

Licence Thesis Structural Web-Marketing

Using fundamentals structures from Internet, and web-marketing methods to promulgate the popularity of a mobile application

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Web Structure, a Support for Marketing

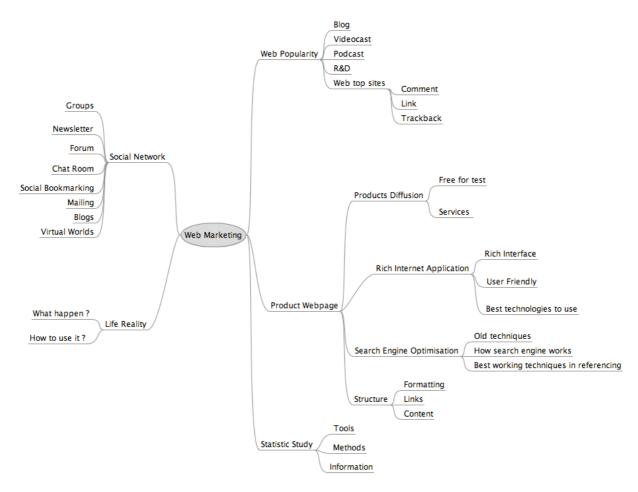


Figure 1: Fundamental Web-media (see Annexe A)

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Introduction

Web-marketing is a multipart work, and it must always be linked to real world marketing. This work proposes to study the different parts that a global web-marketing approach uses and will also focus on the structure that can be deployed to support our marketing.

In the first part we will study the social networks on Internet. As there are various structures of social networks, we will therefore begin by identifying the main categories of networks and then we will examine how to interact with the various networks so as to drive trafficking and "word of mouth" for our proposed products.

In the second part we will concentrate on the "Life Reality" or what interests people have at a specific time. We will go even further by interacting with news providers providing the right information at the right time. Then, we will study some news-analysis techniques to support our web-marketing campaign, and especially to find what will interest our future customers at a precise time.

The third part is about self-buzzing or how to create a buzz about our activities (or whatever we market).

In the fourth part of this thesis will go more into detail about the media that can be used in the construction of "Web Popularity".

The fifth part will be more a technical explanation on how to make a website that gets natural referencing in the search engines (such as Google or Yahoo) and the different tools that create visibility on the web.

In the last part we will try to measure, with statistic tools we could find on the Internet, the success of our structural marketing.

PROBLEMS

Our principal problems will come from the analysis of data. We can easily find a lot of data on the Internet but we must stay careful regarding the following three points:

No database has a complete hold of what is happening on Internet, in terms of traffic, interest, links or keywords. Databases are snapshots from different viewpoints, rather than authoritative universal metrics. Finding the appropriate data is a key issue in web statistics. To select the correct data we must know the nature of the principal biases of the different web statistics.

Using the correct data to extrapolate the correct observation, it can sometimes be a little confusing to see how many visits to our server are save on the log files and how many visits actually happen to be from human origin. The purpose of this thesis is to explore different possibilities for making web-marketing without spending any money in advertisement, this being accomplished only by adequately structuring our web-campaign and by using the most useful tools to help us. The non-monetary investment in a marketing campaign brings about some with difficulties in terms of competing other—competitors. Nevertheless, we will finally see that a well-structured campaign can be more effective, in the long term, than a campaign using older and more traditional media.

The biggest issue for a campaign without monetary investment is time. It is very hard and nearly impossible to last a long time on the top of the buzz-wave without money. Once we get known we must be sure that we provide quality services and traditional marketing (customers relations) that will ensure the stability of our customer base growth. With this in mind we will begin analysing the different media that support marketing on Internet and see how we could use these media to promote our application.

Hypothesis

The goal of this thesis was to catch at least 100.000 visitors on the website of FoxyTag, an application whose trust engine has been developed at the University of Geneva. The application to be promoted is social mobile software that aims to signal radars on mobile phones, interacting with a GPS (*Global Positioning System*) on the J2ME (*Java to Mobile Edition*) API (*Application Programming Interface*). The software is called **FoxyTag**, and can be downloaded from: http://www.foxytag.com.

While trying to attract people to the website, we will study what drives the best returns in terms of web-marketing strategies, and what doesn't, by analysing the popularity of the website.

We will also use the fundamental structures of Internet to give the best visibility to our website assuring a structural self-promotion of our website. We will not do just "search engines optimization", although it is one part of our jobs. Our hypothesis is the following: Without a lot of investment, the structures that the Internet offers are mostly sufficient to market an application or, as a matter of fact, anything else we would want to market on a website. Let us begin our analysis by studying how to direct attention to our website / application by doing some Buzz.

What is "Buzz"?

A simple definition in an electronic world

"A steady low humming sound likes that of a bee"

Those three definitions, found in Encarta, of the word "buzz" (http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/dictionary/DictionaryResults.aspx?refid=1 86159378) can be used to define this term in an electronic world. It is a social phenomenon, increasing very quickly but for a short time on a specific subject. It is driven by the social network in which people share information (by phone, mail, talk, blog) with other people who will in turn propagate the news until it pops-up (generally the interest is short-lived).

The buzz phenomena is not new in human behaviour, it is simply changing in terms of speed and quantity in our electronic world, the amount of information travelling on Internet is so huge that we could do nothing else but read news during all our life, which could lead to web addiction, a well described psychological pathology.

New technologies facilitate information sharing with others, and have completely changed our vision of time. Information travels much faster, touching prioritarily people having interest in this information and later everybody else with more traditional media.

Nowadays it does not take more than five minutes to write a post on a blog, to chat or simply to talk over IP (*Internet Protocol*), everybody can create information and share it. This behaviour is what we will try to use in our buzz web-marketing campaign.

The perspective with wireless technologies are even greater, today on the modern mobile phone, PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) or any "communicator" can give access to Internet, Mail, Video, Music, Videotelephony, Games, Chat, and many more.

[&]quot;A short-lived interest or enthusiasm"

[&]quot;Publicity, or interest generated by publicity"

Buzz marketing: a viral marketing technique

In buzz marketing campaigns, the advertiser seeks to use only a few people who have heavy influence on their peers.

"It's a sophisticated word-of-mouth campaign where consumers are flattered to be included in the elite group of those "in the know" and willingly spread the word to their friends and colleagues"

http://searchcrm.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,290660,sid11_gci939341,00.html

Those people will drive information directly to a specific public; it can be seen as "surgical marketing". The viral term explains the behaviour of the community member, spreading the word worldwide about advertisement, new technologies, or anything else. There are a lot of different ways to create buzz with viral marketing. At the end of this thesis we will explore "advergaming" (advertisement by games), or advertisement based on games to create viral communication. These marketing techniques aim to make people talk about us, leading them to our website.

Recent evolution of marketing

Marketing evolves with new technologies, it has moved from a product point of view to a user experience point of view. New technologies bring a large choice of media to use for marketers. But it means that the marketer has to use "technology spies" or "geeks" that can give them all the information necessary to promote themselves with moderns way. A good example is to observe how politicians, who use marketing since the 1960's, are using new technologies to drives their ideas home to the electorate.

John Edwards, a candidate for the presidency of the United States of America created a "Twitter" (http://twitter.com/johnedwards). "Twitter" is a community of people answering the simple question: "what are you doing?". To Twitter is not only answering that question, but also creating community of friends and followers. It is surely not the ultimate way to get elected President, but the candidate used the current buzz around Twitter, to make people talk about him. It worked quite well, he started on the 4th of January 2007, it took some time to grow but one and half month later, in February, the buzz was beginning.

