance, “home remodel”, or “home remodeling contractor”, “home remodeling cost”, “home renovation company”, etc.

All of that can be grouped into a general ‘remodeling services’ ad group.

Other ad groups could be along the lines of “kitchen remodel”, “kitchen remodeling”, “kitchen remodeling contractors”, “kitchen remodeling company”, “kitchen remodel cost”, or the same combination of keywords but use “bathroom” instead of “kitchen” in the examples above.

These are all different classifications or different groups that have different sets of keywords to go along with the groupings based on search intent.

So, your goal is to think through, “What all services do I offer, and how many ad groupings do I need in total?”

On the other hand, if you're a **Custom home builder**, you're going to have an entirely different set of ad groups. Your ad groups will feature entirely different keywords, more along the lines of “home builder”, “custom home builder”, “luxury home builder”, “home builder companies”, “home additions”, “new construction”, possibly even “commercial construction”, “commercial builder”, “condominium renovations”, or

even “general contractor”.

So, you’ll want to map out the ad groups that go along with each of those services, as well as separate ad groups for residential and commercial services if you offer both. Once you figured out what your ad groups are going to be, then you can start to get specific. How do you set up your ad groups?

- First, pick a group of keywords that go with that ad group.
- Next, write specific text ad for that keyword within that ad group.
- Lastly, direct users to a specific landing page of your website.

Ad Group Templates

When we talk about ad *templates*, we’re talking about the keywords, text ad, and landing page(s). Then you want to think through what the content on that landing page needs to be, because if you’re driving traffic to a page that isn’t compelling, or doesn’t contain a strong call to action, then there’s no reason for that user to pick up the phone and call you versus hitting the back button in their browser and searching for a different company. Be cognizant of this because you can start bleeding money rather quickly.

You also want to be aware of other aspects when it comes to your landing pages. One thing that you want to make sure of is really speaking to the psychology of the person based on the keywords that you know they typed in, based on the aggregate ad group that you set up.

Talk about why they should choose you over your competitors, what is it that makes you unique or sets you in a class above your peers? Do you have more experience, more experience on unique or large projects? Do you have classifications or other licensure that allows you to do both residential and commercial?

Also be sure to showcase your online reputation, especially if it's a perfect 5 stars. Feature all of those reviews on your landing pages. Let potential new customers see what other happy and satisfied clients already have said about you. Your online reputation is just as important with paid ads as it is with SEO and Google Maps optimization that we talked about previously.

Break down the barriers to let them know that they can trust you. Help them realize that you're a quality company that strives to exceed expectations and offer a higher standard of service. You could even feature your A+ rating with the BBB if you have that.

***Give them the information they need to
feel comfortable,
and then give them a call to action.***

To review the steps that you need to take to get your ads and ad groups set up:

- Set up your ad groups.
- Pick your keywords.
- Write a specific text ad for those keywords.
- Set up a landing page. Make sure the content on that landing page resonates with the customer and answers the specific questions that they're asking.

Lead Capture

One other strategy for your landing pages is to offer visitors some type of lead capture mechanism. By this I mean, use some manner of lead capture, like a form to fill out, in order for you to capture their contact information and be able to follow up with more targeted information about your company. This could be something as simple as “Download Our Bathroom Remodeling Style Guide.” If they’re thinking about remodeling a bathroom, then maybe they want to get some additional information and get some bathroom remodel ideas to get them started in their research.

Offer them a guide of some sort to entice them to learn more about your company and see some of your portfolio. And a guide of this nature doesn’t have to be long – it could be a short four or five pages with pictures of different types of bathrooms, different types of styles, and preferably all previous projects of yours. If they are interested at this point, they will enter their name and email address in order to get that guide.

Now you have their email information, and you can email them over a pre-defined period of time. The truth is, when it comes to remodeling, people aren’t looking for an immediate service or wanting to make a quick decision. So, building your lead funnel and nurturing it over time is the key to landing clients consistently over time.

So, you could set up six emails that go out over the first 30 days after they landed on your landing page and gave you their contact info. They’ll get a pre-set series of emails where they’re going to get an email from you every few days with new information and messages, such as, “Hey! Just wanted to touch base. I know you were

considering remodeling your bathroom. We recently completed a project in the San Diego area and wanted to show you some of the before and after pictures.”

And that’s exactly what they were looking for! Now, they’re thinking, “That’s really cool! I really appreciate that they sent this. I was still thinking about doing my bathroom, so this was perfect timing. Serendipity even.” This is what helps your company remain top of mind with them over an extended period of time.

That really improves your probability of getting those higher transaction sales by collecting names and email addresses for those folks specifically, and dropping information to them over time, especially considering that your sales cycle is going to be considerably longer than that for a plumber.

I really feel that if you do this correctly, if you follow these strategies as laid out here, or at least you take these strategies to your current provider and say to them, “I want to make sure I break it into these six or seven categories, and that we have intelligently structured ads and landing pages.” If you do this at minimum, your return on investment is going to be significantly higher.

There really is no way that it wouldn’t be. Inevitably you will be achieving a lower cost per click, simply because your relevancy attribute is higher.

This will result in a better conversion from your click to call feature, or lead capture form, because your landing page is speaking to that person’s specific situation, which is really what they want. They want an answer to a problem.

Best Practices for Setting Up Your AdWords Campaign

Local Extensions

One of the things I recommend is setting up a location extension within your ad group campaign, or AdWords campaign. The purpose of a local extension is that it takes your AdWords campaign and it connects it with your Google Maps listing.

