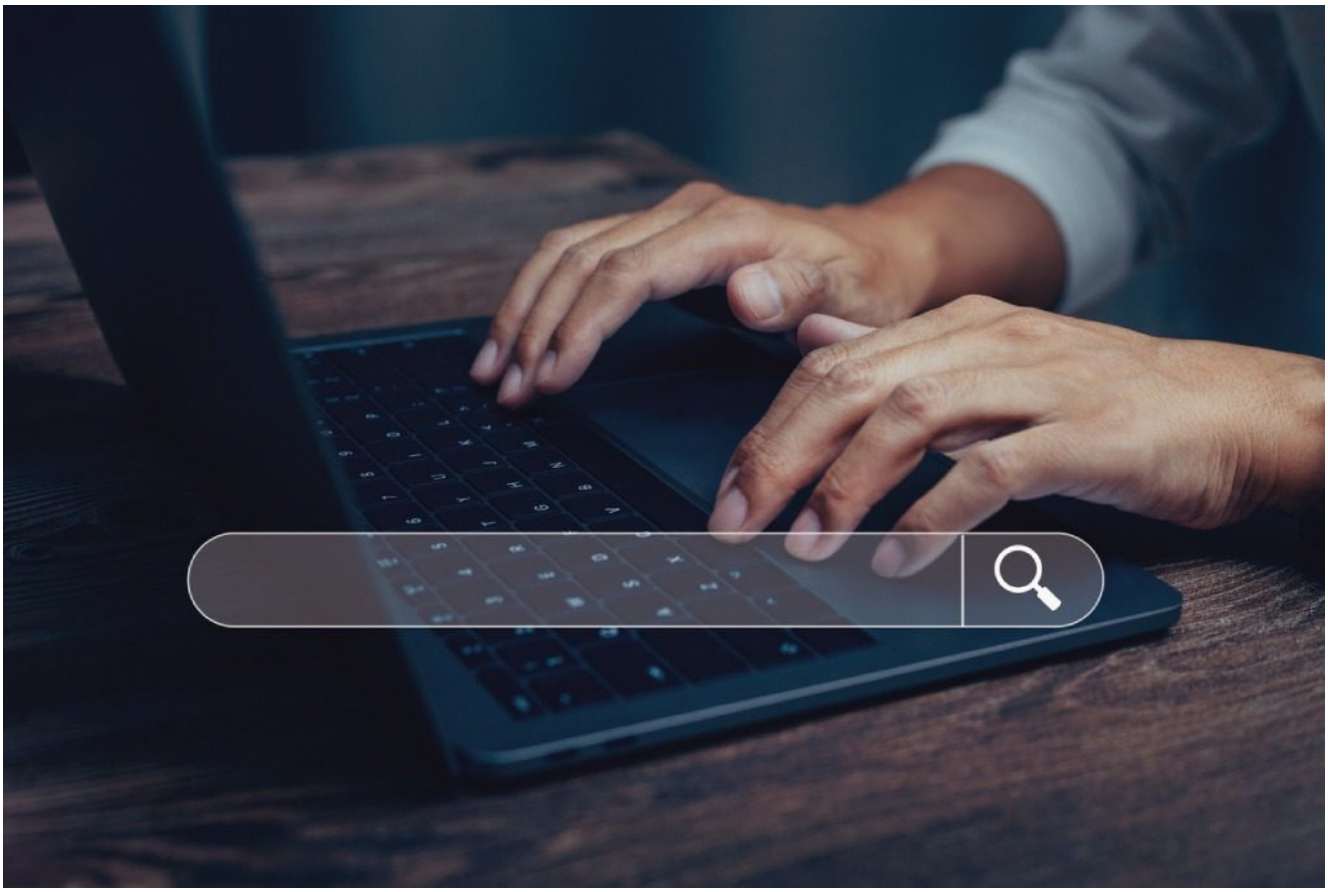
Marketing secrets for generating internet traffic

As essential as social media have become to marketing, other virtual tools should not be overlooked. "Traditional" tools like SEO and SEM still boost sales.



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The Internet has transformed the way marketers interact with clients, making it vital to know how it works and how to take full advantage of it.

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A new paper coauthored with IESE Prof. Julián Villanueva shares some marketing strategies for generating Internet traffic, stressing the need to come up with a good digital marketing plan that is adapted to your company's needs.

It is particularly important to pay close attention to the following factors.

- **Internal and External Analysis of the Current Situation.** Identify your strengths and weaknesses, and what threats and opportunities you face.
- **Marketing Goals.** Besides selling more goods at a higher profit, there are secondary goals that are more specific and measurable, such as launching an online outlet for minimizing out-of-season stock, as in the case of, say, a company that sells leather goods.
- **Strategy.** To achieve these goals, you should establish concrete strategies related to product, price, distribution channels and advertising.
- **Action Plan.** Clearly spell out your digital strategies, denoting specific tasks, dates, the people in charge and their positions in the hierarchy, to determine if the preestablished objectives have been met.
- **Viability Plan.** To guarantee the profitability of your digital strategy, you must have a clear idea of where your revenue comes from and where your expenditure goes, as well as what investments need to be made.
- **Measurement and Monitoring.** Establish indicators to assess whether you are achieving the set goals of the business, i.e., your Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Ask yourself: Through which channels do visitors come to our website? How many users end up actually buying something? Which page is the most visited?

The more traffic, the better

Search engine optimization (SEO) techniques help you to better position your website in the list of results that come up when someone does a search.

A user is much more likely to access your site if it is on the first page of the list rather than buried somewhere on the third or even 33rd page.

There are two kinds: in-site SEO and off-site SEO. The first consists of techniques for internal optimization of a website, such as providing a map that allows users to scroll through all the information it contains. The second refers to external techniques such as qualified links to your site from other sites.

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Traffic received through SEO methods does not involve any payment, and the interest of the user is clear from the search he or she has carried out.

Search engine marketing (SEM) does involve cost. These are the sponsored links that most search engines include when the user does a search on that subject. SEM traffic provides greater flexibility.

SEM and SEO complement each other, as the former tends to be used for a company to position itself over the short term, while the latter offers better results over the medium to long term.

Other techniques for generating traffic fall under the category of social media marketing (SMM), which consists of promoting your product or service through blogs or video aggregators such as You Tube and social networks.

One should also not overlook social media optimization (SMO), which involves promoting your website with tools that allow users to export your content to other sites, such as when they share a news article they like on Facebook.

Choosing the right path

There are other resources for promoting your website. For instance, display or branding campaigns are based on inserting advertising on your webpages. However, they tend to be linked to goals of brand generation than to outright revenue generation.

Another marketing strategy is that of affiliation, which consists of distributing advertising online via several websites grouped around a company's platform. There are three payment models: cost per click (CPC), cost per lead (CPL) or cost per access (CPA).

Digital public relations (e-PR), meanwhile, can promote your product through influencers whose function is to persuade influential people and/or organizations in your sector to recommend your brand or product on their websites.

Other digital strategies include e-mail marketing — sending e-mails to a set group of people to lure new clients or hold onto ones you already have — and mobile marketing, which, while still not widely used by companies, holds immense promise as a high-growth medium in the not-so-distant future.

Of course, one must not forget traditional media, like television and radio, which can enhance

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the effectiveness of any digital campaign. After all, a good off-line strategy always boosts one's online strategy, and vice versa.

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