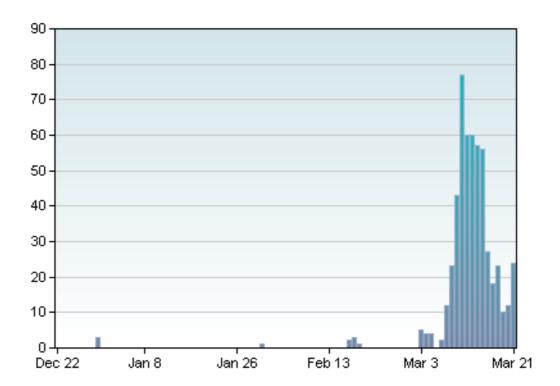


Figure 2: Number of blogs linking to John Edwards at Twitter

Another example of political use of new technologies takes place in Switzerland, a Federal Councillor created a blog over his point of view on society (http://moritzleuenberger.blueblog.ch), he is the first Federal Councillor to use that technology and he already had more than five hundred comments on his first post in a week. Buzz about his blog did not spread worldwide, as these essentially regional news were not too interesting to the rest of the world. It is noteworthy that the buzz was driven by the traditional media (television and press) in Switzerland.

Some examples of Buzz

To explain the phenomena of buzz some recent examples of famous Buzz marketing campaign will be mentioned. For example, the Mentos-diet coke Geyser: Mentos (http://mentos.com) said they had found more than 800 videos of people trying to redo the geyser obtained by mixing a bottle of diet Coke with a pack of Mentos and even traditional media (television, newspaper) spoke about this. It resulted in a big marketing advantage; it appeared that the Mentos people themselves did not start it.

This trick was known for some years already but the newfound fascination amongst young people to create a video content and to share it, made it notorious. The Mentos official home page, during the time of the buzz showed, on the first page of mentos.com, videos of people making those Geysers. This is a proof that the Mentos people put this in the centre of their Brand marketing. On the other hand Diet Coke was not happy with this buzz as it did not fit their own Brand strategy. Videos about Diet Coke and Mentos were watched more than ten millions times with a starting investment of zero money and this after the companies had invested heavily to stay on the top of the wave.

(http://youtube.com/results?search_type=search_videos&search_query=mentos&search_sort=video_view_count&search_category=0).

Another successful use of buzz marketing is the Adobe story. (http://www.adobe.com). Adobe has a blog aggregator, a web service, displaying the latest blog post on the Internet. Originally it was started by Macromedia for anyone seriously wanting to talk about Adobe/Macromedia and Adobe/Macromedia related products, (http://weblogs.macromedia.com/mxna).

This strategy is excellent as Adobe wins a lot, more than 1300 aggregated bloggers freely writing articles and citing examples about Adobe products. The blogger obtains a very interesting referencing link from Adobe. To be linked directly from this aggregator and Adobe domains, a high authority website, has a huge influence in terms of page rank (more on than latter).

Adobe with this service, can keep itself in the top of the wave for quite a long time now. Adobe has passed their page rank from five to ten in less than two years. Also, Adobe invests a lot in evangelist (remunerated enthusiasm technologists and bloggers propagating the buzz and sharing their ideas with others).

Danger of Buzz

As said before, Diet Coke was not favourable with the buzz around the videos running on youTube because it did not fit the Brand Psychology. But they could not control it. The non-control of how people perceive our products, and propagate it, is the principal danger of buzz. What is happening is out of control. So if an error is done during the buzz campaign, it can go against us.

Sony (http://www.sony.com) example, asked Zipatoni (http://www.zipatoni.com), a marketing company, to make a viral marketing campaign for the PSP (a portable game platform). They decided to create a blog called "all I want for xmas is a PSP" (http://www.alliwantforxmasisapsp.com), which was an attempt to create a false blogger wanting to have a PSP. They didn't think that people, would try to find more about them. Finally someone discovered that a marketing company was behind the blog. Blog visitors and everybody hearing the story, felt like they were being considered as "money givers", and it made a really bad buzz (more than five hundred blog posted against the marketing strategy of Sony) for the PSP. Sony had to accept their mistake publicly, and promise to talk only about their products and to stop trying to play smart.

(http://blog.wired.com/games/2006/12/sony_admits_to_.html).

Buzz marketing is a great marketing tool, which because it can possibly backfire in case of bad use must be seen also as a danger. To avoid such a backfiring, the first thing to do is to respect, always, our future customer. Do not think it is possible to hide something on the Internet. The web is too much visited: Respect and transparency are key values for a successful viral web-marketing campaign.

Preparing a Web-Marketing Campaign

We cannot begin a marketing campaign without a minimum of marketing study. The work of the marketer, and we will not enter in the details of theoretical marketing, as it is not in the scope of this paper. However we have to keep in mind that we can support the marketer simply by using the fundamental structures of the web. We focus our interest onto the vehicle supporting our web-marketing campaign and how we can use those media to become popular and to cause our application to be downloaded by a maximum of people.

Understanding Fundamentals

Before going into the explanations of all the methods to structurally market an application on the Internet we have to understand the basis of the mechanisms of search engines. Unfortunately for us, the algorithms of indexation from search engines are not in the public domain. So we can only guess how they work. Even worse, these algorithms change with time. It means that our work may become useless in the future so we have to stay flexible and use a structure separating the contents from the presentation. Nevertheless, let us examine what we can learn from actual behaviour of search engines.

How it works

Search engine works can be categorised into three logical methods, aimed at understanding the website: "webcrawling", analysis and answering.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search_engine#How_search_engines_work).

The first part is "webcrawling", or how to retrieve the maximum pages on the Internet. Search engine launch "spider" or robots over the Internet that copies the content of any website in their cache. This cache will be the data where the analysis will be done, which explain the small delay between website update and search engine update. Spiders will then be redirected to follow every links identified on a website.

The second part is the analysis of the retrieved webpage, the search engine algorithm extracts much information about the webpage such as which words are used and with what formatting (Title, Paragraph, Image title, ...). Then it analyses the link structure of this website. A link to a website can be considered like a positive vote for this website, remember that there is no semantic understanding from the search engines, so search engine developer tries to create a social "election". It has been said that Google algorithms query more than 200 parameters to evaluate the pertinence of a webpage. This part is where search engine optimization specialists make their bread and butter; we will study some of their techniques later on.

The third part displays relevant information on the user's search query. When a user writes a query about some keywords, the search engines will display the result from the more relevant to the less relevant. Relevance is judged by the previously done analysis. Basically we can say that the frequency of a word used in a webpage and the positive correlation of the quality of the inbounds links (with the same word or a synonym) from websites with a big authority, will be judged as relevant. A list by categories of search engines is available on Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_search_engines).

