

Innovation in Internet Marketing



By Damon Segal
Founder and MD
Emotio Design Group

So where are we now?

Consider these amazing statistics: There are over one trillion unique URLs on the web at any one time – that's one million million pages. Globalisation is becoming more relevant as more than 25 per cent of the world's population has access to the internet and the importance of consumer personal engagement is all the buzz. In the UK 18.3 million households (70 per cent) have access to the internet. More than 150 million people access their Facebook account every day, 65 million of these via their mobile device. People are watching hundreds of millions of videos a day. In fact, every minute, 20 hours of video is uploaded to YouTube. So with these facts in mind, how do you take an innovative approach to creating and marketing a web presence?

How the money flows

It has been reported that online retail spend reached £21 billion in the UK last year with that figure expected to triple over the next decade. Over the same timeframe, traditional spending will fall from £265 billion to £247 billion, or so says the crystal ball that is Reuters.



According to Paypal, 2010 will see a 235 per cent growth in online grocery shopping to £6.25 billion. On Christmas Day 2008, with all the shops closed, online shoppers spent over £100 million, and in November and December 2009 Americans spent US\$29.1 billion online (Source: comScore).

As a response to this demand, we have also seen UK online advertising spend increase to £17.5 billion in 2008, representing almost 20 per cent of all media spend in the UK.

So what does this mean?

It means businesses and retailers need to get smarter in the way they attract customers and generate sales. Competition is going to be fiercer and margins are going to be attacked even more with consumers being able to compare prices quickly and easily. The focus must be on brand trust, loyalty and differentiation in order to influence market share.

The best way to predict the future is to invent it

In just six years Apple's online music store iTunes has picked up 25 per cent of the US retail music market, selling over five billion downloads. Facebook has gained more than 300 million users and Twitter grew 1,382 per cent between February 2008 and February 2009. One of the reasons for Twitter's amazing success was its open architecture, this is creating the conditions for users to innovate and shape the way twitter is used.

Innovations like these change our understanding of how the world works. Ten years ago, if I wanted to find a song that a friend told me to listen to I had to go to a shop and buy the track. Now, I can see what

my friend is listening to on his Facebook post then click and hear it immediately free of charge on a site like Spotify.

To keep up-to-date with the latest trends and technologies is almost a full time job in itself. Even more important is having the foresight and understanding of where future internet trends might head.

To understand this we need to examine the environment

- Personal profiling and community advertising will start to target customers more effectively than ever before.
- The growth in broadband and connection speed will allow more rich media to be delivered, bringing on the rapid growth of Web TV and premium content. This will allow personalised advertising to be delivered via this new exciting medium.
- Consumers will be more informed than ever before with live search becoming a growing trend, allowing people to find real time information and reviews.
- Web semantics will enable search engines like Google to improve their understanding of words and documents, therefore producing better results.
- More prominence will be put on personalisation and localisation. With a large increase in global urbanisation these factors will heavily affect online sales and customer engagements.
- The growth of smart mobile phones will mean that consideration for mobile content must be given when creating a website.
- The importance of site speed and usability will factor in search engine friendliness. Faster, better-structured sites will be looked at in a favourable way.
- Google personalised search will have an effect on site rankings as Google shows results to searchers based on their last 180 days of search history and behaviour,



although my understanding is that top rankings will retain a high position even if they may be displaced by one or two positions. The trick will be to look for ways to take advantage of personalised search – for example, making sure your locality is set correctly or that you have a broad spectrum of on-page optimisation that will cast a bigger net.

- Social media spheres will influence consumer trends whilst social media monitoring will provide an insight into your brand and sector. Engaging consumers on an emotional level will help grow loyalty and communicate brand differentiation.
- An integrated approach to managing social media will need to be defined and adopted in order to streamline management and keep messages consistent. With so many platforms now available, attracting literally billions of visits each month, solutions are being created so that accounts can be linked, allowing single posts to gain the maximum reach.

In Summary

"Only the paranoid will survive." said Andy Grove, chairman of Intel, adding "The more successful you are, the more people want a chunk of your business and then another chunk and then another until there is nothing left." This kind of paranoia leads to constant innovation in order to stay ahead.

Innovation should not be confused with change or creativity. Change is not always innovation, changing your website for a better-looking new one is not innovating. Being creative is only having the ideas for innovation, whilst innovation is actually taking those ideas and making them real.

Many of you have creative agencies and creative directors but the real question is how many of you have innovative agencies and innovation directors?

We should be taught not to wait for inspiration to start a thing. As Frank Tibolt says "Action always generates inspiration. Inspiration seldom generates action."

emotio
DESIGN GROUP

Emotio Design Group

Damon founded Emotio Design Group to help brands and business define and deliver integrated marketing services and collateral and to improve their marketing effectiveness. Although Emotio is primarily focused in the digital arena, website design and development, it remains strong in branding and its traditional skills of design for print.

Emotio provides websites, branding, marketing consultancy, brochures, search engine optimisation, PPC campaign management, social media optimisation and more. Its extensive client list includes Brady Corporation, Bestway, Forever Living Products, Shaun Leane, BNI and The Royal College of GPs.

emotio.co.uk