Within your AdWords dashboard, it's as simple as clicking 'Ad Extensions' and choosing the local extension.

By doing this it makes it so that when your ad shows up, not only does your text ad show up, but also a little map marker and your address shows up too, which is great for remodeling and construction related services. This serves to give you more 'real estate' on page one of Google.

Importance of Testing

The other thing that you want to do is always make sure that you're split testing your ads. I spoke previously about the Quality Score and the click through rate being a very high factor in that overall quality score.

Click through rate means if 100 people see your ad, and let's say only 10 people click on it, that's a 10 percent click through rate. If you can bump that 10 percent to 15 percent, Google will think that you have a really relevant ad for that particular search query.

And so, the key is to know which ads are working the best. The only way to do this is by testing each ad against a variation of itself. Make one minor tweak to the ad or ad copy, by doing this, it will give you a slightly different variation in order to find the best performing ad.

The process is to go into each one of your ad groups, such as the ‘remodeling company’ ad group or the ‘custom home builder’ ad group, and make sure that you have two versions of each one of your ads.

Review each ad’s performance at the end of the month and then see which ad had the higher click through rate. You now know which ad is the better performer.

An advanced split testing strategy is to develop a control over time. In other words, you want to have one ad that serves as the baseline for all of the little tweaks that you make as you continually split test ads against each other continually over time.

For instance, you might have one ad that converts at a 13 percent CTR. You’ll want to keep running that ad every single month until another ad gets a 14 percent click through rate. Now you have your new control ad and the original control ad is now gone and this new ad is now the new control. By doing that on a consistent basis for each one of your ad groups, that’s how you can get a better click through rate, and a better quality score, and then continue to get a lower cost per click over time for your keywords in all of your AdWords campaigns.

Monitor Page Position

One other component that you want to make sure you’re paying attention to is your average position on the page.

So, when we look at a search query on Google, and we’re looking at the pay-per-click listings, in what position do you find your ad? Is your ad at the top of the page in one of the first 3 positions? Or is your ad being served at the bottom of the page?

The lower down the page that your ad is positioned in, the lower the probability of someone clicking on your ad.

It also means that you'll probably be getting lower quality leads to your landing page as well.

If you're bidding so low that you're all the way down at the very bottom of the page, your click through rate is going to be skewed against you. Most people aren't looking in that area. They're looking at the top of the page, and maybe in the middle of the page, and so your click through rate is going to be lower no matter how well-written your ad is. Your Quality Score is then going to be lower too. It starts to create a vicious cycle, and ultimately, you're not going to get the number of clicks that you should for the right cost per click, and over and over this cycle will repeat itself until you eventually find yourself giving up on paid ads with the assumption that they're just not effective.

Keywords Research

The first step in researching your keywords is to use one of the well-known and effective tools available online, several with free subscription options available:

- Google AdWords Keyword Planner
- Ahrefs
- Wordstream
- SEMrush
- Keywords Everywhere

You'll want to gather as many relevant keywords as you can based on your different ad groups. Remember also to group your keywords into different ad groups based on

user intent, that is, similar variations of a keyword that different people may be using in their search queries. Every keyword that relates to your topic is an opportunity to gain one more set of eyeballs on your ad.

The easiest way is to start doing keyword searches using one of these online tools, then continue adding more searches as each search gives you one more direction to look at, possibly an expansion of a keyword grouping based on newly discovered keywords of a more rarely used variety.

Also, you want to pay attention to the distinction between ‘exact’ match and ‘broad’ match keyword varieties. Exact match is when somebody types in the exact keyword that you’re also bidding on, for instance, “home remodeling”. Broad match keywords would signify any version of that keyword that somebody might type in, for instance, “home remodeling contractor”, or “home remodeling company”, or even “best home remodeling company in Austin”.

One of the most often overlooked keyword strategies is the use of negative keywords. Negative keywords are keywords that are similar to your chosen keyword but have a completely different user intent. If one of your target keywords is “home remodeling”, then an example of a negative keyword would be “how to start a home remodeling company”.

These examples may seem similar enough for a computer algorithm, but obviously the correct intent is not there for the services that you offer. So, a negative keyword list tells Google what ads of yours NOT to show to users.

And make no mistake about it, not creating and refining a negative keyword list is one of the biggest reasons that you’ll see your ads budget evaporate very quickly.

Depending on your specific niche and industry, each one of those useless clicks could be costing you \$30 or \$40.

Additional negative keyword categories might include keywords related to jobs or employment, career or courses of study, 'how to' articles, and even marketing topics related to your profession. By creating a strong negative keyword list that covers all of the possibilities, you'll save countless dollars and lots of frustration, not to mention poor performance of your ads campaigns.

Mobile Devices

Recall how we previously talked about the fact that more and more people are accessing the Internet via mobile devices than those using desktop computers. This is especially true if we're talking about emergency roofing services or emergency water damage mitigation services.

What we have found too is that the way Google pay-per-click is rendering on most mobile devices, we're talking about iPhones and Android phones, the paid listings take up almost 50 percent of the real estate of the first page of search results.

People would have to scroll down quite a bit in order to see organic listings after getting through all of the ads.

The other key feature within mobile search pay-per-click advertising is the 'click to call' extension that we spoke of earlier that allows users to call you with one click of a button on their mobile device.

The caveat is that cost per click on mobile search is significantly higher than your typical cost on desktop computers and the normal AdWords advertising that

we're used to seeing. You want to pay close attention to your metrics as far as what your cost per call is, and what your average sale transaction is, as costs can escalate quickly. This is where knowing your cost of customer acquisition becomes very important.

