

CHANGES BROUGHT BY INTERNET IN COMMUNICATION BETWEEN COMPANIES AND CONSUMERS

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REZUMAT. Internetul a adus o schimbare majoră în comunicarea curentă. Este de neimaginat dezvoltarea unei afaceri fără prezență on-line. Consumatorii au controlul asupra informației accesate de pe Internet, ei decid ce vor să vadă, cum vor să vadă și cum doresc să transmită mesajul mai departe (marketing viral). Prin urmare, metodele de comunicații prin forumuri online, blog-uri, conferințe on-line, campanii de e-mail aduc profituri importante firmelor care știu să pună în aplicare strategia social-media. Lipsa prezenței unde își desfășoară clienții activitatea, sau timpul liber expun companiile la riscul de a fi ignorată.

Cuvinte cheie: social media, popularitatea prin conectare, SEO-optimizarea site-ului pentru motarele de căutare, publicitate web, Page Rank.

ABSTRACT. The Internet has brought a major change in the current communication. Is unimaginable a business development without an online turn. Consumers have control over the Internet, they decide what they want to see, how they want to see and how they want to convey the message further (viral marketing). Therefore communications methods through online forums, blogs, online conferences, email campaigns bring important profits to firms who know to implement social-media strategy. Lack of presence where the target market works, lives and enjoy spending spare time expose companies to the risk of being ignored.

Keywords: social media, link popularity, SEO-search engine optimization, web advertising, Page Rank.

„Social media has fundamentally changed the way the company interacts... social media has changed the way in which we communicate and we know better each other.” (www1, Nick Palmer, MediaCom)

Social media generally seeks to increase the number of fans, but this is not enough. To get the profit is important to earn customers loyalty, to know their purchase skills and attitudes so that products and services can be customized for them, both in terms of their characteristics, as well as time and location to be supplied. „A perfect advertising involves the perfect message, the perfect time, to be targeted to the appropriate persons within the perfect context. If there lacks only one of these four factors, you could have only a common campaign”, without great results. (www1, Steffen Erhardt, Google)

Thus any company with online presence should take into account the development of an active blog or forum to communicate with customers, to offer them the possibility of feedback, to express their opinions, suggestions and complaints regarding the company's products and services. The most effective form of marketing is direct marketing, viral marketing, sending the information from person to person. Such testimonial left by customers on the company's website is an effective form of advertising and free of charge. “92% of the people have trust in word of mouth from friends and family. 47% trust in TV and radio.” (www1, Bruce Bale)

According to the BR 2011 study, conducted by refresh.ro and Vola.ro, online travel agency in Romania, the activity on the blog has become an industry that, in 2011, has attracted 619.750 euro from companies pockets. (www2)

According to the study Romania's blogger profile is characterized by: is man, has over 25 years old, lives in Bucharest, has higher education (College or master degree) and started to write on the blog after 2009. They win money from advertise (31% answers), banners (23%), affiliate marketing (18%) and special projects (14%).

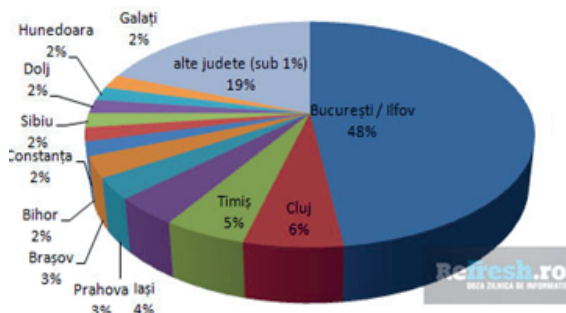


Fig. 1. BR 2011 study – Blog activity in 2011 in Romania.

The most popular social network is Facebook: 95% of Romanian bloggers have a Facebook account. “Now there are 901 million users on Facebook and half of them connects to the mobile terminal. Daily uploads arrive to 300 million photos on Facebook.” (www1, Bruce Bale). An example of successful page on Facebook is the Manchester United (24 million fans). Voting site by visitors shows the audience.