Architecture Overview

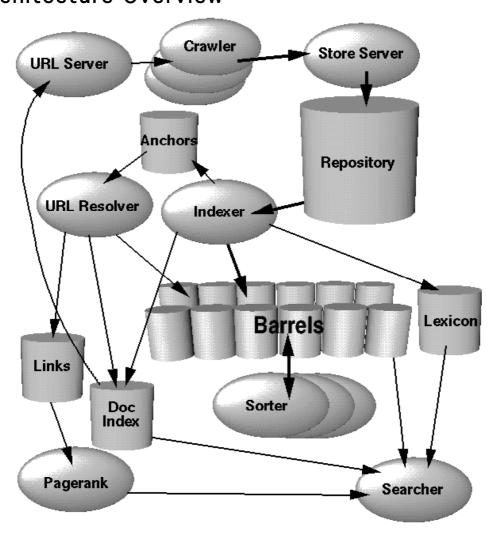


Figure 3: High Level Google Architecture

Figure 3 (http://infolab.stanford.edu/~backrub/google.html), shows an overview of the internal architecture of Google. Even though we will not go too much in details about the architecture of Google, we still can notice some important points (the search algorithms calls three data structure): Page Rank (more on the next chapter), Doc Index (associate webpage ID, for database processing) and Lexicon (list of relevant word).

With these information Google computes the answers to our query. Which makes obvious what we have to focus upon: link, keywords used and authority rank.

Page Rank

Google provides a public data for its rating called Page Rank.



Figure 4: A simplified view of Page Rank

To get the page rank of our website, we need to download the Google Toolbar (very useful for web-marketers). Once installed, we can find information about the page rank, the Google cache, backward links and similar links. There is also an option to highlight the researched word, so that we can quickly visualize the use of our main keywords.



Figure 5: Useful tools in Google Toolbar

By reading the Google Help we can obtain more clues about how the algorithms works as it shares data gathered for this purpose.

Let us have a look to the alternate query that we can find in Google Help (http://www.google.com/help/operators.html), and so try to better understand how it works:

[Cache:] With this query Google will show its cached page from a website (what pages it used to compute the analysis).

Query example: cache:foxytag.com

[Link:] This query will list web pages that have a link to the specified website, interesting to know about our linking structure.

Query example: link:www.foxytag.com

[Related:] This query will list web pages that are similar to and related with the specified website.

Query example: related:www.foxytag.com

[Site:] This query permits a search in a constrained website. For example we can see how much time our keywords appear in our website and where.

Query example: site:foxytag.com gps mobile

[AllInTitle:] Restricts the result to words contained in the title page, useful to know who is talking about us, and if the title tag is well defined in our website.

Ouery example: allintitle:foxytag

[AllInUrl:] Restricts the query to the element contained in an URL.

Query example: allinurl:mobilesgpscompatibles

With these advanced operators, we can confidently say that Google looks up in each of all these domains to analyse a given website and to make a computation of each of these result to give a page rank. It implies that we must take care about: who links us and who we link, the keywords contained in our website, in the title and in the URL. We can mix Google query operators to make a powerful query such as knowing how many pages of FoxyTag website got a title with GPS: site:foxytag.com allintitle:gps. Now we can check all the errors of referencing we have on the structure of our website.

Tools to analyse our website

Site Score

Site Score (http://sitescore.silktide.com/) analyses some points useful for a better website, how much linking to use, the size of our pages and the speed of response from our website.

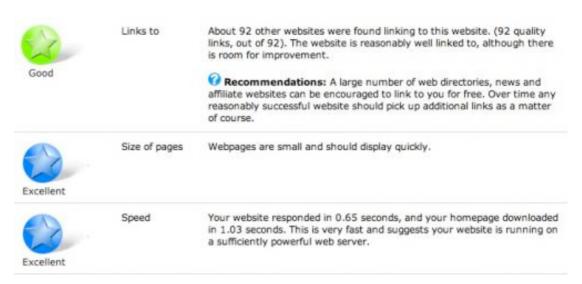


Figure 6: A sample screenshot from Site Score

Site Score can give us a detailed breakdown from our website, sparing us precious time. It will analyse for example, the number of incoming links to our website, the size of the pages, the speed and much more.

Smart Page Rank

Smart Page Rank (http://www.smartpagerank.com) allows us to compare our page rank in the different data centres (organized by region) from Google. Each data centre has its own page rank for a website, which explains fluctuation in page rank from region to region.



Figure 7: 30 Google data centre page rank for foxytag.com

Figure 7 shows a stable distribution of our page rank. In case of unstable distribution we must work directly on the region that has the lower page rank.

Smart Page Rank also provides important information concerning our page indexation (how many pages are visible to spiders) and interesting thoughts about the algorithm mechanisms of Google

(http://www.smartpagerank.com/pagerank-explained.php).

Media Supporting Web-Marketing: Social Networking

Introduction to Social Network

"The personal or professional set of relationships between individuals. Social networks represent both a collection of ties between people and the strength of those ties. [...] Recognising social networks assists in determining how information moves throughout groups, and how trust can be established and fostered. "

http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/sarc/E-Democracy/Final_Report/Glossary.htm

The social networks are a very valuable way to communicate directly with people with a specific interest and they are also an excellent method for knowing what people think about our marketing.

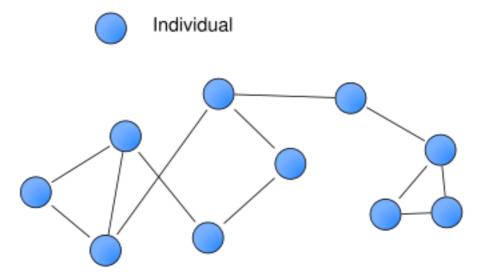


Figure 8: Example of a social network diagram

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_network_service

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_network

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_social_networking_websites

Social networks can be reduced to three categories, described below without any particular order:

1 - Groups:

- **1.1 Newsgroups** are on-line discussions in a group based on email technologies. When we send an email to a news group, every member of the group will receive our email and we just need a newsreader and a provider allowing the participation to newsgroups. Focused newsgroups allow us to touch people sharing a common interest for the products we wish to market.
- 1.2 Forums are another way for people to discuss favourite topics. Forums are based on the HTTP technologies. Basically, a browser suffices for participation in a Forum. Forums differ from Newsgroups also in terms of high visibility of the information provided. Most of the Forum threads are accessible with search engines (such as Google, Yahoo or Live). This high visibility gives an important advantage to the Forums in terms of web referencing.

2 - Virtual relations:

- **2.1** Mailing is the oldest technique of communication on the Internet. Similarly to newsgroups, the receiver, in a legitimate situation, actively requests for reception of the mail. This implies that the receiver has written down his email address on a form.
- Possessing Email addresses is of big value for marketing, because we can send communications to a place where we are sure that the user will look i.e. the Email reception box.
- 2.2 Instant messaging allows people to discuss live topics of their interest. Chats are often used for this type of communication and they tend to have a more sentimental weighting than discussions in groups. These particular sentimental aspects give an advantage in terms of experimental marketing. Instant messaging is often used by people that already know each other, but it can also be used to discover people sharing a common interest. A huge proportion of people tends to trust friends or real people in terms of buying decision.

2.3 - **Virtual worlds** are similar to chats but in a specific environment. Virtual worlds (such as Second Life) are another way to communicate with others. Here, people are more interested in meeting other people and doing business than to chat about a specific interest, however virtual worlds permit a vast in-depth people experiment. In terms of marketing it is akin to being in direct contact with people. In fact, with virtual worlds a direct foot in the participant's private home is made possible.

3 - Human generated content:

3.1 - Social powered content are contents findable in the Internet but that "real people" recommend. These services are more and more used to find pertinent information about topics of interest. It is a real joy for a marketer to get into these socially powered contents as it drives a lot of specific interest traffic. Contrary to groups socially powered contents can drive millions of visits, whereas groups can drive only thousand of visits.

Examples of Social Network Use in Marketing

There are numerous different social services based on Networks. Let us begin our tour of social networks in the "groups" category.