And so, when I talk about the importance of having Pay-Per-Click advertising as part of your overall online marketing strategy, you could be missing a lot more traffic and opportunities if you're not leveraging paid advertising for mobile search.

If you know your numbers well, then you can play this game. You can capture some of those mobile searches and further contribute to your overall lead volume.

The Importance of Understanding Your Metrics

Budgets

The first thing you need to decide before building your ad campaigns is what your budget will be for your monthly ad spend. You must set a budget and stick to it and give it a chance to work, and sometimes having that patience to get your ads campaign dialed in can be the toughest part.

It's also necessary to have your budget set and a number fixed in your mind before starting to build your campaigns because this will also guide your keyword selection and bid strategy.

Some other things you want to pay attention to with your AdWords campaign is that a decent budget within a remodeling or roofing company is probably going to be no less than \$1,500 per month, while home builders and commercial construction firms will tend to pay more.

Anything less than an adequate ad spend budget will severely constrain your campaign in terms of prime positioning and visibility, thus driving costs higher for you as all the other metrics break down in that Quality Score formula that we spoke about previously.

On the other hand, we have clients that we work with that have an ad spend in the \$15,000 to \$20,000 per month range. The reason they invest so heavily into PPC marketing is because the spread on this is pretty significant. If you're spending \$15,000 a month on ads but you're bringing in an additional \$100,000 of revenue, or more, then your return on investment dictates that you keep this strategy in place. Simply put, it's making you money. That translates into a positive ROI that works not only for your advertising strategy but also for your goals and overall marketing strategy.

As long as you know your numbers, and you have the right tracking mechanisms in place, it's almost like going up to a slot machine and putting in \$1 and getting a \$5 bill out. Or investing in the stock market and consistently getting a 500% return on your investment. That's unlikely with the stock market, but easily accomplished with an expertly devised PPC campaign.

At first mention, some business owners might be a little freaked out by the sound of a \$3,000 or \$5,000 ad spend budget each and every month. But when you consider that it typically will take only one new client sale to realize a substantial return, well, it starts becoming a little more palatable rather quickly!

If you can consistently set up your pay-per-click campaign where you're putting in \$1 and \$5 comes out, if you have the manpower and you have the ability to scale your business and have set that as a goal, then why wouldn't you scale it to \$10,000 or \$15,000 ad spend per

month? It just makes sense.

Understanding Your Sales Numbers

Sales numbers are one of the most critical numbers for any business owner to know, of course, and this is no more obvious than with PPC marketing.

First, what is your close ratio? You should know this number. For instance, let's say that for every 10 phone calls that you get, you close one project as booked revenue. That's a closing percentage of 10%.

Pretty conservative, wouldn't you think? Maybe so, but I would rather see you run this numbers exercise conservatively so that you can see that it truly does make financial sense.

Let's assume that you have decided on a \$5,000 ad spend budget per month to dedicate to your PPC.

And if your average cost per click is \$40, then the number of clicks that you will need is $\$5,000 / \$40 = 125$ clicks. Make sense?

Next, what is your percentage of converting clicks into real leads that you get a chance to talk with? As a conservative estimate, let's use a conversion percentage of 20%, meaning that you convert 2 out of every 10 leads. To reference the above mentioned 125 clicks, that means $20\% \times 125 \text{ clicks} = 25 \text{ leads}$.

To summarize, for every \$5,000 in ad spend that you're spending monthly, you can expect to get 25 leads using this math. Recall that your closing percentage is 10%, conservatively, so that means you're going to book an extra two or three jobs per month.

Now, what is each job worth to you? Depending if you do small bathrooms or high end luxury homes or full home remodeling, or even commercial constructions projects that push some high metrics, this is the number that matters. What is your profit on each job? What is that job really worth to you?

If you make, on average, \$25,000 on each new project that you take on, that means 2 leads x \$25,000 = \$50,000 in revenue.

So, for this ad spend scenario, you just spent approximately \$5,000 to bring in \$50,000 of profit. That's a Return on Investment of 10X! Starts to sound a bit exciting, doesn't it?

These numbers are estimates, and your results and profit margins could of course vary greatly from this scenario outlined. On the flip side, you might be running your own commercial construction numbers and realize that your ROI could be even better if you can get the sort of online visibility that having additional real estate on the top of page one offers.

At any rate, this should give you a good idea on the potential benefits of PPC marketing with Google AdWords. With a deeper look into the numbers and ROI projections, you might just find Pay-Per-Click marketing carving some space out of your marketing budget, and for good reason.

Summary

Just to recap what we've covered in this chapter; the primary takeaway should be that you can really succeed with Pay-Per-Click marketing if you set up your

AdWords in a way that positions you for success.

You do that by setting up ad groups based on specific and high user intent keywords, setting up very specific text ads, and then landing traffic on specific pages of your website.

The reason for that is, as your relevancy improves, your cost per click will decline and your conversion rate will increase.

What that means is you're going to get a better return on the overall investment that you're making in your pay-per-click advertising and this could affect a lot of other decisions for what you can do within your overall online marketing plan.

And having all of your marketing channels working in synergy and all geared towards a positive Return on Investment is what it's all about.

Chapter 8: RE-TARGETING

What is Re-Targeting?

Do you find that your website is getting a good deal of traffic but yet you're still not receiving the amount of leads that you want?