A study of the Unlock Market Research, made public at the Social Media Summit held by the Biz magazine presented six categories of users profiles on Facebook (www3):

– Pragmatic: their detailed profile is available only in the friends circle, which is not very extensive and he interacts pretty little on Facebook, being disinclined to non-informational content. Instead he searches for details on products and promotions on the brands internet pages.

– Militant: has a very large number of friends, who neither knows well nor give them information about itself, but debate the causes that defines itself.

– Connector: is the man who takes over and then distribute the message, is highly dynamic, searches for detailed information and makes many recommendations

– Approver: has a small group of friends and do not give much information about itself. He gives Like very often.

– Self-propagandist: he supplies very detailed information about himself and his passions. Write

and spend a lot of time on Facebook. He has many friends and is very friendly.

– Explorer: he posts news, ideas, original paintings, films, etc and is very up to date with the trends, with the interesting happenings.

Consequently the companies have to address with advertising campaigns especially to the self-propagandist, which has many friends and spends a long time on the internet. If he is convinced of the product/service quality, he will influence his friends’ perception, too. Firms may address to connector and militant to send the message further. Firms may address to approver to get as many Like as possible. Explorer may be attracted just by very good quality and innovative products/services.

“Facebook Ads Product Director, Gokul Rajard said that Facebook Social Ads cause people to remember an ad (up to 68%) and increases the likelihood as a person to buy a product (an advance of over 400% than the traditional methods). Sponsored Stories allows advertisers to promote the recommendations mouth-to-mouth and the interactions with brands that exist in Facebook News Feed. If, for example, someone's friend, 'yeah like' a brand, it will see this both in News Feed, as well as in the right side of the screen. Facebook Ads are based on the idea that people want to see what their friends are doing.” (www4)

Companies can increase online visibility using the instruments offered by social media. They can also increase their link popularity, their page rank and their online visibility, as a consequence, receiving as many links from YouTube, which „got a thousand billion of views in 2011” and from Google: „ they loads an hour of content per second. 90% of european users search on Google information about products and services.” (www1, Dan Bulucea, Romania)

NewMedia Confernce held this year in Bucharest have shown five trends for 2012: Online display covers 76% of advertising, 68% is search, 59% represents social media, 30% is digital video. It is easy to observe the impact that social media has in firms activity with online presence. User profile of social media influence its behavior on forums, blogs, on the internet, in general. Specialized studies in psychology and sociology have shown that estrogen hormones and genetics constitution affect brain activity, having consequences in human behavior. Women use social media differently compared to

men. Women are very attentive to detail, are more stable, preferring to forge stable relations in social media, being inclined to long conversations. Men don't notice details, they have a synthetic thinking, trying to obtain an overall panorama. Men are more active, more dynamic, they like to compete and to conquer/win. Media campaigns must target very well having in count these features and others, such as cultural differences, the role in society and specific needs. For example, although South Korea is a conservative country 40% of Koreans have created avatars, while in US just 18% have an avatar. In India, 69% of the Facebook users are men while only 31% are women. China has filtered internet access. In Russia Google's it is not market leader in the segment, but the search engines Yandex, with a market share of 62%. Similarly, Facebook is in 5th place, with 8%.

The popularity of a site and the page rank of a site are given by the exchange of links between websites and optimizing the site for search engines. Link popularity is given by the number of links to the company website. These are obtained by agreements between organizations for providing reciprocal links on their sites. Firms are chosen from the chain of distribution, assign, suppliers, dealers, companies that offer complementary products, shareholders, even with the competition. These links increase traffic on the site, all the more so they are made to sites with a very large number of visitors.

(http://www.emailbrain.com/eb/index.shtml?gclid=CLq_yqv9saYCFUQI3wodcnuXpQ)

It's very important the banner design, which becomes unattractive after 3 views, so must be accessed from the outset; A well positioning on the site influences the number of views and the price.

Writing and offering free specialized articles to publishers for newsletter, which to be send by e-mail, with a request to include in the article a brief description of company products/services, and include links to the site, is another method of increasing your page rank.

