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CONTENT THAT PAYS

EDITORIALLY DRIVEN SEO STRATEGY FOR MORE TH>N BUSINESS DELIVERS 300% ROI

OVERVIEW

iCrossing UK has been working incredibly successfully with major insurance provider MORE TH>N on its natural search strategy since 2006. In 2008, the company turned to iCrossing to drive the natural search profile of its dedicated business division **MORE TH>N BUSINESS**.

To deliver results in this highly competitive market, iCrossing undertook an innovative and in-depth campaign that would fundamentally change the way that MORE TH>N BUSINESS approaches natural search marketing and addresses its customers online. Using exclusive authored content on the MORE TH>N BUSINESS site, iCrossing has been able to create a valuable resource for customers that has vastly improved its natural search presence around the **small business insurance** sector.

The campaign has seen significant success – increasing traffic from natural search referrals by 6.5 times.

OBJECTIVE

The core objective of the campaign was to increase natural search traffic to, and business insurance policies sold via, www.morethanbusiness.com.

In this massively competitive, yet low-interest sector, driving traffic from potential buyers of business insurance through natural search referrals was identified as a key goal to deliver low-cost, high-converting traffic.

Gaining profile for relevant terms in search engines would mean competing head on with traditional media outlets as well as MORE TH>N's established competitive set. However, if successful, the project would help build a stronger relationship with existing and potential customers in a sector where cynicism is high, as well as drive valuable traffic to sales.

STRATEGY

iCrossing's core strategy was to produce and disseminate strong, useful and unique content relevant to MORE TH>N BUSINESS's potential customers. The content would make the MORE TH>N BUSINESS site a valuable resource for businesses by covering unique and specialised content; the kind that is usually missed by the major media outlets and so build the brand and drive traffic.

In addition to the direct customer benefits inherent in this content, a key benefit of this activity was to generate enhanced natural search rankings. By producing and hosting a raft of high-quality, exclusive content the site was able to rank in search engines against key small-business related terms where a purely transactional site could not.

In the natural search space, securing valuable traffic from search listings requires a new approach to online marketing – one that focuses on building valuable content for users that is highly-targeted and expertly delivered, rather than 'advertising'. Rather than just optimising the site structure and inserting relevant keywords, high-value content is important to attract both customers and search engines, leading to iCrossing's content based approach to this project.

To identify the key terms that were important to MORE TH>N BUSINESS' customers, and would therefore be important to include in the content on the site, iCrossing first undertook a linguistic analysis of existing search behaviour. By analysing the terms that small business insurance buyers were using to find products, it was possible to identify key terms that could generate maximum traffic.

In particular, iCrossing and MORE TH>N BUSINESS were keen to identify niche terms that were used – these were less competitive than the more obvious

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ANALYTICS AND INSIGHT

WORKING TOGETHER

Roberto Hortal, head of e-business at MORE TH>N: "iCrossing's continued focus on building the MORE TH>N website as an essential resource has delivered above and beyond our initial brief. The results speak for themselves and reflect the importance of delivering useful content to our ever-growing audience, which has both propelled us up the search rankings and built our reputation online."

keywords and were also more business specific. For example, analysis has shown that terms such as 'florist insurance' have the potential to be just as powerful as more generic terms such as 'shop insurance'.

In response to this need, iCrossing developed and continues to develop useful, editorial-focused content alongside the presentation of promotional, product-focused collateral. It is a big challenge to ensure that users don't feel 'sold to' in an editorial space – while fulfilling the end goal for the work: to increase sales of MORE TH>N BUSINESS' range of products and services.

Specific innovations have included:

1. A completely new content approach, using the MORE TH>N BUSINESS Knowledge Centre (<http://www.morethanbusiness.com/Knowledge-Centre>) as the host site:

- Content produced by journalists not copywriters – iCrossing's editorial team is a group of experienced, trained journalists who are focused on producing 'reader first' copy that offers accurate, unbiased reporting. This subtle but key difference means that the content produced for MORE TH>N BUSINESS has authenticity and credibility not found in promotional copy
- Daily newsfeed covering topical, small business-focused news that doesn't necessarily get heavy coverage in mainstream media. It continues to feature original material sourced directly from places such as the Federation of Small Businesses, British Chambers of Commerce and government departments
- Existing RSA resources such as Risk Management Guides have been repurposed to drive greater value for audiences and deliver more traffic through integration with content being added to the Knowledge Centre, including daily news
- Monthly features using multi-media content were produced offering in-depth analysis on the most popular topics of interest (identified through analysis of data from the news feed). These, like the newsfeed, were original and independent, avoiding the hard sell of traditional PR collateral
- "Sticky" content such as surveys and polls, video and podcasts were integrated to constantly engage users and increase their interaction with the site and the brand

2. All content search-engine optimised, including text, images, audio and video, to ensure maximum natural search visibility against identified terms. These terms are constantly re-evaluated to support new product launches, niche audience targeting and adapt to market changes and topical events.

3. Advertorials launched on third-party sites to target new audiences and support specific products

4. The use of linguistic profiling to identify the language used by target audiences, relevant terms and their content needs.

5. Also, content development has been synchronized with PR activity to complement new products and research to create a "virtuous circle" whereby editorial and promotional content are constantly cross-linked to support each other in a legitimate and authentic way.

RESULTS

Morethanbusiness.com has been established as an authority site for **small business news**.

iCrossing's work has established the site consistently in the top three Google listings for the critical term "small business insurance" and a constant presence for small business news on the Google News site, combined with thumbnail images. Visibility in Google has increased against all key terms.

As a result, total traffic from natural search referrals has increased by 6.5 times since the start of the project, including a five times increase from non-branded search terms.

Over the course of 2008, the number of successful applications on the site delivered by natural listings has increased by 90%, almost double the target, and the value of sales by 70%. Considering the economic climate, particularly towards the end of the year, this has been a remarkable performance.

The ROI in terms of the increase in presence and trust of the MORE TH>N BUSINESS brand is impossible to measure but clearly significant. However, even in just revenue terms, iCrossing's SEO work has delivered MORE TH>N an ROI of 300%.

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