The key concept to realize is that most people that land on your website are not ready to buy at that instant, and most in fact may not even be ready to even pick up the phone and schedule a consultation with you. Most typically is that they are still in their research phase, perhaps even just starting it, and so it may seem that you're losing out on a lot of opportunities.



The way to recapture those opportunities is to re-market to those people even after they've left your website. The idea is to stay top of mind with those people, and the way to do that is to re-target them with ads that they will see

on other websites that have partnered with Google.

Then, when they're ready to buy, to finally get that remodeling project moving forward, they'll think of you and move forward with booking that consultation. That's the goal of staying top of mind. And it works!

Have you ever been on a website looking at a particular product, maybe a new office desk or perhaps a new 75 inch television! And the next thing you know, you're scrolling your Facebook feed and you see an ad of that same exact television for sale at one of the big box stores.

That's Re-Targeting. Re-Targeting ads to be specific.

This is a very efficient form of advertising and particularly at keeping your brand and company name top of mind with those searching for your services.

And the added benefit is that Re-Targeting previous website visitors in this fashion is an extremely effective and economical approach because you already know that person is interested in your services. Otherwise, they would not have visited your website in the first place.

Lastly, Re-Targeting is extremely economical compared with other online advertising with Google AdWords or Facebook Ads because cold traffic on these sites can take some time to warm up especially relative to the more expensive ads offered on these platforms.

Why Employ Re-Targeting?

The sad truth is that most people that visit your website will not be reaching out to you on their first visit. Sometimes it takes 7 and even up to 12 touch points

before a site visitor is ready to schedule with you.

By Re-Targeting these individuals over the course of time, and using different ads and messages, this form of marketing will help you achieve a higher ROI with your marketing budget by pulling prospective clients back into your sales funnel.

As you already know, with most people that are thinking of a major financial decision like a remodeling project, a new room addition, or perhaps a new luxury custom home, this research and thought process can take up to weeks or even months.

Timing is everything when these people do finally decide to pull the trigger. And when that time comes for a decision to really start their contractor search in earnest, you want to be top of mind with them already. This may give you the first and best opportunity to pre-position your company and your reputation.

Re-Targeting ads can offer this advantage for you.

This may seem like the Internet is super cool, but let's face it, it can also be a little creepy. But sadly, that's just the world we live in now. Everyone knows what re-targeting ads are and if you've made a good impression on them, they'll want to give you a chance to dazzle them with your knowledge, experience, and expertise.

Where to Use Re-Targeting Ads?

Now that you know you can tag and re-market to every visitor to your website, you're probably wondering where do you place these re-targeting ads? The most common places for placement of Re-Targeting ads are on:

- Common news sites
- People's favorite blog sites
- ESPN
- Facebook
- Instagram
- YouTube videos
- And many other sites...

And once you're able to re-market to these people using your re-targeting ads, you can deliver a specific message to them based on knowing exactly what keywords they were searching for. This tells you precisely what their user intent was, and you can modify your ad accordingly so that you're addressing that specific need and interest of theirs.

The Internet is truly an amazing place!

The moral of the story: Re-Targeting ads are the most cost effective form of advertising out there and that's why we highly recommend that every contractor take this marketing channel seriously.

Chapter 9: TRACKING & RESULTS QUANTIFICATION

So, at this point in unwrapping your overall marketing plan, you've built and optimized your mobile responsive website, and you've continued your SEO efforts with an ongoing link building strategy to build more authority for your website and thus move up in the search engine rankings.

You now also have your PPC and Re-Targeting advertising campaigns up and running, so now how do you keep track of all this and figure what's working and what needs some tweaking? The key is putting some tools and tracking mechanisms into place so that you can track, measure, and quantify your marketing results and keep yourself moving in the right direction. Remember, the whole goal of marketing is to achieve a positive Return on Investment. You're in business to make money after all, right?

There are many tracking tools and mechanisms that you can put into place, for SEO, PPC, and plenty of other marketing channels that you can track, including social media and your video views and engagement on YouTube.

With so many options to focus on, and the ability to use a variety of tools and software, I'm going to focus on what

I feel are the three most important. Those are Google Analytics, Keyword Tracking, and Call Tracking.

Google Analytics

Some of the metrics that you want to start looking at first is Google Analytics. Google Analytics is one of the most well-known data and traffic analysis tools for your website, and it can tell you a lot about how well your website is performing.

One of the key metrics to monitor is how many people are getting to your website and what keyword they typed in to get there. Combined with what you'll see in your AdWords dashboard, you start to get a pretty good picture of what keywords work best for your goals. Google Analytics is a free tool that you can access using your Google ID, and some of the insights that you can pull from it are:

- How many visitors are coming to your website over a particular timeframe?
- How many visitors are coming to your website from organic listings versus paid ads?
- What keywords did they type in that brought them to your website?
- What all pages did they visit on your website?
- How long did they stay on each of those pages?

The process of adding Google Analytics to your website is relatively simple, it only involves one step of installing a small piece of code onto your website. Once installed, you're quickly up and running with your tracking efforts. This code is easily added into a pre-defined section of your website if it's built on Wordpress, otherwise you

may want to have your website developer install that code on there for you.

A quick word of caution. Make sure that your web developer installs the tracking code that you gave them, the one that you can access on your own from your own Google Analytics dashboard. Too often we onboard new clients and there's a tracking code on their website that they have no idea where it came from and thus don't have access to any of their previous data. It's like starting from scratch when it comes to accumulating and analyzing data for conversion optimization purposes. You want to avoid this scenario if you can.

