

When approaching public relations, it is key to not only address all channels throughout which one's target demographic can receive word of the benefits of one's organization or brand, but to utilize to one's advantage those which are most popular and therefore, effective.

As a result, search engine optimization (SEO) is a pivotal piece of today's PR success puzzle. Gone are the days when television and radio were the best means of reaching a national demographic. With 2.4 billion people surfing the web every day, curious minds have turned to Google, Bing, and other search engines to resolve issues, diagnose themselves, and research reviews prior to making a purchase. The internet, unfortunately, even when untrue, has become a trusted source to many.

The intent of public relations is to positively expose a brand or organization based on what is generally seen or heard. This defines SEO to a tee. Search engine optimization is the study and execution of bidding on key words and adding quality material to a brand or organization's website that will help it be seen in search engine results. Though bidding can be done on words that relate to one's field to ensure that the organization "ranks" more highly in search results, building quality pages can also ensure that your brand or company makes the first page. Google's algorithms, which change almost daily, are structured to evaluate a site's statistics, such as quality material and number of visitors, and place them accordingly within their "organic" results, so:

<h1>Understand What They Are Searching</h1>

Similar to the development process of a product or brand, it is imperative to question for what your target demographic is looking. In the SEO world, this is the same as defining what it is that your target is searching. Place yourself in the position of the searcher, not the results. For instance, a PR representative for a generic version of a prescription drug should research the keywords that are most likely to be entered by someone potentially interested in his/her product. It is unsafe to assume that "generic" and "(enter drug here) alternative" are being searched, as these are industry terms not likely used by the searcher. Instead, remember to utilize relative key words such as "cheaper (enter drug here)" and "cheap (enter illness here) medicine". In addition to bidding, the utilization of these more applicable key words on your website will reflect in the success of your brand.

<h2>Optimize Your Materials</h2>

Once these ideal keywords are defined, it is crucial to utilize them on your brand or product's website. Doing so will ensure that the search engines' spiders identify the relative material available on your site and therefore encourage visitors within its ranking. Quality sources are also identified by spiders by the amount of links provided within the site. Ensure that your site provides links to additional resources and, when possible, be sure to include YOUR site's link when posting on other websites.

<h3>Join the Trends</h3>

Social media has become one of the greatest tools in identifying what is trending in the marketplace. Twitter, which was once a mass of random, brief commentary, has now become a cultivation of hashtags and the practical definition of popular material. Stay informed as to what is trending and expose your information applicably. Read and comment on related blogs whose viewers may appreciate reading more about your product. Beyond initiating conversation, be sure to remember to link back to your own material, providing your readers with a quality point of view and encouraging site traffic all the while.

In essence, to best execute public relations in our digital era, one has no choice but to utilize SEO. The similarity ends in their interchangeability, where one does not currently exist without the other.