Newsgroups and forums are organized by subject. It is important to focus on topics that are relevant to what is to be marketed. The easier tools are Google Groups (http://groups.google.com) and Yahoo Groups (http://groups.yahoo.com). By making a query in those groups' search engines, we will find quickly what groups are appropriate to our network. We just need to subscribe and begin to communicate with all those involved and interested in the talked-about topics. After some time we can begin posting about our product innovations and upgrades, and this directly to the core of users interested in our technology profile.

Setting up a virtual relation is not that easy. In mailing, we first have to gather Email addresses, and then we must save enough information when the user subscribes, this will give us the possibility to create a direct and a personalized contact with the user. For example: Send a thank- you to new customers, send a mail for Christmas and New Year or announce updates and new products.

In virtual worlds it is becoming even more complicated because we need to attract people to the place were we make marketing. In Second Life (http://secondlife.com), a virtual and persistent world were business is warmly welcome; we tend to use what is called avatar marketing [CF. Harvard Business Review by Paul Hemp]. When marketing online, "you want sustained engagement with the brand rather than just a click-through" to purchase or for product information, says Bonita Stewart (responsible for interactive marketing for Daimler Chrysler's Jeep and Dodge brand). One of the nonacademic question is who do we market to in a virtual world, the fleshand-blood members or their avatars? The members is the one who has access to the wallet but their avatars represent an extension of their personality, able to influence its creator's purchase in the real world. For example Nike's marketing campaigns in the virtual world were a success, they sold virtual Nike shoes that helped virtual people to run faster, making the real member behind the avatar interact on an every day basis with the Nike brand. The danger in virtual worlds is to create virtual spam, which always leaves a bad feeling with the users.

The social powered content is very effective, for example the site Digg (http://digg.com) can drive up to 50.000 visitors a day, this is called the Digg effect (a wave of users coming in a very short time that often causes web servers to break down). The problem is to get "digged". For FoxyTag we have been digged, but the topic was not so much digged by people, but it was our starting point of interest from traditional media. It seems that the first journalist that writes about FoxyTag, had read the news on Digg.

(http://digg.com/gadgets/FoxyTag_A_free_system_to_warn_of_speed_cameras_o n_mobile_phones).



Figure 9: The most Digged story: Apple IPhone Photos

Compared with the first picture of the Apple IPhone, which is the most "digged" story in the last 365 days (but this was written only 65 days away from today) the score for the FoxyTag story is very low. If we browse the most popular story in the last 365 days (http://digg.com/news/popular/365days), it is hard to produce a correct statistics about user likes and dislikes. The number of users of such a site is so large that it is nearly impossible to influence the popularity of a topic, nevertheless it is always a good idea to send the digg topic to all our friends' networks as it have a very high level of Return On Investment (ROI) if it works.

Media Supporting Web-marketing: Blog

In this part we will study how blogs can help us to create a well functioning marketing campaign. We will try to focus on the way to use the best technologies related to our marketing campaign.

Definition

"[...] is a Web site that consists of a series of entries arranged in reverse chronological order, often updated frequently with new information about particular topics. The information can be written by the site owner, gleaned from other Web sites or other sources, or contributed by users."

http://searchwebservices.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid26_gci213547,00.html

Blogging is more and more used, from big companies to politicians and from the young to the old. They use it to communicate and to allow vertical communication, it means that we are not only writing about something but people can also react easily to what we have written. Blogs can have an incredible impact on communication but like all communication this can be dangerous. Blogs drive branding to a new level of communication were there is much more reactivity to our work, much more advice from our customers themselves and it is cheap (until a certain point).

Usage

From a marketer's point of view, blogs can be used in several ways. The first and most obvious is to contact directly the bloggers and to ask them to talk about our products. Normally if our product is in his topics he will talk about it but will surely ask us money for it or compensation. Usually prices for a blog post depend on the Page Rank of his blog. The more the blog is linked, the more the Page Rank will be high (as we have seen previously).

There are community leaders in the Blogosphere and when those leaders write about our product this can create a large amount of visitors. The danger is that we cannot control what will be said in the post, the blogger is free to criticize our product in a positive or in a negative way. Anyway, this may create a discussion about our products, which is always a good point in terms of marketing.

Creating our blog

Maintaining our own blog has multiple advantages,

We can control what type of information we publish and we can react very quickly to any "communication accident".

It helps for the main part of our website, as it can drive traffic and display publicity for our products.

In terms of search engines optimisation, a blog is a very powerful tool that can help increase our visibility with the selected keywords defining our work.

We are certain to remain the expert in what we produce, it is like a modern customer relation, people's interest and talk about our product can link to our blog and increase the number of people familiar with our products.

If there is a problem somewhere (bug or delay) a blog allows us to explain to our customers why there is a problem and in doing so avoiding a bad reputation. The more we communicate with our customers, the more they feel like being a part of our social application.

Now let us see what we to need to succeed in the blogosphere.

Succeeding in blogging

Here is a collection of tips for successful blogging. Again it is important, if we plan a blog as a part in our web-marketing campaign to make it the best possible as it drives our brand name. A blog not sufficiently updated or with a poor presentation will drive negative thinking about the product we are marketing.

#1: Know our audience

We must define what we want to market and who will be our audience. There are too many blogs about everything. We need to stay focused on what will make our audience come back. We must identify clearly what the real core business of our marketing campaign is.

#2: Timing matters

It's seems that the more often and the more regularly we update a blog, the more successful it will be. The two main reasons for this are: Readers love fresh content

Search engines will reference an updated blog better

Another point about timing is that, according to what I observed these last years, the earlier we speak about a subject as compared to the rest of the blogosphere, the better we will be referenced by search engines.

#3: Links to others

People love it when we talk about them in good terms. It is the same in the blogosphere. Whenever we talk about something, link it to the relevant content and to the blogger. The people we linked will certainly come to our blog (as blogger tend do a lot of ego-surfing). This is a good start to drive people that interest us to our blog. Most of the blogging platforms offer automatic back linking, called trackbacks. With trackbacks, we can link directly to someone else's blog trackback URL, a commentary will be automatically created on his blog. This behaviour made the great success of blogs in terms of Page Ranking (as it is based on links). Another good reason to links is the ability of other bloggers to find that we are linking them, which will surely create some interest on their part about what we wrote.

#4: Leave comments

By leaving comments on blogs of others, we can create a community of interest, which is a key factor in the blogging success. One of the most common ways for people to find a new blog is through the links from the comments. Another advantage by leaving comments is to create backlinks to our blog, which will increase its authority. However, trackback have an advantage to comment: the words that we will write will be associated to our indexation.

#5: Alert

Most blog platforms will propose an auto-ping option. Ping is when our blog sends a mail to feed providers to alert them about our new post. With this option enabled our blog platform will alert blog services, like Technorati or Google blogsearch, to send a spider to our blog so they can update their content and link to us. A useful service for pinging is Ping-O-Matic (http://www.pingomatic.com), a service that pings freely to other blog services.

#6: Using Rss Feeds

RSS feeds are another way to diffuse our information into the blogosphere. More and more people access blogs only by RSS feeds (Simply, it is only the content of our post, not the complete environment of our blog). Readers can access RSS feeds without even coming to our blog, which is a problem in terms of publicity but an advantage in terms of visibility. More and more services, propose to subscribe to RSS feeds, allowing readers to take our content with them wherever they are. Also we can edit our RSS, to add advertisement in our RSS feed.

