Search Engine Strategies
CSE/BIS 197 Fall 2006

• Welcome!
• Profs. Brian Davison and Lin Lin
• Syllabus, schedule, etc. all online
  - http://www.cse.lehigh.edu/~brian/course/sem
• One credit, meets just once per week
• One textbook: *Search Engine Marketing, Inc.*
Course Overview

• Three parts
  – Introduction
  – Planning a search marketing campaign
  – Implementation

• Semester-long project
  – Design a campaign for a university department

• Online discussion (required, by Monday noon)
  – Ask and answer questions for each chapter

• Expect to have one or more special visitors
Background

• Assumption throughout the course
  - You want to make your website visible and attract your target audience
    • Whether to sell, promote politics, or let yourself be heard

• Search Marketing
  - Process of maximizing the number of searchers coming to your site
  - Includes more than just search engine optimization (SEO)
Reasons that Search advertisers are using Search engine marketing, 2005

- Increase brand awareness: 62%
- Sell products directly online: 60%
- Generate leads: 58%
- Drive traffic to our site: 37%
- Generate leads for a dealer/dist: 19%
- To provide info/edu content only: 11%
- Other: 3%

Source: SEMPO, December, 2005
Web Search Basics

• More web users are searching
  – 91% of Internet users search for information (60% daily) [Pew/Internet, Dec. 2005]
  – 76% of all web users searched at least once in Jan 2004 (114M visitors to search sites)
  – 64% of web surfers use search as the primary method of finding things on the web
  – Have you Googled yourself?

• You need to know
  – The different kinds of search results
  – Where searchers go
Multiple Kinds of Search Results

- Organic results from an index
- Directory results
- Paid results
Multiple Kinds of Search Results

- Organic results from an index
  - Natural results from an index of crawled web pages
    - Usual meaning when referring to search results
  - Search engine optimization efforts are to improve ranking in organic results
  - Searchers click on organic results 60% of the time
Multiple Kinds of Search Results

- Directory results
  - Directories show site entries within particular categories
    - Yahoo's directory
    - dmoz Open Directory Project
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Multiple Kinds of Search Results

• Paid results
  – Includes both paid inclusion (indexing guaranteed) and paid placement (sponsored search)
  – Paid placement lists ads along with organic results
  – Paid search was a $10B market in 2005 [ClickZ]

Source: eMarketer, 2005, with IAB/PwC as baselines for 2001 – 2004; *SEMPO figures for N. America
US paid search – spending growth (% increase vs. prior yr)

Source: eMarketer, 2005; *SEMPO figure for N. America

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Where do searchers go?

- Top destinations:
  - Google, Yahoo, MSN, AOL, Excite, Ask
- Typically half of users of an engine will use another engine if needed
Share of US online searches, by Search Engine, Dec. ‘04 vs. Dec. ‘05

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings, Feb. 2006
Google

- Play on the word googol (1 followed by 100 zeros)
- Created in 1998 by Stanford graduate students Larry Page and Sergey Brin
- Googling has become a verb
- Handles about half of all web searches
- Has many (much less popular) additional services
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Yahoo!

- One of the most-visited sites on the Web
- Includes portal with news, shopping, email, etc.
- Founded in 1994 by Stanford graduate students
- Acronym: Yet Another Hierarchical Officious Oracle
  - Built directory of web sites, very popular!
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Yahoo! Search

- Second most popular search engine (25% of searches)
- Originally outsourced search to Inktomi, then Google
- In recent years, purchased a number of search engines
  - Inktomi, AltaVista, AllTheWeb, Overture (2005)
- Now has its own search technology
MSN Search / Windows Live Search

- Originally part of the Microsoft Network
- Previously outsourced search to Yahoo
- Built new search engine
AOL Search

- Part of Time Warner
- Used primarily by AOL users
  - But open to everyone
- Google provides main results
  - Both organic and paid search
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Ask.com

