

The image features a background of dark, weathered wooden planks. The wood has a rich, dark brown to blackish hue with visible grain patterns, knots, and some surface wear, including small holes and scratches. A solid, bright blue horizontal banner is positioned across the middle of the image. Centered on this banner is the text "Websites 102: Marketing Your Business Online" in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

Websites 102: Marketing Your Business Online



01. Introductions / Course Overview



Who I Am / What I Do / Who I Do It For

derek allard

derek@tunnel7.com | 413.529.0754

Standards Based Website Designer
focused on return on investment
based on client goals

Primarily small to medium sized
businesses who want to make the
most of their website

Who Are You / What Do You Do

... and what are you looking to get out of this class

Do you have a website? If yes, what has your experience with it been?

Sections of This Class

01. Introductions / Course Overview
02. Evaluating / Planning Your Website
03. Analyzing Your Website
04. Free Things Everyone Should Be Doing
05. Search Engine Optimization
06. Paid Advertising with Google Adwords
07. Email Marketing
08. Blogging / Podcasting and the RSS Feed
09. Social Media Websites
10. Wrap up / Questions & Answers

Goals of This Class

Help you to market your business online

Show you in a hands on way some tools to help you

Keep it fun and entertaining

Keep it interactive ... If you have a question/comment/concern stop me and let me know

Class Materials

Presentation and outline will be posted at www.tunnel7.com/cdc



02. Evaluating / Planning Your Website



Selecting A Domain Name

Keep it concise and easy to remember

.com is what people remember most

Domain name extensions changing

Does Your Website Have A Clear Goal?

What action do you want visitors to your website to take?

Websites should have a focused goal.

Website simplicity is the cornerstone of goal achievement

Who is Your Competition?

Does your website stand up to your competition?

How much competition is there?

Reviewing your competition's website is a great way to get ideas and avoid pitfalls

The Importance of Website Standards

What website standards are (W3C)

Separation of content and design

Improve accessibility and maximize search engine friendliness

Forward compatibility and ease of maintenance / reusable code

Non-SEO Friendly Technologies

Flash animations

Framesets

Hidden text, keyword stuffing and
link farms

The Importance of Website Content

“Content is king.”

Your content is as big a marketing piece as anything else we will discuss

Speak to the benefits your audience will receive from working with you

Keep content brief and focused on your website goal

Why Are We Talking About Websites?

Because it is the foundation upon which all of your marketing efforts will be built upon

Websites are the new yellow pages and are often the first impression of your business

Treat your website as you would your business



03. Analyzing Your Website



Understanding Visitors To Your Website

Do you regularly review your website statistics?

Unlike traditional print media websites offer a direct way to track visitors

Websites also can show you the effectiveness of marketing efforts

Where Is Your Traffic Coming From

Search Engines?

Referring Websites?

Paid ads?

Direct traffic?

What Are Your Most Popular Pages?

Homepage will be the most popular by default for most websites

Knowing what pages are most heavily trafficked will tell you what your visitors are looking for

Enter Google Analytics

Primary tool I use for my clients when analyzing their websites

Invaluable and free

Have your web person set it up for you tomorrow

Make Better Website Decisions

Understanding analytics can save you time and money and increase your goal conversion

Identify under performing marketing and ads

Identify your visitors areas of interest

Set Goals For Your Website

Traffic alone should not be your goal / Not all traffic is created equal

Think of your website as a funnel. Your homepage is the top of that funnel

Where do you want your visitors to go?



04. Free Things Everyone Should Be Doing



Add Your Website URL To All Collateral

Letterhead

Business cards

Invoices

Envelopes

Brochures

Include Your Website URL In Ads

Print ads

TV ads

Radio spots

Build An Email Mailing List

Email marketing is a great, low cost way to connect with your audience

Encourage website visitors to give you their email address (contest sign up, white paper, etc.)

If you have a store put a blank book out for customers to leave their information

Use Your Domain Email (Not AOL!)

Domain email contains your website address so people can easily find it

Having a non-domain email (aol, verizon, charter) for a business address conveys the message that you aren't serious about your website

Separates business email from personal email

Make Use Of Your Email Signature

Signature can be a marketing tool

Mention upcoming events or specials

Include social media websites where people can find you

Utilize Social Media Websites

Forums, blogs (comments) and social media websites are a great way to establish credibility and build links

Become an expert in your field

Twitter, Facebook & LinkedIn

Painless networking (no awkward schmoozing!)

Add Your Business To Google Local

People rely more and more on search engines and less and less on the yellow pages

Google Local is free / yellow pages are anything but free

Leverage Craig's List

Place ads offering your services

Find business from interested parties

Craig's List is free

Don't Let Your Website Go Stale

A dated website is one that reflects poorly on your business

Competition online is massive - stay current!