#7: Having a good architecture

Blog became famous as it easily allows giving visibility to people. To help even more with this visibility we can create a structure that will guide the principal search engines to index our content with the best tag possible. For example a link to one of our blog post should not be http://myblog.com/p=123 but should better be http://myblog.com/importantTag/veryimportantTag/postTitle. Most of the search engines also look in the URL to identify keywords; this type of structure will therefore have a much more effective weight for search engines than the first type.

Media Supporting Web-marketing: Mediacast

Defining the mediacast:

Mediacasting is the transmission of media on a network. http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/0,289893,sid9_gci1238165,00.html

By media we need to understand multimedia programming that includes text, images, sound and video. These technologies break down the barriers between interactivity, television and Internet. By transmission on a network we need to understand the broadcasting in all directions of our content. This means that, similarly to television, several users can watch and interact separately with the broadcasted content.

How can it support web-marketing?

We see it more and more while surfing around the Internet. Videos, webcasts, podcasts and so on abound. The great thing with mediacast, is that we meet the needs of a strong communication (video and audio) with a wide range of people able to download and watch this information whenever they want. With websites such as YouTube (http://youtube.com), we can use the video media to create advertisement. This can really be a good working strategy, and costing only the price of a webcam.

One of the success stories on YouTube was 'Lonelygirl15', a cute video blogger who claimed to be a young schoolgirl. She had rapidly many fans, between 200 000 and 500 000 viewers, for each of her 91 videos. After that, the creator admitted to a YouTube fiction. This was not made for profit but just to see what would happen (http://news.com.com/2061-10802_3-6115452.html).

For a marketer this is a strong sign that mediacasting can be used to promote products by driving a lot of interest for videos. These videos are a great support for advertisement as marketers noted a long time ago with television.

Another way to promote products is to do podcasting. Podcasting consists in distributing an audio file to our visitors that they can listen to online or directly on their MP3 player whenever they want. Podcasting is very popular and it maybe even less labour-intensive than a blog, but I do not have the same search engines optimisation than a blog as the content cannot be indexed by search engines.

Webcasts are great for presenting content in a more visual way than just writing. People can access it at any time, share it to their networks and so one. Some webcasts are essentially educational, which is appealing because we can educate people to use our technologies easily.

Media Supporting Web-marketing: games

Advergames

The use of games to advertise a product is not new, it was adopted early in simulation games (false banners in soccer games). Viral gaming (advergames) is different and the advantages are numerous for an Internet use: people can be drawn to stay longer on our website, players can also be made more aware of products (associating the specifics brand attributes to memory) and friends can challenge each other, giving score responses or statistics.

In 2005 there exists more than 105 millions of online gamers, according to Jupiter Media Metrix (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advergame). And the market is still growing. In the United States of America the global budget for the game industry is already larger than the film industry.

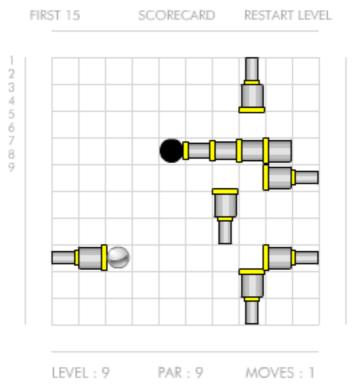


Figure 10: The Dyson Game

On the Internet the budgets are not that high. The marketer had to find another way to touch a lot of people. They created games with a simple game play (without the need to lose time learning how to use it) as in Figure 9 (http://www.dyson.co.uk/game/playgame.asp). The marketer and the developer created a way for people to buzz about the game such as challenges between friends. In the game we can see the scorecard, displaying our best results (see Figure 10). Obviously, we can share the link of the game to a friend.

	RETURN TO GAME		
level	best	worst	par
01	1	1	1
02	2	2	2
03	3	3	3
04	4	4	4
05	7	7	7
06	5	5	3
07	7	7	5
08	18	18	5
09			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			

Figure 11: The Dyson Score Card

The key point in a social advergaming, is the ability to challenge friends and other players. So, the structure of our game must permit users to compare each others' score.

Media Supporting Web-marketing: society

We have already spoken about social networks, with some examples of the use of those networks for promoting our product. In the case of FoxyTag we used a lot of networks to promote the maximum news that could be shared about the development. For instance, we became member of several groups involved with mobile technologies. We shared with them the fact that worked on FoxyTag and two hours latter two journalists contacted us to have more information about the application. Social networks have this extraordinary privilege to draw people sharing the same interests and often having key position on a particular topic and always looking for fresh information.

Using Real-Life News

What benefits can we have?

Just as engineers would certainly not create useless applications, we as marketer have to find what, in real-life, can drive our campaign to a next level. For FoxyTag, we realised that in Germany there is a strong cultural interest about radars.

The first journalists interested in our application were German, and they brought our campaign to a much higher level. We were presented in "Le Téléjournal" of the TSR (http://www.tsr.ch) and in the news of SAT1 (http://www.sat1.de). We made a page on our website citing all the media that talked about us: http://foxytag.com/en/media.html.

If we can market our application on a topic that already drives much attention we can normally promote very cheaply our application. The problem is that we need to identify all the topics, which could drive our marketing, in all the different cultural regions.

The benefit of using real-life news is to allow people to talk about our application even if they are not on the Internet. Our application takes a first step in their life.

How to gather news

There is so much news over the Internet. We have to develop a strong technique to get only the ones that are relevant to our task. With this goal in mind we will discuss below simple but effective ways to obtain smart information.

Really Simple Syndication

Well known under the terms of RSS, really simple syndication allows us to save the flow of data from informational services. For instance with Technorati (http://www.technorati.com), it is possible to research all blogs with tags. We can subscribe to the results of this query and always have the news corresponding to the tags in our favourite feed reader. In the case of FoxyTag for instance we are willing to listen to all the news about our principal keywords and so be able to watch the buzz evolution on our specific topic.

Using feeds readers and RSS to stay informed

There are a lot of feeds readers that we can find freely on the Internet. Two (personalized famous are Google home page. http://www.google.com/ig?hl=en) and Netvibes (http://www.netvibes.com). These services allow us to keep all our RSS feeds in one personalized webpage. So we need to create an account into one of these services. Afterwards we have to tag the RSS feeds that interest our marketing campaign. For FoxyTag our main keywords were: "Mobile", "GPS", "J2ME", "Radars". Under Technorati, IceRocket or any RSS search engines we make a research about our desired keywords. This will result in a webpage with an RSS feed to which, we can subscribe.



Figure 12: Rss subscribe button

Clicking on the subscribe button and this will give us the URL of the dynamically generated feeds. Now back to our feed reader services, we are going to create a new tab under Google.

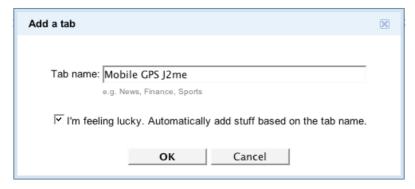


Figure 13: Add a Tab to Google Personalized Home Page

We can enter the name we want, and let validate the "I'm feeling lucky" check box if we want other feeds offers from Google. Now we just have to add our feeds (by URL) to our new tab.