You can then start to discover how many people came to your website via paid ads versus organic results and where you might have weaknesses in your marketing and keyword strategies. You can also see how much time they are spending on your website and can see what your bounce rate is, that is, how quickly they leave that page. If people are coming to a particular page but end up leaving that page after only a few seconds, 'bouncing' from that page in other words, then that gives you an idea that the ad copy or calls to action on that page may need improvement.

Another trend to watch is how many keywords are attracting traffic to your website, and is that number of keywords increasing every month? If so, this means your SEO efforts are paying dividends and the authority that you're building for your different services and keywords is having a positive impact.

This starts to get into Conversion Optimization that we discussed in Chapter 4. And so, for the purpose of this chapter on tracking and quantification, the bottom line is that it's important to pay attention to your monthly analytics and make sure the numbers are trending in the

right direction.

As I learned long ago in a statistics class, “the trend is your friend”. Don’t just look at one snapshot in time in terms of your data, look at the trend of that data over time and make sure it’s moving in the right direction.

Keyword Tracking

Another key tracking mechanism (pun intended!) to have in place is keyword tracking. At the beginning of this entire process, we talked about keyword research and knowing what all keywords that people are typing into their search engine queries. And we came up with a list of your target keywords and then broke those down into different groupings for the purpose of SEO strategies as well as PPC ad groups.

To keep all those keywords and their rankings organized, there are many keyword tracking tools out there, with more tools available every day. A few options to choose from are:

- Bright Local
- Raven Tools
- White Spark
- SEMrush
- Wordtracker

There are usually costs associated with keyword tracking tools, but it’s a worthy price to pay to understand how your keyword strategies are performing. But there is no better way to track your Search Engine Optimization efforts than with keyword tracking.

You can then run weekly or monthly reports to chart your progress over time, to see if certain keywords are moving higher up in the search results. This give you a great idea of how well your website is trending in the search engines and allows you to adjust SEO and link building strategies as needed.

After you've built your well-optimized website, with all 'on page' SEO elements in place (title tags, H tags, meta descriptions, proper keyword density, etc.), the best way to track your link building and other SEO efforts is through the use of keyword tracking.

And if you ever see your SEO rankings stalling out for a particular keyword, you can dig into that keyword research, look at your links, look at your 'on page' set-up, and basically figure out where you have weakness in your marketing strategy that is specifically centered around that keyword. A quick observation or tweak here can get you set back on the right course.

Call Tracking

The third tracking mechanism that you want to have in place is Call Tracking. This is my favorite. This strategy centers around employing the use of a tracking number so that you can precisely track how many calls you're getting and which marketing channels are bringing you the most opportunities and best ROI.

Looking at keyword rankings and website visits sounds exciting, but nothing matters more to a contractor than having his phone ring with new potential opportunities.

Having number one rankings on Google is all good and well, but if your phone is still not ringing, there is obviously more work to be done in order to get your

marketing plan dialed in.

And so, you want to make sure that you have some sort of call tracking mechanism in place. There are many tools out there that you can choose from:

- CallRail
- Call Fire
- CallSource
- Capterra
- And many other platforms to choose from...

Most of these call tracking platforms will let you choose a local based phone number or you could also choose a toll free number if you wanted to, but I don't recommend using toll free numbers in most situations. You simply plug in an area code that you want your number to be in, purchase that number, and then pay a nominal fee per month of usually just a few bucks.

Now, you can use that tracking number in all of your marketing, you can add it to your website, your graphics, and even add it across all of your citation sources. And it's as simple as setting the forwarding number where you want calls to ring to, usually your office or cell phone depending on the size of your company. Although the call may still be coming to the same number, you now have the ability to quantify each and every call to better determine ROI of each marketing channel.

One of the distinct advantages of employing the use of call tracking numbers is that you can record all of the phone calls. So not only are you able to track the number of calls that you're getting, but you can also monitor the quality of those calls or even use the call recordings as training tools for your company personnel.

With most of these platforms, you can also set up a code on your website that allows for what is called ***Dynamic Number Insertion***. This gives you the ability to swap out phone numbers on your website so that you can track visitors from their source, for instance, whether they came from organic search results, or maybe from a particular ad and landing page that you have a tracking number on.

This gives you the ability to really start to isolate how many calls that you're getting from your pay-per-click activity specifically, or how many calls come from your GMB listing specifically, and so this can really help you dig into your ROI per marketing channel. By fully understanding how each marketing channel is performing based on tracking each of those channels independently of the others, you can continue to refine your marketing strategies and your overall annual marketing plan.

Chapter 10: SOCIAL MEDIA

I want to touch briefly on Social Media. A comprehensive digital marketing plan can't ignore this marketing channel in this ever-connected world that we live in.

However, I will only touch on social media briefly, and the reason for that is primarily because the effectiveness and ROI quantification is very difficult if not impossible to track and to quantify.

Social media is great for building brand awareness, it's a great tool for staying engaged with your customers and possibly building your referral network. But as a lead generation strategy, as a marketing channel that you can quantify how many leads that you're getting from this channel, it's really not possible.

When people and potential new clients are on social media, they're typically on there to be social. Shocking I know! They're not on their Facebook page or looking at pictures on Pinterest because they're looking for a service that they're in need of. That's the key factor that distinguishes social media as a social network but not as a lead generation strategy.

