Website promotion – about SEO "science"

Dispelling illusion of having an artificial method to improve website rankings through SEO. Talk about strategically correct ways of site promotion.

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Behold the endangered "science" – SEO (Search Engine Optimization). "Wizard" and "alchemist" optimizers – usually, relatively-young people pioneering the Internet space – magically influence the perception of numerous top managers and investors; with no fraudulent intent and quite unknowingly, they sting them to the quick, often irresponsibly, with corporate website popularity caught in the net. The reason for this magical influence is clear: development managers, when the idea for a new project first emerges, often need to claim everything at once, and the website as sales tool is the first avenue towards broad popularity.

In order to understand this "chemistry" correctly, one must delve at least slightly into the Internet development story. As the vast number of websites of various profiles and quality began developing, there emerged a need for their classification and search, and consequently, search-system businesses appeared. Initially, there were a lot of Internet search systems; then, many of them were filtered out due to competition, and today, when we say "search engine," we traditionally mean Yandex and Google (speaking of Russia). Along with Internet development, website development and the accompanying technologies and regulations developed as well. For the purposes of search solutions, new rules and improvements appeared to regulate website classification within the search systems. Rules were actively introduced and used; however, as the Internet space quickly developed, they became obsolete and harmful instead of attaining the objectives of global search engines.

The objective of search systems, like any other business, is the generation of profit. However, many ways of doing this appeared, and over time, it was not so much profit that came to the fore (becoming partly a means) so much as ensuring a sustainable competitive advantage in a tough competitive environment. The long-term advantage of search engines is the Internet purity of their interpretation. In other words, the principle is that if a user wants to find something (a new commodity, a service, information, etc.), he will get a selection of the most interesting and high-quality services and accurate information. Otherwise, the multimillion-strong user stops visiting these services, and all of the multifaceted opportunities for earnings and synergy of search engines are set back to zero at once. This happened with many once-famous search services, which focused on quick money in the late 1990s – early 2000s. But Yandex and Google survived – what does this mean? Certainly, that they are constantly improving towards maintaining their strategic competitive advantage.

Let's return from history to our day. Without delving deeply into SEO chemistry, most managers facing this task imply in the SEO-optimization job definition the knowledge and practical application of an accumulated "set of rules" for website positioning in search systems. This intuitive definition is correct. But there is also the problem of the overestimation of SEO contribution, both by optimizers themselves and by their customers. So, the impression forms that SEO can magically influence website positions. The question is, at what expense. Do you really believe that a group of creative young people (optimizers) can play haphazardly with Google and Yandex with your money while following the rules of the latter! If it can – this will be for a very short period of time in terms of brand life, but is nonetheless destined to fail. And whether the outcome of this game will be beneficial for your website, or vice versa, is an open question.

All previous SEO (from the time of the rise of search-system competition) has today been reduced to correct – first of all, in terms of common sense (and consequently, in terms of search engines winning the competitive race) – website settings, which are largely implemented at the initial stage of its

development, not every month. Plus, to a clear explanation of how to post materials to the website for those who will be doing so regularly (editors, PR specialists, IT administrators – note that their jobs are not called SEO).

The common sense of promotion should be synchronized with the common sense of the business idea itself and team competencies. The chain of logic is simple: if you don't produce an interesting product or service and have no exclusive information that you want to deliver to others, why should a search engine provide a link to you for its innocent visitors. But if you "do produce" and "do have" – just write about it. And consequently, the search engine will find your website.

Proceeding from the above, we now believe that there are just three main methods for brand website promotion (corporate "business card website," though this term has been downgraded by today's mass developers):

- Regular delivery of your team's competencies to users by the team itself via a website. As a result, you provide the actual vision of your business, its development dynamics and product features on the company's website pages, and enjoy a well-earned spot on the lists of search results. You must be patient, since this method is not fast – both from the standpoint of the ability to perform such work in practice, and by the respective restrictions in the filters of the search systems involved. The other two methods may have a higher dependence on you in terms of return period;

- Advertising purchase in its various forms on the net. This way is justifiable at any time and in any scope – everything depends on current demand for the inflow of new customers, the availability of funds in the respective budgetary item, and the perspective (professionalism) of your PR manager;
- Development of your own customer loyalty system (CRM, Customer Relationship Management), which will help you deliver the PR campaigns of your brand to potential and current buyers, thereby promoting the website via such referrals.

All listed methods must constantly complement each other – most likely, with different priority at different stages of website development.

Do not waste your money on chemistry. Invest in product quality and core staff qualifications. Website promotion will largely become a consequence of this investment, and you will definitely win in the long-term. SEO "science" today (apart from your personal content) means legal compliance with the requirements (and "recommendations") of Yandex and Google with respect to website page structure – this is a task for an ordinary web programmer, not a mythical optimizer, and it should be performed at the first development stage of the new resource. Start the process of website maintenance in tandem with the investment development of new production (an idea, a service), long before the scheduled launch of sales; do not loose valuable time, and you will derive maximum benefit from the first of the aforementioned methods for its promotion.