

## Webxites helps small companies use 'search marketing' to compete

BY LINDA MUSTHALER

Large enterprise companies have always had an advantage over small to midsized companies when it comes to "reach." Big companies have correspondingly big staffs and big budgets to build more effective Web sites, to run more advertising, and to sponsor more marketing campaigns. This reach helps them attract more customers.

In recent years, the World Wide Web has become the great equalizer for smaller companies that don't have those huge marketing and communications budgets. A well designed Web site can help a small company reach more potential customers through the effective use of "search marketing."

Search marketing is the practice of designing a Web site so that it attracts highly qualified visitors who find the site through a search engine such as Google or Yahoo! Search. And not only does the site attract qualified visitors, but it entices them to follow some call to action, like registering with the site, making contact with the company, or best of all, purchasing a product or service.

One company that provides a complete search marketing service almost exclusively to SMBs is [Webxites](#) (pronounced "websites"), of Houston. Webxites has obviously found a niche and a huge demand for its services, because last June the company was named by Entrepreneur magazine as one of the fastest growing companies in America. Despite posting an impressive 1500% revenue growth in 2005, co-founder and president Gene McCubbin expects 2006 to be "the breakout year" for Webxites.

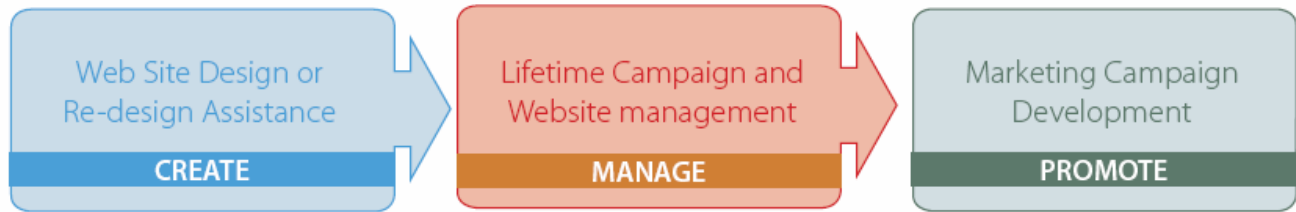
What this tells us is that small companies are beginning to recognize the importance of new Web tools and techniques for attracting and capturing new customers. A savvy approach to search marketing can put even the smallest company on par with a far larger competitor.

What makes search marketing so special? "There is a shift taking place in advertising," says Kelsey Ruger, Technology and Web Operations Director at Webxites. "Traditional means like running television ads are like dragging a big net to see who you can catch. With search marketing, you understand your audience better and take narrower aim for a more qualified customer. You can target this audience and get more predictable results."

Ruger points out that there are few ways to measure the effectiveness of a print or television ad. With Web-based search marketing, you can use analytics to tell you a lot about who is visiting your Web site and for how long, what they look at, and what actions they take. If you see that you are losing people after they visit a specific page, you can change that page to improve results.

Ruger says that when Webxites first meets with a new client, they often hear the client say they want to drive a lot of traffic to the company Web site. "They want hits," says Ruger, "which basically amounts to window shopping. Visitors who come to your site and do nothing don't result in sales. What you want is a person who lands on your site and takes some action."

# Webxites Traffixtreme



Webxites uses a four-step process when creating a marketing campaign for a client. The first step is to work with the client to analyze the target customer. "Many companies write Web site content because that's what they want to say about themselves," Ruger says. "It might not be what the customer wants to know, though. We get our client to really think about his customers and what they might want to learn about that company."

The next step is to build a Web site for that target audience. Webxites uses its marketing savvy and search engine knowledge to build a Web site based on industry standards that is usable, accessible, and focused on driving traffic and delivering customers to the site. The developers optimize the page content for search engines, helping to ensure that the Web site will land high on the list of results of a search by interested parties. Pushing the right content for the target audience is step three in the process.

Step four involves buying advertising from the search companies that is very highly targeted to the likely buyer. Then Webxites monitors and analyzes the traffic coming to the site and the actions visitors take.

Webxites is a hybrid Web development/advertising and marketing company. On the one hand, they build very attractive and usable Web sites for their clients. On the other hand, the design and content of each Web site is a hook to bring in buyers. For small companies, the combination provides more bang for the marketing buck.

Web searches are so critical in business today. As more people become comfortable with finding the companies they want to patronize through the Internet rather than through the local phone book, it's more important than ever that your Web site be optimized to allow your target customers to find you.

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