

## How a non-technical person can make good SEM decisions

- Where are we now?
  - Domain name
    - Where is it registered?
    - Whose names are on the record?
  - Website hosting
    - Where is it hosted?
    - What are username and password?
  - Statistics
    - How many people are visiting now?
    - Where do they come from?
    - How do they find the site?
  - Website design
    - Is it right for my prospects and clients?
- Where are we going?
  - The purpose of SEM is to increase qualified traffic to your website.
  - We want the site to appear on the front page of Google for the search term(s) that are most effective for your business. It is sometimes possible to get it on the front page up to three times. Because Google makes changes more slowly to the organic results than other search engines we will be likely to see results at the other search engines more quickly.
- How can we get from what you have to what you want?
  - The search terms that people are using will be determined from your website statistics and the results of a paid advertising campaign on Google.
  - Changes will be made to your site's content and structure to match to what people are looking for.
  - The optimized site will be submitted to hundreds of sites to create helpful inbound links.
- What do I do if something seems to be going wrong?
  - Write down what the problem is.
    - When did it occur?
    - When was it noticed?
    - Are there any related other problems?
  - Write down what you can do about it.
    - Determine who can diagnose and fix the problem properly.
  - Decide what you are going to do.
    - What do I do if there is a difference of opinion between advisors?
      - Unfortunately there will be times when your technical advisors disagree. To sort this out you need to be clear about each advisors area of expertise. All aspects of technology knowledge may seem to blur together but, in fact, are very separate without much overlap. Someone who is very knowledgeable about setting up and maintaining web servers isn't necessarily an expert about search engines although they may have very strong opinions.
      - Get your advisors to talk to each other and see if they can find common ground. You may want to set up a conference call so that you can listen in and referee if necessary.
  - Act on it.
- How can I get the best possible work from SEM[c]?
  - Ask lots of questions.
    - You need to understand what's happening to the fullest extent that you can.
  - Don't jump to conclusions.
    - It is easy to see a problem and assume that it was caused by an action that preceded you noticing the problem. You need to make sure exactly when the

problem occurred before you can determine what may have caused it.

- Search engines play by rules. Some are well defined others are kept a closely guarded secret that can only be guessed at over a period of time and a lot of experience. Sometimes it is difficult even for an expert to distinguish between the two possibilities.
  - Since Google's organic results change so slowly it is valuable to use AdWords to test pages. AdWords gives you results in a matter of minutes rather than the weeks or months that Google's organic results take to react to changes.
  - Yahoo! And MSN may show results more quickly than Google but usually represent far less qualified traffic over the long run.
- Understand the meaning of the reports of the increased traffic to your site.