05. Search Engine Optimization



Three Major Search Engines

Google

Yahoo

MSN (Microsoft)

Google

Current search engine leader

Accounts for 63% of all searches done online

Because of this people pay closer attention to their Google rankings

Yahoo

Was once the search king

Accounts for 19% of all searches done online

Have been in merger talks

MSN (Microsoft)

Has always been playing catchup to both Google and Yahoo

Accounts for only 8% of all searches done online

Organic Search Results

Determined by content of your website

Determined by placement of keywords within tags that hold more relevance

Determined by the number and quality of inbound links

Selecting Keywords

The foundation for any search engine optimization (SEO) campaign

Look at your competition for ideas

Understanding keyword popularity and the effects thereof

Google keyword tool

Content Must Contain Keywords

Search engines read your content just as you or I would

Meta tags not as important as they once were

Place keywords in <title> and <h#> tags

Building Links From Related Websites

Links to your website essentially count as a “vote” for your website

Better if website linking to you has related, relevant content

Monitoring Progress Is Essential

No simple formula for high search engine rankings

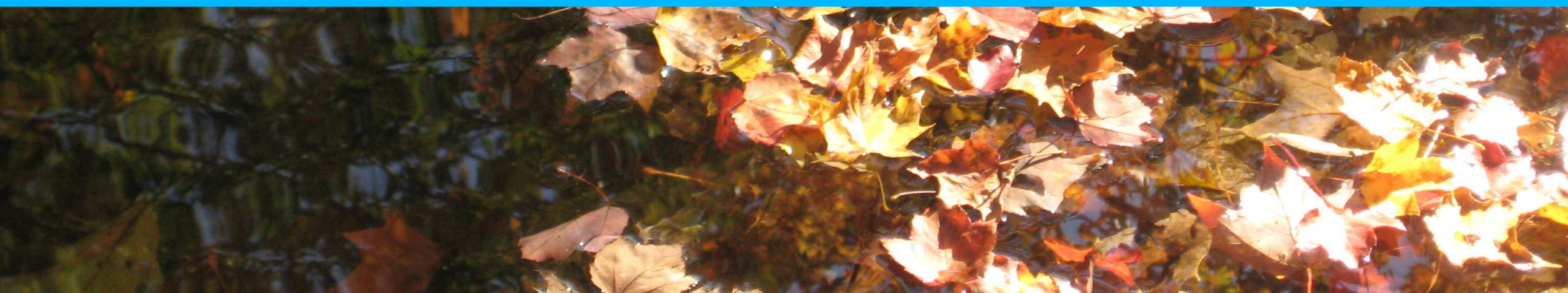
Check progress on a monthly basis

Utilize Google Analytics

Firefox Rank Checker



06. Paid Advertising With Google Adwords



Have You Used Paid Search Results?

What has your experience been?

How long did you run the ads?

How Pay Per Click Ads Work

Bid on keywords and associate ads with the keywords

Can define a daily budget limit

Popular ads are displayed higher and receive cost discounts

URLs take user to a page of your choosing on your website

Keywords Used In Paid Search Also

The work we did in determining keywords for organic, non-paid efforts will be used for paid search also

Selecting Keywords To Bid On

Highly competitive keywords will be very expensive to bid on

Often makes sense to bid on less expensive, niche keywords

Finding a niche is a good approach for most small businesses

Recommended Bid Prices Inflated

Google will suggest a bid price and daily budget

They tend to be rather inflated

Bid recommendations will be based on #1 position (not essential)

Importance Of Experimentation

Experimenting with ads will improve your effectiveness and lower expenses

Will drive more traffic at a lower cost

Split Testing

Always run two ads for identical keywords

After a set period of time delete the under performing ad and write a new one

Importance Of Monitoring Campaigns

Under performing keywords should be eliminated

Can connect Google Adwords campaigns to Google Analytics

Constant refinement will eliminate wasted costs and improve your click through rates

Landing Pages

Are critical to the success of any Google Adwords campaign

Do not send your traffic to a general homepage!

Landing page should be closely linked to ad text and offer clear calls to action



07. Email Marketing



Great Low Cost Alternative

No postage

No high priced ad placements

Targeted to your specific audience

Building An Email Mailing List

The better your list, the better your email marketing campaigns will be

Take the time to build a great list

Offer something in exchange for email addresses

Buying existing mailing lists

Don't Become A Spammer

If buying lists, make sure they are reputable

If someone unsubscribes from your mailings make sure they are unsubscribed

Abide by the CAN-SPAM act

Establish A Regular Schedule

A regular email schedule keeps you in contact with your customers

Once a month works well in most cases

Defining the email topics on an annual basis very helpful

When To Send Your Message

Never send on a weekend

Monday and Friday's tend not to be good

10 am - 1 pm midweek regarded as prime time

HTML Email Madness

There are dozens of email clients and all support HTML email differently

Test in as many clients as you can

Online services offer basic templates to get you started

Rely sparingly on images

Elements Of A Good HTML Email

Link to a website location

One clear point or offer with a clear direction (button) to proceed

Design matches website

Physical address present (CAN-SPAM)

