The Eight Critical Goals

The Eight Critical Goals That Must Be Achieved For Online Marketing Success

Written By: Allen Oelschlaeger & Shawn Kerr

Marketing Used To Be A Lot Simpler

If you were a **small local business** you spent a few minutes each year placing a Yellow Page ad and, otherwise, you relied on your location and word-of- mouth to drive business. If you were a **larger local business**, you might've also done some traditional advertising (print, radio, TV, direct mail).

As a **Martial Arts School**, you were focused on driving people into your school with advertising, direct mail, and telemarketing.

This summary may be a bit oversimplified but, **for the vast majority of schools, it isn't too far off.**

Today, marketing is much more complicated and that's largely due to the **explosion of the Internet.**

In this report we're going to share the challenges of dealing with these new complexities and we'll explain in detail the **eight goals that must be achieved for online marketing success.**

The Two Realities

The Internet has reduced (in some cases, killed) the effectiveness of past marketing methods and has created a **plethora of new options** for getting your message out (e.g., website, blog, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, iTunes, Google+, Pinterest).

The explosion of the Internet and its impact on marketing has resulted in two realities:

1. No matter what business you're in, **you MUST have an effective online presence**

2. While having a basic website used to be all that was needed to be effective online, being successful on the internet has **become horrendously complicated**

Most companies are aware of these realities so, over the last few years, they've scrambled to either get their business online for the first time or upgrade their previous attempt at having an effective online presence.

Unless they were a large company with significant Internet capabilities, this meant **having to outsource some portion of their efforts** to companies that fall into one of these three categories:

1. **Technology firms** who are motivated to use the most complex (and expensive) approach to doing something – but **know little about marketing**

2. **Designers** who are compelled to create a work of art and then use technologists to reproduce their masterpiece as a website – but **know little about marketing**

3. **Marketing firms** who are often lacking in either technology expertise or design talent.

Of these three options, a **marketing firm – even with deficiencies in talent – Is clearly the best choice**. Why? – because, at the end of the day, the fundamentals of marketing are **NO different** on the Internet than with the use of any other marketing media (e.g., print advertising, TV, radio, direct mail).

You still need to understand your target market, have a clear and compelling message, leverage your sustainable competitive advantages and take an integrated approach.

Just having technology and/or design expertise, **without an understanding of the fundamentals of marketing,** is a recipe for failure on the Internet.

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The Narrow-Focus Problem Simpler

However, even if a company found a great marketing firm with strong technology and design expertise, there was another problem – the firm **having too narrow of a focus**.

Due to the complexities of the Internet and explosive demand for out-sourced help, it's been common for marketing firms to focus on just one or two elements of the online marketing mix.

There are firms focused just on website development, blog creation, social networking, Google Adwords, podcasting, online video market-ing or eLearning systems. There are even firms who provide support services for just one of the social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter or Pinterest.

Using these narrow-focused firms can work for large organizations that have sufficient expertise and staff to ensure **all these individual online marketing elements are well integrated.**

But, for the vast majority of companies, using narrow-focused suppli-ers leads to an **ineffective piecemeal approach to online marketing.** Each firm ends up acting like the carpenter with only a hammer who sees every marketing challenge as a nail.

Most companies just don't have the capability to coordinate multiple narrow-focused suppliers to implement a successful online marketing initiative.

The result of the challenge of companies finding a good outsourced firm is that they end up having an online presence that's either **useless** (most common) or, in the best case, **not taking full advantage of the incredible marketing power of the Internet.**

In the latter situation, the company might have a nice looking website OR a great Facebook account OR a well-managed Google Adwords account – but NOT all these elements, plus the many more, that are needed for online marketing success.

To summarize, the explosion of the Internet has made marketing **far more complicated than it used to be** and requires that you find an outsourced supplier that:

- Understands marketing, technology AND design

- Isn't too narrowly focused

What Outcomes Are You Seeking?

So, let's assume you find such a firm. Now you need to make sure they have **a solid understanding of the goals that must be achieved for online marketing success.** No matter how talented they are otherwise, if they don't have the goals right, your online presence won't have the impact on your business that it should have.

The first goal to understand is the **ultimate outcome** you want from your online presence. There are only two choices here:

- Increase sales or donations

- Ensure you are found when someone searches for your business online

The **first outcome** means you are either trying to get people to purchase something online immediately or take a step that might lead to a sale in the future (e.g., call, ll out a form to get something for free, sign up for a newsletter, visit your store). This is, by far, the most common outcome that businesses are seeking with their online presence.

The **second outcome** might be what you want if you can't imagine anyone ever taking any action after finding you online (e.g., if your business was 100% direct sales driven). However, if someone searched online to see if your business was real, you'd want them to find you.

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This is why some people have business cards – they need them just to ensure people don't question if they're with a real business.

There is a **third outcome** – Increasing the efficiency of your business operations – but, since it has little to do with marketing, it won't be covered here.

If your goal is the second outcome, then things become real simple. You just need a solid website that's search-engine- optimized for your business's name and you'll be all set. But, be careful in making the assumption this is all you need. Even if you don't sell directly online, there's almost always a way to turn your online presence into a lead generator for your business.