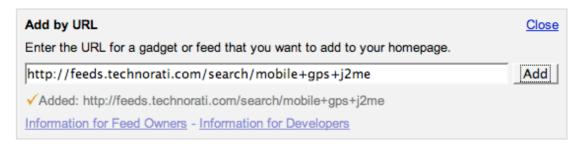


Figure 14: Add our feed URL

Now under our newly created tab we can see all the feeds we subscribe to, making it possible to see all the latest news in one blink.



Figure 15: All the feeds displayed under Google

How to use news in buzz marketing

We will spare a lot of time with this simple technique. Now if the marketing team is numerous, everybody can log into this page and begin to market our application.

But how can we market our application with this technique?

Remember that referencing is often based on links, the more links we have the better is our referencing. In our "smart" marketing, we place links to our site in websites that already have an authority and a referencing. Websites that already have a positioning for our keys terms will give us more authority for our keywords.

Getting and Using Statistics from the Net

Statistics are a hot topic for webmasters and marketers, the better we know our users the more we can give them what they want in terms of usability and what we need in terms of promoting. We can also simply evaluate our visibility. Statistics help us to monitor and to establish metrics for our website. The challenge isn't in finding information, but in finding the right information.

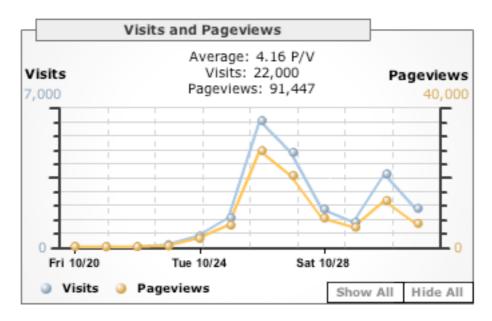


Figure 16: The kick-off of FoxyTag marketing

Statistics (web stats, trend analyses and link tracking) are indicators about the health, the visibility and the relative passion of our blogging and blog-reading audience. This means that they must be measured against our overall strategy.

Finding value in data

Mostly we will use statistics services and smart analysis to get information on: who is reading and talking about us, what operating systems they are on and where, why and how we are growing.

We also can analysis the trends we are starting or of which we are part. Also we will learn what people are saying about us and how we should best respond.

Information needed

From the webmasters' point of view:

The webmasters use website statistics to know if the design of the site works correctly with what the majority of visitors have (browser, platform, screen, languages, plug-in, Connection Speed and so one...). The use of different technologies should also be tested before publishing, so as to avoid useless hours of work. For example, in the website http://foxytag.com, we did not use modern technologies; we thought that our free application should be promoted to the greatest possible number of people, so we took the decision to stay with pure HTML-CSS.

From the marketers point of view:

The marketers also use the statistics to adjust his marketing work. Statistics can give crucial information to know better our visitors (were they click, how long they stay, how deeply they visit the site...). We can keep track of the activity of the user, what his favourite page is or which path he used to visit the website. We have also defined funnels, in FoxyTag there are two important parts: the download and the subscription. If the user missed one of these steps, he could simply not use our application. So we would have been able to detect any trouble in our navigation. The marketer can also keep an eye on his link-to-link campaign (who's linking to our website) or on his keywords campaign.

Tools to obtain statistics from the web

There are many tools on the Internet for statistical analysis. Here I'll only discuss a few, but all are free to be used.

Google provides two powerful tools to make statistics of our websites.

Google Analytics (http://www.google.com/analytics/) allows us to know about "how our visitors found us and how they interact with our site".

Google Webmasters (http://www.google.com/webmasters/) informs about how Google crawls and indexes our websites.

Technorati (http://technorati.com/) is a blog services providing a list of blogs discussing a subject.

In our case we are interested in FoxyTag. With Technorati, we can have the number of blogs linking to our website or containing the "FoxyTag" keyword.



Figure 17: Search results from Technorati

Overall, it provides a snapshot view of our blog visibility and allows us to track new links quickly and easily.

Icerocket (http://icerocket.com) is distinguished from Technorati by speed, it being much faster. Icerocket also includes the ability to trend our search over time

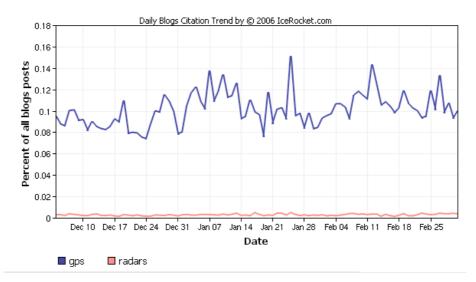


Figure 18: The use of the terms "gps" and "radars" in the last 3 months

With this information we can evaluate the importance of our website in the overall Internet buzz.

Blogpulse (http://www.blogpulse.com) is also a tool to trend keywords, and blog post overtime. It has a many other tools (profile, conversation track,...) but this will not be discussed here.

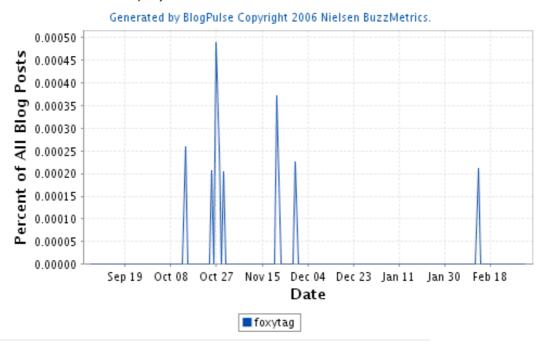


Figure 19: Percentage of all blogs that mentioned FoxyTag in the last 6 months

Alexa (http://alexa.com/) provides a service calculating the reach of our website. It also helps us to compare our traffic to others.

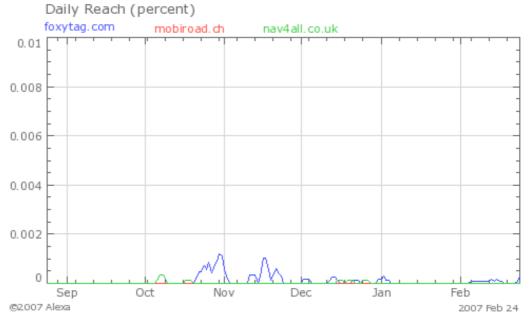


Figure 20: Daily Reach in the last 6 months from Alexa

In Figure 20, we observe the Daily Reach comparison. We can easily see that we are above our direct competitor.

Yesterday	1 wk. Avg.	3 mos. Avg.	3 mos. Change
0.0003%	0.000045%	0.000045%	₹ 71%
ic Rank for Foxyta	a.com: ②		
Yesterday	1 wk. Avg.	3 mos. Avg.	3 mos. Change
N/A*	716,558	1,052,486	4 429,482
values are not available	e for sites ranked outside of	the Top 100K.	
,			
,			
	r Foxytag.com: ②		
Views per user for Yesterday	r Foxytag.com: ② 1 wk. Avg.	3 mos. Avg.	3 mos. Change

Figure 21: Percentage of Internet users visiting www.foxytag.com

Alexa also provides graphics comparing the percent of Internet users visiting our website, as well as the traffic rank and the page views per user.

Alexa ranking is not based on a website listener; it mostly listens only to the Internet traffic, so the information is somewhat less trustworthy.

Statcounter is a statistics analyser that provides information regarding the visitors and the link sphere.