Search engine optimization (<http://seo-portal.ro/>) is the process of improving the website visibility or a web page visibility for search engines. Other form of record listings is Search Engine Marketing (SEM).

SEO may target different kinds of search, including image search, local search, video search and semantic search.

SEO tools:

1. Backlinks Checker - looks for links to the referred site and gives some data about each link (description, language, size)

2. Google PageRank Prediction - predicts what will be the site page rank at the future update made by Google

3. Link Popularity - Checks how many links are pointing to the site in the most popular search engines

4. PageRank Checker - checks page rank site for multiple datacentre Google

5. Rank Checker - check how popular is the site for users and search engines.

6. Reverse IP/Lookup - checks the original site host for a given IP. Can be useful to detect a spammer

7. Search Engine Position - checks on what position is the site on Google and Yahoo

8. Spider View – find out how the site is seen by different robots site search engines: Google, MSN, Yahoo

9. Visual PageRank - displays the page rank for each link page of a site

10. Website Speed Test - check how fast your site loads. If it loads too slowly site has to be optimized or moved to a different server.

For an objective assessment of the degree of relevance of web pages, web developers have invented a scoring system of popularity of a site, on a scale of 1 to 10, called PageRank, whose formula is $PR(A) = (1-d) + d(PR(T1)/C(T1) + \dots + PR(Tn)/C(Tn))$ where "PR(Tn)" is an array (a T1, T2, ..., Tn) of features that measure the relevance of each page, and "C(Tn)" is an array that reflects the number of links for each page, the "d" is a factor given by multiplying the number of votes for a page with 0,85. If a page has no links to it (backlinks) will receives a low PR of $((1-d) = (1-0,85) = 0,15$. In other words, $PR = 0,15 + 0,85 (PR \text{ pages that link to the page for which you want PR})$. Details on the calculation of PR and the decoder can be found at: <http://www.search-this.com/pagerankdecoder/>.

Evolution of links to a page is strictly monitored by the web robots (date of appearance and disappearance of links in a document and their frequent changes). The document will get a higher

PR if it has many links or if these new links come from sites with high PR. If a document is considered old links contained in it will be ignored.

Companies must take into account in fundamental online prices strategies that a number of factors determine the significant declines in price:

1. Consumers can easily search, nationally or worldwide, the offers with lowest prices;

2. The emergence of new products is immediately identified both by consumers and potential current or future competitors;

3. Because of business globalization many fees paid by buyer tend to reduce or disappear (customs duties, VAT, etc.);

4. The implications of spending reductions and removals to manufacturers, importers, or distributors reduce the online products/services costs (salaries of staff employed in the commerce and distribution, storage and sales services for customers in the physical environment involves costs by about 300%, on average, higher than in the virtual, etc);

5. Many companies on the Internet are supported financially through investment funds or investors in the long term perspective, which invest in brand image or to fill a market quota.

We can identify three online price strategies that can be applied:

1. Price Penetration Strategy-setting a relatively low initial price for quick penetration in the segments of the product or service; very effective for a market sensitive global market such as the Internet;

2. Price Leadership Strategy - establishment of the lowest price to a given product in a given category, the market share covered by reducing the margin of which practiced by identifying suppliers that offer the lowest prices, reduced ongoing costs;

3. Promotional Pricing Strategy - placement, on a temporary basis, the prices in the price competitive environment, to encourage online shopping first.

Also the Romanian companies with online presence should take into account that „the percentage of online shopping vs other countries made in Romania is 80” (www1, Dan Bulucea). Thus 80% of the online buying are made from foreign companies: Amazon, eBay dominate local markets.

CONCLUSIONS

To visit the site, to return to the site and to make shopping on the site are 3 different activities that involve different strategies approach to consumers. Companies need to invest today in social media to make their presence felt online. As this online presence is felt, both the company activity and its profits are more obvious. Implemented poorly, social media can generate negative reactions for a particular brand, transforming it in hot and negative topic on Facebook and Twitter.

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