On the other hand, I feel strongly that every company should be engaging in social media. It does build your brand and brand recognition, and it does keep you in front of your customers and followers, which may lead to repeat or referral business. Some smaller companies rely

on referrals exclusively as their inbound lead funnel, so your repeat and referral business are most certainly a viable marketing channel to pay attention to.

But you have to keep in mind that amassing followers for your Facebook page, getting likes for your business page, having someone re-tweet your daily posts, these are all activities that we've come to associate with social media. But ultimately, these are not lead generation strategies.

And that's where the biggest distinction comes into play. When you chose to work with a marketing agency, do you want to work with a marketing agency that focuses on activities and checking off a list of social engagement metrics, or do you want to work with a results-based marketing agency that focuses on increasing your leads and opportunities?

That's one of the most often repeated themes that we come across while talking with contractors and construction experts across the country. A lot of business owners that we talk to have worked with other marketing agencies and usually have attained results that leave a lot to be desired.

Either they worked previously with an agency that simply didn't do anything that produced results for their marketing and lead generation goals, or they worked with an activities-based marketing agency that touted all of their social media engagement metrics and social outreach, which also didn't produce any results.

As an example, we brought on a custom home builder and high-end full home remodeling company as a new client. They had previously worked with a marketing agency that focused strictly on social media and press releases for building "buzz" about the company. But after spending \$48,000 with this marketing agency, they

realized that they had not received one single lead from any of these marketing efforts. Not a single new customer for their marketing investment.

And that example embodies our overall marketing methodology that marketing is not about activities, it's about getting results. We are a results-driven marketing agency, and for us, nothing really matters unless we're producing results for our clients.

With that said, let's talk about social media as part of your marketing plan.

Why Social Media is Important

As previously noted, social media platforms are great at connecting you with your customers, it helps increase awareness about your brand, and it can lead to repeat and referral business that boosts your sales. And with more than three billion people around the world using social media every month, it's safe to say that social media is not a passing trend.

Build Brand Awareness

It's simple. If people don't know about your business, then they can't become your customers. Social media can boost your company's brand visibility amongst potential new customers, and so if you have a chance to be or not be on social media platforms, then obviously it is better to have social media profiles set up.

The good thing about this is that most social media platforms are free to use, so it's really an easy decision to

get on social media. But you also don't want to sign up for social media profiles and then never use or engage people on those platforms. It's as if it's better to not be seen at all versus having social profiles set up that have no posts. It actually could cast a negative impression of your company.

Being Authentic

Promoting your company on social media gives you an opportunity to let your brand's personality shine through in everything that you do on social media. What does your brand voice sound like, how does it represent who you are, and what marketing message are you trying to deliver?

Customers aren't interested in businesses that publish dry, almost templated, corporate-style social media posts. As a small business serving communities that you're active in, your message has to be a message that resonates with potential new customers.

Followers on social media want to see who the real you is, in other words, who is the real company behind the voice? Is it authentic? Are you being true to who you really are?

Communicating Authority

Nowadays, customers are becoming more and more savvy when it comes to digital marketing. And with this increasing degree of savvy and research, customers are becoming more discerning on who they want to do business with. And this is no truer than for contractors

doing high-end work like custom home builds, home remodels and additions, and commercial construction that usually places even more demands on the company doing the work.

Before doing business with a company, most consumers will now research that company online, they'll check out their website, they'll look at your social media profiles, and they'll look to see if you have established a glowing online reputation for your services.

By setting up robust social media profiles that are updated frequently with relevant content, this serves to build your brand's authority and to make sure that you're seen as 'the' expert in your chosen field and service area. This is your opportunity to make a positive first impression and to show that your business is knowledgeable, trustworthy, and approachable.

Social Media also gives you the opportunity to demonstrate your expertise as a thought leader in your industry. You can do this by sharing posts and writing content related to your expertise or that speaks more to your company's mission. By showing what your business offers and what your company values center on, you can establish instant confidence in your customers and potential new customers.

Objective and Goals of Social Media

When you're ready to add social media to your marketing plan, the key is to establish clear goals and objectives that you want to achieve. And a key component of setting effective goals is determining what metrics you'll focus on and then how will you measure and evaluate those metrics.

It can be as simple as looking to achieve new leads and closed sales, or will your goals center around gaining a certain number of followers, likes, and re-tweets?

A well-known method of establishing and measuring goals is to stick with the S.M.A.R.T. principle. This focuses on setting objectives that are:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Realistic
- Timely

This acronym is simple and self-explanatory but should not be overlooked when you're crafting your social media marketing strategy. If you don't set goals that can be defined using this methodology, most likely you are going to be disappointed in your results.

When it comes to social media, and any marketing channel that you employ, the most important step is to measure your results. The important question is, can you track and measure your goals in order to analyze the effectiveness of your marketing plan?

No marketing channel can truly be evaluated unless you're tracking your results and you can arrive at quantifiable numbers that measure your success. With social media, if your goals are simply to increase user engagement through adding followers and getting likes, then the success of your campaign can easily be quantified.

But if your goal of social media marketing is to drive more sales, it can get a lot trickier to measure the effectiveness of your social media strategies. And that's

why we put social media further down the list when it comes to effective marketing channels that drive sales and revenue.

We feel there is a place for social media marketing and awareness in your overall marketing plan, but know going in that your Return on Investment will be hard to quantify. It's really difficult to draw a distinction between increased sales and whether that had to do with a certain number of new followers or likes that your page received.

And since Home Remodeler SEO is a competitively driven, results based marketing agency, we like to focus on increased sales and revenue for your company. And that usually only comes with proven lead generation strategies like SEO, PPC, and Re-Targeting.