	Page Loads	Unique Visitors	First Time Visitors	Returning Visitors
Total	348,561	115,692	100,242	15,450
Average	58,094	19,282	16,707	2,575
Month	Page Loads	Unique Visitors	First Time Visitors	Returning Visitors
Feb 2007	30,791	10,422	8,642	1,780
Jan 2007	27,125	9,484	7,613	1,871
Dec 2006	36,037	12,344	9,916	2,428
Nov 2006	161,031	52,271	45,181	7,090
Oct 2006	93,378	31,107	28,829	2,278
Sep 2006	199	64	61	3

Figure 22: Data from Statcounter about the number of visitors

Here we can see that we had more than 300,000 page loaded in that last 6 months and more than 100,000 unique visitors.

Crazyegg (http://crazyegg.com/) allows us to make a "heatmap" of our visitors' clicks, which helps us to optimize our web design and to display important messages at the adequate place.



Figure 23: An example of heatmap from CrazyEgg

Crazyegg is particularly useful when making web design modification, we can easily track whether users are confused or if new services aren't well notified to users.

SEOTools (http://www.seochat.com/seo-tools) is a website that proposes a collection of effective tools for search engine optimisation. It can give great feedback on the structure we already have in place and what remains to be done.

Keywords Generator

keywords Generator will help us if we have a lack of inspiration while trying to find keywords relevant to our domains of interest.

Term	Relevance
mobile	100.00%
gps	57.69%
radar	46.15%
devices	19.23%
based	15.38%
phones	15.38%
java	15.38%
data	15.38%
windows	11.54%
platform	11.54%
location	11.54%
type	11.54%
satellite	11.54%
mobile phones	11.54%
weather	11.54%
linux	11.54%
handsets	11.54%
mobile gps	11.54%
windows mobile	11.54%
phone	11.54%
incorporates gps technology	7.69%
a true mobile	7.69%
support	7.69%
true	7.69%
gps technology	7.69%

Figure 24: Keywords propositions

Page Rank Lookup

This tool allows us to compare our Page Rank to the competitors'. Once we know who has a higher Page Rank, we know whom we are going to analyse with the same techniques that we used for our own website, and try to be inspired from what they have done.

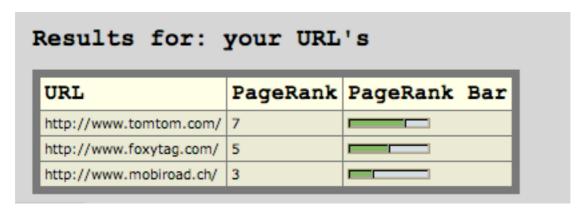


Figure 25: Page Rank for multiple URLs

Indexed Page

This tool will display the number of page that are indexed from an URL.

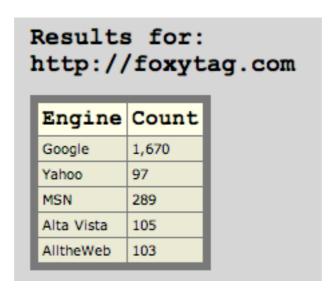


Figure 26: Number of indexed pages

Using statistics for web diffusion

Language:

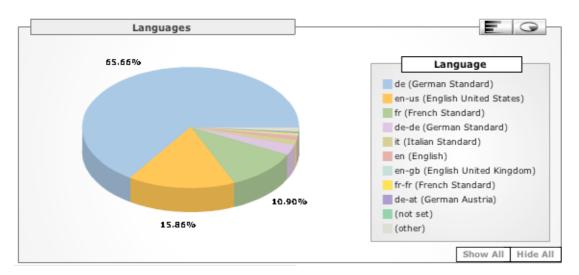


Figure 27: Visitors system's Language

When we first saw these graphics, we did not have a German version of our website, three days later it was done as 65% of our visitors system's were defined in German. Without the use of statistics we wouldn't have known about this situation.

Technologies:

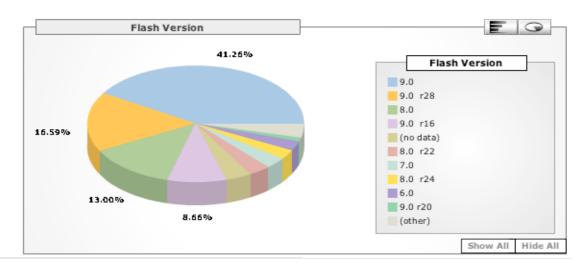


Figure 28: Flash Version of our visitors in January 2007

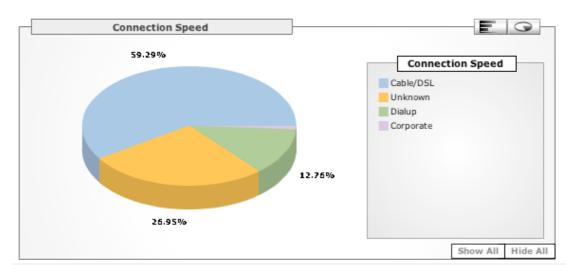


Figure 29: Connection speed of our visitors from October 2006 to January 2007

Figures 27 to 29 are examples of information that webmasters can gather from Google Analytics. This allows adapting the technologies used to the average user.

Increasing our website traffic

By designing well our website structure

Most of the search engines are based on link algorithms. Google for example use more than 200 algorithms to rank our site. Knowing all the algorithms is impossible, fortunately for their business, but unfortunately for us. Nevertheless there are some well-known best practices to follow.

Best practice #1: Know our keywords

Before beginning anything we must take the time to elaborate a precise list of the keywords defining our activities and products. We extract the fifteen most relevant and use them as much as possible in our website.



Figure 30: Another way to know our keywords: del.icio.us

Here we used Del.icio.us to know how other people tag the FoxyTag websites. Del.icio.us is a social bookmark services. Anybody saving the URL of our website can tag it to organize his bookmarks.

Best practice #2: Get a clear structure

When a website is elaborated, often the time is not taken to thing about the structure. But search engines use the website structures to analyse it. For example, our important keywords must be used as often as possible within our structure (folder name, image name and description...).

As we seen previously, search engines does not understand the semantic of our website, they only make supposition of it with the structure we let them crawl. To have a clear structure we have to follow the different steps we talked about.

Best practice #3: Get a blog

A blog has the big advantage to set up a direct communication with our users and customers. We can let them be informed about our activities, progresses and bugs. A blog allows us to create a bridge between us and the users.

There are a lot of free blogs running on the Internet. They often are free. Blogs allow us to use our keywords often and can also increase the number of links to our domain. A blog still asks a bit of work, and forgetting to update it regularly can be interpreted as a lack of activities.

Best practice #4: Get a newsletter

The newsletter is helpful for two main points:

Increasing the number of returning users: otherwise they could forget us.

Sharing information: It is so much easier to forward a mail to a friend than to send him a mail with a link.

A newsletter does basically what a blog does but straight into the users' mailboxes.

Best practice #5: Be search engines friendly

Elaborating our website with standard (HTML – XHTML) and using the tool given by search engines can also give a serious help. Google for example provides sitemaps. It's an XML files explaining to Google the hierarchy of our website. It helps Google to spider our website.

Best practice #6: Use statistics

All the tools we wrote about before can be used to direct our structures. The languages, the number of visitors, the page popularity are so much information that we must use to make our website visible.

Best practice #7: Be active in web-networking

The more we participate in the blogs of other people sharing our interests, the more we get links and coverage for our blog. It is not an ultimate practice but it helps to increase our visibility. We can use one of the preceding tools we have discussed to find what the most famous blogs on our topics are and write on it.