If your goal is the first outcome – increased sales – then the **challenge is far more complicated.**

The Eight Goals That Must Be Achieved For Online

If the outcome you are seeking is increased sales, then your business's online system must be designed and maintained to meet these eight goals:

1. Traffic

2. Conversion

3. Pre-frame

4. Credibility

5. Personality

6. Fully-Integrated

7. Well Maintained

8. Management Loved

What you might find interesting is that one of the most common goals of marketing is not on this list – brand awareness.

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Sure, if you decided to purchase a lot of online advertising, then brand awareness would be an appropriate goal. But, otherwise, the **Internet isn't a brand-awareness medium** like billboards, TV, radio or print. A company's brand doesn't just show up as people are browsing online. Instead, web browsers are only going to see something about your company if they're specifically searching for information related to what your company does.

Then, once they find something about your company, they must **take some sort of action (e.g., call, fill out a form)** or they'll click on and, likely, **never find you again.**

When your goal is brand-awareness, you're looking for repeated exposure to your brand and message. On the Internet (again, unless you are doing a lot of advertising) this isn't possible. So, instead, your goal must be getting people to **take action.**

If you're working with an advertising agency, you may hear a lot about the importance of branding in discussions about your online presence. If they're point is that the logo, colors, font styles and other design elements used online should match what is used offline, then that's a worthwhile goal. But, if they're talking about using the Internet as a brand-awareness medium, you should be looking elsewhere for assistance.

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1 - Traffic

This means getting people to visit your online properties. A business could have the most gorgeous online properties (e.g., website, social media accounts) in their industry but, without traffic, it's like having a fancy digital billboard in the desert. **This should be the #1 goal for any online marketing initiative.**

The term that's historically been used to describe traffic-driving activities is **Search Engine Optimization or SEO.** This used to be quite complicated because the effort was often viewed as how to **trick the search engines** to find your business ahead of the other businesses in your category.

What's happened in the last couple of years is that search engines (e.g. Google, Bing) have modified their search algorithms so they either **ignore the tricks** or actually **punish companies who try to use tricks** (dramatic drop in search rankings).

What search engines want to have happen is for people using their system to **quickly find exactly what they are looking for.** They want people to click on the top few listings in the search engines and be happy with what they see.

As a result, the search engines are now primarily looking for **great content** when deciding which listings to display first. Therefore, the

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idea of search engine optimization is largely dead. The new term used to describe traffic-driving activities is Content Marketing.

Content Marketing is **far simpler than SEO but MUCH more work.** What it involves is **adding multimedia content (video, audio, images, text) regularly to all your online properties.**

The term we use for this is **Multicast Content Marketing.**

There are two challenges here: 1) producing the content and 2) getting it distributed to all the places it needs to go.

But, to get traffic, **there's no longer any other option.** Content marketing is the **ONLY** viable method for getting people to find and visit your online properties.

2 - Conversion

This means getting the people who visit your website to take some sort of action so you can interact with them again (e.g., call you, fill out a form, visit your retail store, leave a comment, subscribe). Otherwise, once they leave, they're probably gone forever.

Although most online marketing firms understand the importance of traffic (though they might not know what to do to make it happen) **few seem to understand the critical importance of conversion.**

When someone arrives at an online property **you want them to interact with you in some way during their visit** or you'll probably never get another chance.

However, if you browse the Internet you'll find that this goal is largely ignored. Almost no online properties have a call to action (e.g., form to fill out to get something for free). But, sadly, most **don't even have a phone number or email contact form** that's easy to find.

Without having an effective mechanism for your visitors to convert, whatever resources you've spent to generate traffic **will provide little value to your business.**

3 - Pre-Frame

This means getting visitors, before they take the next step with you, predisposed to do business with your company. Meeting this goal is a function of having valuable content on your online properties that's **easy to find and easy to digest.**

This requires having a **well-thought- out navigation** scheme (frankly, most of what you see online is hopelessly bad) and content presented in a format most appealing to your visitors – which, for most companies, **means using video and audio in addition to text and images.**

But, the real key to meeting this "pre-frame" goal is to do the same thing mentioned above as the only viable way to get traffic -- **adding multimedia content (video, audio, images, text) regularly to all your online properties.**

In this case, rather than adding content for the search engines you're adding it **for your visitors.**

What's great is that the search engines have gotten so smart that, if your visitors think your content is great, so will the search companies. Therefore, you can effectively **meet two of the eight goals with one activity.**

4 - Credibility

This means convincing visitors that they should feel **confident in doing business with your company.** Meeting this goal is a function of not having an amateurish look to your site and including elements that promote your credibility.

The starting point for meeting this goal is to consider how you want to position your company and who your visitors will likely be.

For example, if your business is a nightclub serving 20-somethings, the look of your online properties and what would be considered a credibility-builder is FAR different than if you're selling industrial equipment.

The key is to **make sure the design and credibility elements match up with the expectations of your prospects and customers.**

However, one credibility element that almost all online properties should have are **testimonials from customers** – ideally in multiple formats, **including video and audio** as well as text.