Our mission is to help you grow your bottom line.

Chapter 11: NEXT STEPS

So, now that you've gotten this far, how are you absorbing all of this information?

Throughout the course of this book, we have worked all of the way through a comprehensive marketing plan. We've taken you step by step through the process of claiming and optimizing your Google maps listing, we've talked about how to optimize your website for the most commonly searched keywords for the services that you offer, and we've talked about PPC marketing and grabbing some easy brand visibility through the use of Re-Targeting.

What has resonated with you the most? I'm hoping at this point that you have some things circled, some things that you've highlighted and that you've started to realize that some of this needs to be implemented right away. There is simply no way to compete online if you're not implementing at least some of what we've covered in this book. But most importantly, it comes down to taking action in order to get that market domination started.

You should have identified some key things missing from your current marketing plan and that you need to take action on. Then you can start to build a plan of action to double, triple, or even 10x the sales within your business.

I want to encourage you that digital marketing works. Maybe you tried some strategies but didn't have the

knowledge or experience to correctly implement a winning strategy. Or maybe you've worked with another marketing company in the past that produced no results for you and so now maybe you are a little hesitant on jumping back into digital marketing. Believe me, we've heard that story before, unfortunately.

But I want to encourage you that these same strategies and techniques can work in your market, and they will have a major impact on your bottom line.

As we come to the close of this book, I want you to review your Online Marketing Checklist and evaluate what you still need to implement.

- Have you implemented all of the strategies taught in this book correctly for your company?
- Have you identified any key issues that could be harming your website rankings?
- Do you have the resources to get this done on your own?
- Do you have somebody either on your team or outside your team that you can work with to implement these strategies to take your company to the next level?

If you can answer yes to all of these questions, then you are well positioned to take your business to the next level. I hope you've found this book useful and will keep me posted on your success.

If you answer no to any of those questions, then I would love the opportunity to work with you in order to help you take your company to the next level by getting your Internet marketing right.

For an overview of the entire process, here are the core concepts of our strategies broken down into their key categories. If you don't have a plan that you can follow and stay consistent with, it's crucial for your online success to have someone on your team implementing at minimum these core concepts.

Keyword Research

The foundation of your online success all starts with keyword research. The first thing we will want to do is develop your keyword list. It all starts with understanding what keywords that people are typing in when they need your services. We also want to distinguish between keywords with higher or lower search volume in addition to looking at the level of competition for those particular keywords. Understanding the keywords being used and the user intent is our focus starting out.

With keywords, we also want to look at your entire keyword list and then apply it to the service areas that are going to be optimized for. Knowing your baseline rankings for all of those keywords will be the key metric to pay attention to here as we chart our rankings progress over time.

On your own, you might also want to decide if you're going to determine your rankings across all search engines, or at least across the main three search engines most often used: Google, Yahoo, and Bing. Looking at keywords rankings for both Maps results and organic results is a key distinguishing factor as well. You will undoubtedly find that organic or Map listings win out over the other depending on different scenarios.

This is our starting point, the foundation that we construct

our online house on. That will help figure out where your baseline is at starting out, and give us good direction on where we need to focus on making the biggest improvements. Remember, you can't measure what you don't track.

Conversion Optimization

We'll look at the conversion elements on your website in order to determine how effective they are at actually generating conversions from site visitors. Do you even have elements built to convert on your site presently? Do you have effective 'Calls to Action' (CTAs), or do you lack offers and special programs that drive higher conversions?

Before we even look at having effective conversion elements in place on your website, the first question is whether your website may need to be rebuilt before it can ever have a chance at dominating in the search engine? Maybe it's even aesthetically pleasing currently, but does it lack most or all of the 'on page' SEO elements that are necessary to achieve higher rankings? Or maybe your site needs more personality or needs to tell a better story about your company and your brand?

Your website, and the keywords that help direct the design of your web pages, is the foundation that everything else in your digital presence will be built on. Optimizing for conversions becomes the next step in the process, which is what will give you the confidence that your website is built for conversions and able to compete in search results.

Building Authority

The key to bringing more brand awareness to your website and gaining better rankings in the search engine comes down to your Authority. Have you built enough brand awareness for your company and your website? Do you have enough high quality and relevant back links? Do you have any bad links pointing to your website?

Have you built a massive citation footprint all across the Internet and do all of your citations have N.A.P. consistency? Having issues with your N.A.P. consistency is one of the factors that can really affect your ability to rank on Google Maps.

Have you built a 5 star reputation online? Do you have online reviews? Do you have a process in place to get real reviews from real customers, and to do that on a consistent basis? Obviously the closer you are to a perfect 5 star reputation, the better it will be for attracting more potential new customers. But whether you have a 4 star reputation or a 5 star reputation doesn't matter as much to Google as the fact that you have a consistent stream of reviews being left online for your company. This proves that you're a company that should be relevant in the search results because people are sharing feedback about your company after experiencing your services.

Plan of Action

If you've read this far, first, I commend you! Reading about marketing and keywords and back links probably doesn't top too many people's lists for best books to read! But I sincerely hope that you have gained some valuable insights into creating a digital marketing plan built to succeed.

So, whether you just have some questions and need some direction, maybe need some help on how to implement all of these ideas on your own, then we're here to help and support your digital marketing efforts.

We decided long ago to hone our craft and become experts at marketing for contractors, construction and remodeling businesses, as well as roofing and a couple of other contractor related industries. This has given us the opportunity to test and tweak every strategy and process used in our company, and it's this commitment to excellence that has set us apart from our competitors.

