



How to Yield Higher Quality Leads

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About 10 years ago, you would win the online marketing race by having a well-designed generalist website. Heck, it worked well and the return on investment (ROI) was a no brainer.

As more accountants caught on, it became more challenging to stay ahead of the curve, and still get more than your fair share of website leads. The general public became aware of search engine optimization, and pay per click advertising, and the competition to be in the top of search engine results got harder and harder. The ROI was still very attractive, but you had to spend more to acquire the same number of leads.

Today, it is harder and harder for a single generalist website to be placed towards the top of the search engine results pages for all of the services provided in your practice. And if you operate in multiple geographic markets, it is even more difficult to be towards the top, because your message to the search engines is more complex and watered down.

As more accounting firms have well-designed websites, integrated blogs, a social media presence, pay-per-click advertising, retargeting advertising and reputation management, it becomes more competitive to dominate the online lead-generation game. Not only does this mean that you're left struggling to stand out amongst the competition, but it makes it harder to target your ideal customer. Not only do many accountants find the flow of new leads slowing, they find that the quality of their leads have also diminished.

So, what is the solution? How do you once again stand out in the crowd while targeting your ideal client?

While there is no single solution, many savvy accounting firms have deployed a multiple website strategy to obtain dominate search engine placement for a limited set of keywords.

Here's why it works.

Essentially, search engines scan your website and look for patterns which identify what you do, where you are located, and compare your website against a set of criteria within their algorithm. The more consistent and clear your message, the easier it is for the search engines to give you higher placement within Google, Bing, and Yahoo. This translates to more leads.

Secondarily, the multiple website approach enables you to tailor your message to the prospect and talk out of multiple sides of your mouth to create that "A-ha!" moment for the prospect. In other words, some small business owners are searching by location and others are searching for a type of accountant (e.g., bookkeeper, enrolled agent, CPA Firm) and others are looking for a specialist (e.g., CPA for doctors, non-profit accounting for churches, business valuation, etc.). Using multiple websites allows you to speak to each one of these kinds of people.

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The third step is to support each one of the websites with pay-per-click advertising to drive traffic to the website. Then, use retargeting, which is designed to pull prospects back to the website. Pay-per-click advertising will help ensure you're showing up for the keywords you want to. But, since you're driving the ads to a website with a specific message it makes it easier and less expensive to compete on ad bids.

The fourth, and final, step is to support everything reviewed online in Google and Yelp. Online reviews are crucial to overcoming skepticism, and instilling trust in prospective leads.

With this four-step approach, accountants are using the multiple website strategy to maximize lead generation and hone in on their ideal client. From a marketer's perspective, each website is relatively inexpensive and pulls in far more business than the annual cost. In fact, each website should make you money. Therefore, running a business with just one website is like playing golf with just one golf club. Realistically, who plays golf with just one golf club? Nobody.

The solution is simple, you need to identify the segments of your accounting practice that you want to grow and then develop a website to focused against that industry or type of service.

About the Author:



Hugh Duffy is the Co-Founder and Chief Marketing Officer of www.buildyourfirm.com, a website development and marketing company for accounting firms. With more than 30 years of marketing experience, he has been coaching accountants on how to improve their marketing and make more money from their accounting practice since 2003. Hugh takes great pride in the impact his coaching has on the practices and lives of his clients.