



nasuti + hinkle

creative thinking

Just having a web site isn't going to do the job.

According to marketing author Seth Godin, "When traffic comes to your site without focused intent, it bounces. 75% of all unfocused visitors leave within three seconds. Any site, anywhere, anytime." By unfocused intent, Godin means visitors who come to your site via a simple Google or Yahoo search or something like Digg.

According to Ad Age, a study conducted by Travelocity showed that in only 2% of paid-search conversions did the searcher originally click on a non-branded term and then search a branded term. And only 4% of hotel bookings (not hits) on Travelocity can be credited to non-branded searches. Any sort of primitive math tells you that 96%, therefore, came from branded search terms.

The Tangerine Toad, a blogger with both digital and traditional advertising credentials, has a great phrase. He calls it "clicking through the Internet" This is when "normally intelligent people at both digital and traditional agencies decide that people will find their cool new flash microsite without any sort of external driver. It's as if the Internet were a giant cable TV line-up or magazine

"When traffic comes to your site without focused intent, it bounces."

and the consumer will be clicking through it, land on the microsite and magically become entranced." The fact of the matter is, just putting up a web site isn't enough. No matter how good it is.

Yes, the Internet is a powerful tool. And anybody in business with any sense has a web site in place. In fact, in many cases (such as hospitality and some retail operations) the web site

can be an effective core marketing and selling tool. But there are two problems with simply putting up a web site and waiting for web searches to bring the customers in. For one thing, as the evidence above suggests, when people come to your site on purpose as opposed to by accident there is a far, far better chance that they will actually do business with you while they are there.

For another, there isn't a search engine listing on the planet that can tell prospective customers anything about your brand, what you do well, why you do it better than the next guy or why they should do business with you. Another piece in this Thinking

"There isn't a search engine listing on the planet that can tell prospective customers anything about your brand."

section was written specifically for the Hospitality industry, but much of it applies across the board. If you want to have your web site be the center of your marketing effort, it's going to work a lot better with some help.

It's popular in some circles to dismiss "traditional" advertising as a thing of the past. But that's narrow thinking. People still read newspapers, thumb through magazines, listen to radio on the way to work and watch television when they get home. So take advantage of those media habits to promote your brand and drive informed customers to your site.

Then see how much more effective it can be.

©2008 Nasuti+Hinkle Creative Thinking
Bethesda, Maryland