If you're ready to take your company to the next level, if you're tired of stagnant results year over year for your company, then maybe it's time to let the marketing experts take over. You can focus on running and growing your company, and we'll focus on putting the right marketing strategies in place to help you get there.

The first step in that process is contacting our office and requesting a marketing evaluation of your website and overall digital presence. Upon request, we'll look at your overall digital presence: your Website, your placement in the Search Engines, your PPC paid advertising efforts or opportunity, as well as looking at your Brand and Authority.

Once we conduct our research into all aspects of your digital marketing, we'll be able to provide you a complete assessment on how and in what areas that you can improve, and what the next steps are for you to take your business to the next level.

To request a FREE Online Marketing Evaluation, you can contact our office at (855) 235-9140. In this strategy session, we'll help you:

- **Identify** key issues or penalties that may be harming your website without your knowledge
- **Look** at a competitor analysis of your website versus your competitors
- **Evaluate** what key performance issues that are missing or holding you back
- **Highlight** ways that you can accelerate your Lead Flow from online marketing channels
- **Determine** if SEO and/or PPC are the best marketing strategies for you
- **Increase** conversions through the use of Conversion Optimization analysis
- **Uncover** hidden revenue opportunities that you may be missing out on currently
- **Offer** suggestions and recommendations that need to be implemented immediately

You can also schedule your customized **Online Marketing Audit** by going to:

<https://www.HomeRemodelerSeo.com/strategysession/>

We look forward to getting the opportunity to work with you and help you scale your business beyond what you thought was even possible. The Internet is a vast blue ocean of opportunity for any contractor looking to take his company to the next level. But you have to be in the game to be able to play the game.

“Build It and They Will Come.” That phrase worked great for the movie, “The Field of Dreams.” But it doesn’t work online by just building a website and hoping everyone finds it. The key nowadays is ranking on page one of the search engines. And to do that takes a well-thought out marketing plan and smartly executed strategies.

I invite you to experience a new world of opportunity and let our team of marketing professionals go to work for you. Nothing brings us more satisfaction than seeing our clients achieve, and hopefully even surpass, their annual revenue goals. That may be some of the competitive nature of our team revealing itself, but I can honestly say that the bigger results we achieve for our clients, the more satisfaction that we experience as a TEAM. Your success is Our success. It's that simple.

I hope that you've enjoyed this book as much as I have enjoyed writing it.

But most of all, I hope that you make a commitment to implement these strategies for your company. If you truly want to dominate your market and grow your revenue, I hope that you take action and implement the strategies presented in this book and then sit back and reap the rewards. Now go crush it!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bob Vance is the Founder and CEO of Home Remodeler SEO, a digital marketing company that specializes in working exclusively with residential and commercial contractors. Some of Bob's clients include home remodeling firms, kitchen, bath, & basement remodelers exclusively, custom home builders, commercial construction companies, roofers, windows installation companies, and a few other niches related to the home and commercial improvement industries.

Bob prides himself on positioning his clients to dominate search results on Google for their local markets, and loves tracking data in order to show proof of the positive Return on Investment that his clients get to enjoy.

Bob is a graduate of The Ohio State University and currently lives in sunny and tropical Denver, Colorado. When not working, Bob enjoys watching the Buckeyes, reading books, and enjoying the wonderful outdoors treasures and locations that Colorado never falls short of delivering.

APPENDICES

GET YOUR ONLINE MARKETING RIGHT: WORKSHEET

Check off the things you are doing and circle those things you are not:

- Do you have a website?
- How many phone calls are you getting each month from your website?
- Is it properly optimized for search?
 - Do you have your main keyword on the Title Tag on each of the pages of your website? E.g. Your City Remodeler | Your Company Name
 - Do you have pages for each of your core services?
 - Do you have pages for the brands that you service?
 - Do you have unique content on each of the pages of your website?
 - Are you helping Google understand your true service area?
- Is your website MOBILE site-friendly?
- Are you consistently creating new content, blogging and creating new inbound links back to your website?

- Have you optimized correctly for the Google Map Listings?
 - Do you have access to your Google Plus & Google My Business listing?
 - Have you properly optimized your listing?
 - Are you on all the major online directory listings with the same company name, address & phone number?
 - How many online reviews do you have?
 - Do you have a proactive strategy for getting new online reviews every day?

- Are you active on Social Media?
 - Do you have your business profiles setup on Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, and YouTube?
 - How many likes do you have on Facebook?
 - Are you updating your social profiles on a daily basis?

- Are you leveraging Email Marketing?
 - Do you have a database with your customer email addresses?
 - Are you sending out a monthly email newsletter?
 - Are you leveraging email to get online reviews & to draw customers into your social media profiles?

- Are you taking advantage of paid online marketing opportunities?
 - Do you have an AdWords Campaign? Are you strategically targeting prospective

- clients with specific ad groups, text ads & landing pages?
- Do you have a premium ad on Angie's List, Yelp, CitySearch, YP.com?
- Are you taking advantage of Paid Lead Services – Home Advisor, etc.?
- Do you have the proper tracking in place to gauge your ROI?
 - Google Analytics
 - Keyword Ranking Tracking
 - Call Tracking
 - CRM with tracked lead sources

DOWNLOAD THE WORKSHEET AT

**[Https://www.HomeRemodelerSeo.com/
online-checklist](https://www.HomeRemodelerSeo.com/online-checklist)**