

## CSE Web Solutions Newsletter - June 18th, 2010

### Local Search is Booming

First up, let me show you some rather stunning results from the March 2010 BIA KelseyGroup study. BIA/Kelsey is the leading provider of strategic research and analysis, data and competitive metrics on Yellow Pages, electronic directories, local search, SMB advertising and local media. In short, they keep a pulse on small and medium business strategies as it relates to marketing products and services to the public sector.

They provide periodic reports that reveal what the SMB's are doing to advertise and market their businesses. Here are some startling but not surprising results:

- 97% of all consumers now use the online media to shop locally.
- 58% of respondents report using an online coupon when shopping for products or services in their local area in the past year.
- 19% of respondents report making an appointment online in the past six months for a service other than a restaurant reservation (e.g., business appointment, health-care appointment, auto service or personal service such as a beauty shop).

*“The Internet has indeed become an integral part of consumers’ local commercial activity,” said Steve Marshall, director of research, BIA/Kelsey. “The data suggest we’re at an inflection point where the balance of power in local shopping is shifting to online.”*

Here is the link to the original source: [Kelsey Local Search Report](#)

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### Content is King – Small Business Website Path to Success

One of the most important factors of any successful small business SEO campaign comes in the form of a tandem that must be ever present - content and linking. And as the ole' SEO adage goes "Content is King and Links are Queen." Well, we can even embellish on that famous quote with perhaps "Content is King, Links are Queen and we all know who reigns supreme in the kingdom." It all comes down to relevance. If you produce good content, others will link to your site. Self fabricated linking works but only if content ensues.

For a small business owner, one of the biggest challenges they face is keeping pace with regular website content updates. Getting regular updates for websites is not an option if you are to be successful - without it, you are doomed to SERP (Search Engine Results Pages) mediocrity.

The problem: where does the busy small business owner find the time? Business owners are just too busy keeping up with day to day activities to write about their business or industry. Updating their website seems on the surface, a low priority, almost mundane task on the already overwhelming day to day To-Do list.

As I see it, there are three options a business owner can take to keep site updated regularly with unique content:

### *1. Ghost writers.*

This option has many benefits as well as potential pitfalls. General content writers, or "ghost writers" as they are sometimes referred, are great for building niche websites. But may not be the best option for the business owner trying to keep quality standards high. Unless you find a writer that is willing to put forth the effort for research and writing quality articles, you may end up spending more time reviewing and kicking it back for modifications than it's worth.

### *2. Specialty Writers*

Quality definitely improves a notch or two, but cost rises as well. Specialty writers are many times, the best option for the well established business owner that simply needs well written content to keep their SERPs at a high level. But the cost of retaining somebody that writes specifically for your industry is generally higher than other writers.

### *3. DIY (Do it Yourself)*

Many times, the DIY option is the only option for the business owner. In terms of relevance this is also probably the best option. After all, nobody knows and understands the business better than the owner or people that work for the company. However for the time strapped business owner, it isn't always a realistic option.

If the DIY route seems like the best avenue for you, I have some time saving tips that you can incorporate to cut the time needed to write content. It will also give you some great writing ideas as well.

Putting these tips into action, will not only help your website marketing campaign, you'll learn a number of things about your industry and even who is talking about your business.

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## **How to Create Content Easily and Effectively using Free Tools**

We are now going to focus on the DIY approach and generate great, useful content for your website.

Think of it as feeding the beast. Think of it as growing your customer list. Think of it as increasing the value of your business. Think of it in any light possible to motivate you to build content. Because getting content on your site is perhaps the single best way to get return on investment and make your Internet marketing campaign a success as a business owner.

Why? Because every word on a web page is a potential keyword. And keywords are the by product of content delivered from the search engines - Google, Yahoo, Bing and others. It really is as simple as that - try not to overcomplicate it.

**Put another way - keywords are what drives visitors to your 21st Century store front - your website.**

So how do we meet this vital component of adding content to your website with the path of least resistance? I will show you one, very effective method I employ and have seen positive results.

Ok, so let's get into the meat of this method. We are going to create content that already exists on the Internet. Simple right? But you are probably wondering – doesn't the content have to be unique? Well yes and no. We are going to take content that is already indexed yes. But we are going to take that same content, rewrite it some and blast links to content you own. This does two things. First, the content or web page will get indexed in the listings which will in turn provide more opportunity for traffic and secondly and more importantly, it provides internal linking to content on another page that in turn, improves its ranking.

So here is a summary of steps we need to deliver content and blast links to your existing content:

1. Set up a [Google Alerts](#) to monitor for interesting, applicable new content. The attempt here is to try and get articles that you already are targeting and have content on your site. Note: if you don't have a Google account, you'll need to that up.
2. Set up [Google Reader](#) (or RSS reader of your choice) to house and organize these Google Alerts. You can use email to deliver the alerts, but I found it much better to use a Reader.
3. Monitor your Google Reader daily or weekly. Try to set up a schedule that is consistent.
4. Use article/content from Google Alerts to write a new short (150-200) word articles using [ScribeFire](#). Generate new links that point to existing content on your site with a link to the original source.

That's it. These four steps will generate useful content for your site and provide a fantastic "internal linking structure" to add page rank and allow your existing articles/web pages to rank higher in Google!

This article was an attempt to get you excited about creating content for your website that is quick and painless but still very effective.

**Look for some videos to support this article - this will help you create new content the easy way!**

-Dan