- Created in 1996
- No longer a 'natural language' search engine
- Respected tech; novel features
Metasearch Engines

- A metasearch engine does not have its own index
- Instead, it sends the query to one or more other search engines and displays the results
  - Sometimes combining or reranking
  - Useful when you want to search multiple sites simultaneously
- Not a large user base
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Local search engines

- Contain content or use an interface that is specialized for a particular country or region
  - e.g., www.search.ch
- But big engines also build country-specific sites
  - e.g., www.google.co.uk
- “Local search” refers to search with a targeted location
  - “hotels in NYC”, “home appliances” (to buy in your local area)
  - Most major engines are working on local search
  - Also includes yellow pages sites (e.g. www.superpages.com)
  - 55% of Internet users use search engines to find info about local firms [Kelsey Group, 2005]
Shopping search engines

• Shopping search services simultaneously compare products, pricing, features, etc.
• Visitors already know what they are looking for
  – Often ready to purchase
• Top sites:
  – Yahoo! Shopping, Shopping.com
• Many others:
  – NexTag, PriceGrabber, Froogle, PriceWatch
Specialty search engines

- More focused domain
- Engineering
  - www.globalspec.com
- Academic papers
  - CiteSeer, Google Scholar
- Information technology
  - IT.com
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Search and Your Marketing Mix

• We've seen that...
  – There is lots of searching happening online
  – There are many search services

• Search marketing should be part of your marketing budget
  – Competitor's mix might include paid search
  – Organic efforts sometimes funded from marketing
  – Search marketing is growing worldwide
Prospective customers use search

- 33% of web searchers are shopping
- 87% of consumers research products online, buy offline [BIGresearch, 2006], perhaps providing search marketing its biggest ROI [comScore, 2006]
- Total Internet users over 1 billion
  - 200M+ from US [Internet World Stats]
- People now search for your product, or your competitor, or the generic product category
- If your site is not near the top, it is not part of the customer's consideration set
- Searchers are more qualified than banner ad clickers
Type of Search Results that US Internet Users Cite as Most Relevant, 2004

Source: iProspect, May 2004
## Willingness to Click on Sponsored Search Links, by North American Google Users vs. Non-Google Users, 2004 (as a % of respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Google users</th>
<th>Non-Google users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, if looked relevant</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=425; 74% of respondents had 5 or more years of Internet experience
Source: Enquiro, April 2004
Search marketing is cost-effective

• Search marketing has lowest cost-per-lead
  – (about 1/3rd of yellow page advertising and 1/20th of direct mail)
• Can argue for reduced budget of other forms of advertising
Marketer’s opinions regarding the effectiveness of media for providing measurable ROI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Mail</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Source: Millward Brown, Advertising.com, Sept, 2004
Search marketing is big business!

- Many companies involved
  - Search consultants: SEO/SEM consultants do search marketing but nothing else
  - Traditional advertising agencies: Web ads (including search marketing) in addition to TV, radio, print
    - Might do SEO for organic search as well
  - Interactive advertising agencies: handling anything online
- Internet advertising in US was $12.5B in 2005 [IAB report]
US Online advertising spending, in $B

Source: eMarketer, 2005
US online ad spending, by format, 2005

- Search: 41%
- Display/Branding: 36%
- Classified: 18%
- Other: 7%

Source: eMarketer, Feb., 2006
$55 billion global online ad market projected for 2010

Source: Piper Jaffray, December, 2005
The challenges of online success

- Multiple specialized web development teams
  - Webmasters, programmers, copywriters, graphics
- Multiple product sites
  - Separate brand names (competing!)
- Multiple audiences (interests, markets, etc.)
- Multiple countries (and cultures, languages)
  - Also true for search engines
- Multiple technologies
  - Web servers, content management, personalization
The challenge of search marketing

- Attracting searchers is harder than many expect
- The larger your website, the more difficult

- The rest of this course will cover the issues and processes for successful search marketing