5 - Personality

This means differentiating yourself from the large and faceless corporations by demonstrating that your business is operated by **real people** with whom visitors can relate.

Meeting this goal includes writing copy that represents the company's personality and having video, audio and images of the people within the organization.

Like Conversion, this goal is largely ignored by online marketing firms – despite its critical importance.

People want to do business with people **they know, like and trust.** That's a fundamental tenant of sales and marketing, which should not be ignored.

What's great about the Internet, versus almost every other media type, is that it's easy to present your personality and the personality of your business.

You can embed personality in your copy but, more importantly, you can also include video, audio and images of you and your team.

Include a video welcome message by your president, display videos of

members of your team demonstrating your products, upload images of your staff participating in your latest charity event – there are hundreds of ways to make sure visitors know, like and trust you over all your competitors.

The term we use for this is **Story Your Business**, where the word "story" is used as a verb instead of a noun.

Story-driven marketing (adding personality) stirs up people's emotions and creates personal connections in a way that just can't be accomplished with traditional marketing.

6 - Fully-Integrated

This means **not taking a piecemeal approach** to your online marketing initiatives. For an online marketing to be effective it must include ALL the elements appropriate for your business. The term we use for this is **UNIFIED Marketing**, which means having your overall marketing strategy and plans consider:

- Traditional media as well as advanced marketing technologies

- Offline, online, and marketing channels

- Content Marketing (see above)

- Digital learning (the term we use for this is eTeaching)

- Offline/online lead generation and automated sales follow-up systems

To meet this goal you should never take on piecemeal projects like "develop a website," "get a Twitter account," "shoot a video" or the hundreds of other projects you can implement on a one-off basis – **without considering how everything will tie to the maximum impact.**

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7 - Well Maintained

This means doing the necessary things on an ongoing basis to ensure your Internet properties are up-to-date – both technically and in content.

This is one of the **most common complaint about a company's online presence – every time there needs to be a change or addition to their site, the company's web developer needs to get involved.** This creates three problems:

- **Delays** - the work almost never gets done in a timely manner

- **Cost** - each little change gets billed at the developer's hourly rate

- **Hassle** - just explaining the change usually takes more time than what it takes the developer to complete it

The most common result is that the website ends up almost never getting changed. It is just too untimely, too expensive, and too inconvenient to make it worth the effort. **This creates issues on multiple fronts:**

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- The site begins to look old and out of date to visitors

- The search engines begin to ignore the site because it looks abandoned

- The business misses opportunities to creatively use their website as an integral part

The good news is that it is now possible to develop a website using a Content Management System. Such systems **make it possible for changes and additions to be made without the need for any technical expertise.**

Another factor to consider relative to the long-term maintenance of your online presence is how to address the technical issues, such as:

- Selecting a reliable hosting provider

- Interacting with the host when problems arise

- Registering and renewing domain names

- Regularly updating the server and CMS software

- Monitoring the site for technical problems

Here you need a technical team to help out – **so it is important to have access to a good one.**

Bottom line, you must make sure your site is well maintained over time or it will compromise your online marketing success.

8 - Management Loved

This means that a company's management team must really like their online presence, so they are **quick to encourage their prospects and customers to visit.**

You shouldn't underestimate how important this is.

The Internet is such a diverse and relatively new marketing medium that no one – no matter how big an expert they claim to be – **actually knows what is best** in terms of design and content.

There are almost an infinite number of ways to accomplish the seven goals above – traffic, conversion, pre-frame, credibility, personality and fully-integrated. But, if you select a way that a company's management team doesn't love, **it will, without question, compromise success.**

Meeting all these goals requires some work. But the good news is that everything accomplished relative to these goals contributes to the long-term asset value of a company's online presence. If done well, your online presence can become an asset of your business as important as your intellectual property, capital and team.

Who Is Martial Arts Marketing Network?

Since 2007 Martial Arts Marketing Network (MAMN) has had one mission, to give martial arts school owners the freedom to focus on their passion. MAMN works with over 100 martial arts schools around the world to give school owners that freedom.

MAMN was founded by Master Chan Lee and Allen Oelschlager. Master Chan Lee is the owner of 6 schools with over 1700 students in the greater Milwaukee, WI area. After building so many schools Master Chan Lee recognized the need to provide done-for-you marketing that takes all of the technology out of your hands and lets you focus on teaching and your students.

Today we're the leading provider of **UNIFIED Marketing** for martial arts schools seeking sales acceleration. We are experts in all facets of revenue generation, including offline, online and mobile marketing as it relates to martial arts schools.

This transformation allows us to overcome the all-too- common piecemeal approach to marketing where every problem looks like a nail because the only tool available is a hammer.

At Martial Arts Marketing Network we have all the tools needed to provide a truly UNIFIED approach to marketing – always with the goal of accelerating sales.

To learn more, please visit us at: www.mamnetwork.com

1845 North Farwell Avenue, Suite 210
Milwaukee,WI 53202

1-888-893- 8952