Best practice #8: Get out of the Internet

The best thing that happened to FoxyTag was TV coverage. The TSR (Swiss TV in French) and SAT1 (in Germany) has talked bout FoxyTag. This brought us a strong number of visits (respectively 5'000 and 25'000 in one day).

It means that traditional publicity is always good to take, but it is also much more expensive if we have to pay for it. Many traditional newspapers also mentioned us, bringing us as well a comfortable number of visits.

Conclusion

The website www.foxytag.com has had more than 300.000 visitors in less than 3 months, during the top of the buzz wave. Nowadays we still have approximately 10.000 visitors per month. The peak of the visits can be explained by the interest that the traditional media had for the software. The missing data is how did the first journalist hear about FoxyTag? My guess is that the first journalist learned about it somewhere on the Internet during the pre-campaign we launched because he was not stationed locally. Also, the strong cultural interest that German drivers have in speed control radars helped in increasing the number of users and visitors to our site.

Finally the actual structure developed for the website and the webmarketing campaign helps the website to continue to be visited regularly. A good understanding of web structure helps a website to be visited and this even if we do not invest in an expensive pay-per-click or advertising campaign. Often traditional advertisements are not effective on Internet, knowing that people stay on the average five seconds on a website. People need to find their way to our website by themselves, or to be advised by others.

Some statistics

To help us make the right decision when we think about webmarketing:

76% of people do not believes that companies tell the truth in advertisement (Yankelovish, 2005)

68% trust other people "like themselves" (Edelman Trust Barometer)

84% find the advice of others at least somewhat credible (TalkTrack, Keller Fay Group, 2006)

Contact information are two times more trusted than company led information

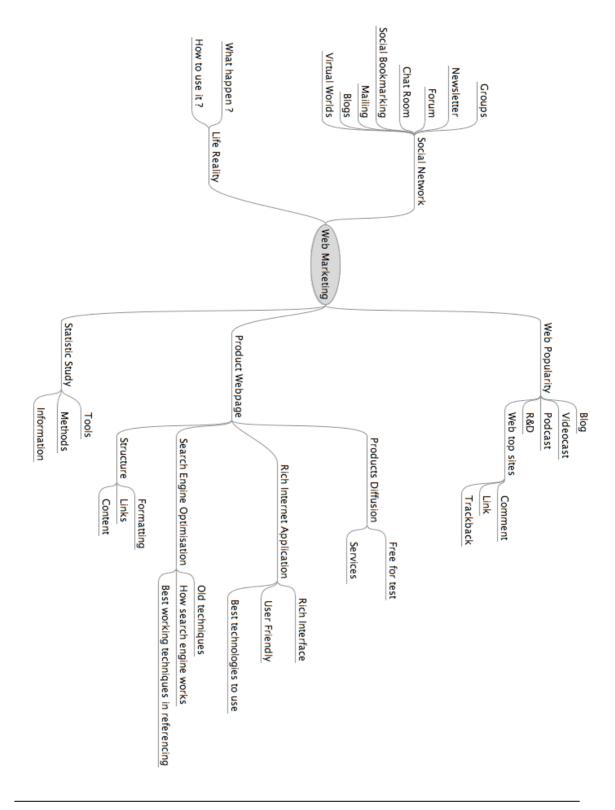
(Millward Brown, WOM influence Study, 2005)

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Annexes

Annexe A: Web-Marketing mind map



Annexe B: Verify our user identity

The problem:

FoxyTag is an application running on a mobile device, based on a system of GPS tagging. Each user can add tag visible by all other users. To that purpose we want to be sure that the one using the positioning tag is really the one he claims to be.

The process we used here is a simple three steps process based on the phone number of the user and his email address.

Subscription Process



Validation Process

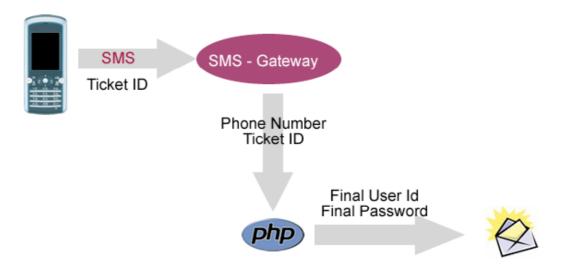


Figure 31: Verifying Mobile Subscription Process

Registration Process

The new user has to fill a form with different information (phone number and email).

A new row is created in the database with all information and a random temporary password. Then a mail is sent to the new user with a randomly generated temporary password.

Registration

Surname:		(Smith)
Forename:		(John)
E-mail:		(john.smith@hotmail.com)
Phone type:		(Sony-Ericsson K750)
Phone number:		(+41781234567)
Country:		(Switzerland)
Language: English	▼	
	Send	

Figure 32: First panel of registration on Foxytag.com

Validation Process

Once the user have received our email with his temporary access, which proves the validity of his email address. He has to send a SMS, with the temporary password received, to our SMS-gateway (a normal telephone number).

We used the "Truesenses" (http://www.truesenses.com) gateway to link the SMS to our PHP server. The gateway sends to a PHP file the Phone Number, extracted from the gateway and the temporary password, extracted from the body of the message.

At this point we can trust the information the user write in the database: email and phone number.

Confirmation process

Finally our PHP server sends a new mail to the user, with his final user ID and his final password and saves the information in our database. The user can now start FoxyTag in register mode and fill his "user ID" and his passwords. The identity of the user, and can now be trusted on our trust link engines, see Michel Deriaz's work to have more information (http://michelderiaz.com/publications) about it.

At the end of the process, we are sure about the Email of the user and his Phone Number. This allows us to avoid problems with people faking tags, trying to ruin the collaborative systems. As people saving tags that are false will automatically leave the system.

Annexe C: Creating a viral game

To create an advergame, they are some structural points to develop.

The Gameplay

The game must be easy to play, or at least we must be able to play directly while slowly learning the basics. By so doing we will not discourage the user that came to our website. The advantage with advergame is that we can nearly create any style of game, as long as it is appropriate for the Internet in terms of speed and cross-operating capabilities.

Make it social

To create a social game, we also have to respect some rules. The most obvious is that we want people to share the link to our game, and in so doing to our website. We must make it easy for someone to send the link to friends. For example it is important that the game have its own alias domains (http://theGame.theWebsiteToPromote.com). With its own alias, the game will promote the main domain and also be easier to share (by mail or by social bookmarking). A plus would be integration in other websites, like blogs. It would create a free advertisement for the marketed products.

Most people love to have their name (real or nickname) visible. Let them do so! We could easily display the name of the top ten players. By so doing we would be in the position to ask for some personal information about the user. This is really interesting to create a better link to our customers.

Challenge the others

People often love to share their good results with friends. Once more: let them do so! In the game of Dyson (http://www.dyson.co.uk/game/playgame.asp) it is only possible to send the URL of the game to a friend by mail. This could be largely improved by sharing the score made by player "A" with the friends invited. Once he has played his score should be sent to his friends, automatically, so they can chat about it later and try to improve on the score.

Organizing championships between friends or anonymous players can also drive a strong interest for players, who will not feel alone in the game.

Make it live

The game should also be playable on a multiplayer mode. Letting two friends play together at the same game ensures that they will stay longer. Staying longer and playing longer means that the user will create a stronger relation with the game and the brand. There are more and more multiplayer games letting more than just two players play together. Most of these games are not synchronised, each player makes his action and at the end of the turn a result is computed. It would be interesting to try a synchronised online game, but it asks for a lot of resources, depending on the number of players we have.

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