All links tagged for Google Analytics

Options For Sending

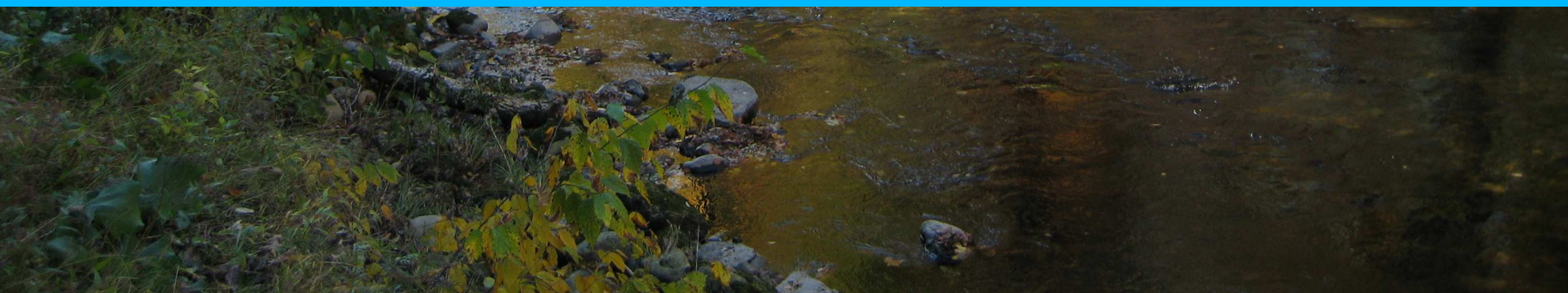
Sending using Outlook not an option

Using an online service (Campaign Monitor / Constant Contact)

Software installed on your server (List Messenger)



08. Blogging /Podcasting And The RSS Feed



What Are RSS Feeds?

RSS is a format for delivering regularly changing website content

Many news-related sites, blogs and other online publishers syndicate their content as an RSS Feed to whoever wants it

Used by CNN, WWLP, MassLive, etc.

Why Should I Care About RSS?

RSS has been rapidly growing in recent years

Allows your visitors a way to subscribe to your content

Allows for syndication of content (BlogBurst)

What Is A Blog?

Essentially it's a collection of articles

Can allow visitors to comment on what you write through comments

Is connected to an RSS feed so visitors can be alerted when you post

What Is A Podcast?

An audio or video presentation for your visitors to listen to or watch

Is also connected to an RSS feed to deliver to interested parties

Can be downloaded to an iPod (or other mp3 player)

Keeping Content Fresh

Regular blog/podcast posts offer your visitors new content and a reason to come back to your website

Regularly updated content helps rank your website higher in search engines

Become The Expert

Blogging / Podcasting about your work helps establish you as an expert in your field

(It also humanizes you and connects with your audience in a direct way)

A Word Of Caution

Make sure you have resources to devote to regularly blogging and/or podcasting

A blog or podcast that is not regularly updated detracts from a website rather than add to it

Popular Blogging Tools

Third party options - blogger.com,
wordpress.com

Hosted options - wordpress.org,
expressionengine.com

Hosted options require technical
know how but benefit from all posts
being on your URL



09. Social Media Websites

Social Media Explosion

Social media websites have seen exponential growth in the last year

Allows you to establish and build relationships with people

Allows you to develop leads through these relationships

Helps you build links to your website

Twitter

Asks the question: What are you doing?

Seems simple and silly but has become a great networking tool

Was the fastest growing website on the internet in October 2008

Facebook

More involved than Twitter but serves a similar purpose

Tends to be more casual than business oriented

Was the second fastest growing website in October 2008

Can establish groups related to your work

LinkedIn

Social website dedicated to the business community

Connect with past co-workers and then connect with their connections

Flickr

Photo sharing service

Has becoming immensely popular -
reached 3 billion photos in November
2008

Has users create profiles like other
social media websites

More Ways To Connect With You

All these sites offer additional ways for folks to get in touch with you

Allows you to connect with them via comments, tweets, posts, etc.

Add your social media locations to your email signature and website

All Social Media Websites Are Sticky

Unlike an email that can easily be deleted, once someone connects with you they generally stay connected

Gives you another avenue to broadcast your message

Allows you to poll others with their thoughts about your work



10. Wrap Up / Questions And Answers



Evaluate / Planning Your Website

Set goals for your website

Make your website search engine friendly with website standards

Never under estimate good content

Analyzing Your Website

Use Google Analytics to better understand how your website is performing

Knowing this you can make better decisions about marketing efforts

Free Things Everyone Should Be Doing

Include you website URL in all printed materials and ads

Little things count: email signatures, domain email, email lists, social media websites

All contribute to overall success of your website

Search Engine Optimization

Keywords are the foundation of any SEO effort

Keywords must be included in content and in areas search engines pay attention to

Inbound links to your website will improve rankings

Monitor progress regularly

Paid Advertising With Google Adwords

Keywords are the foundation for paid advertising as well

Look to find a niche and stay away from expensive keywords

Constant experimentation will make your ads more popular and help lower costs

Email Marketing

Great low cost alternative to traditional print advertising

Build yourself a great email mailing list

Establish a regular schedule

Be aware of technical limitations of HTML email

Blogging / Podcasting And The RSS Feed

Great way to add new content to your website on a regular basis

RSS allows visitors to subscribe to your content (and for others to syndicate your content)

Be sure you have the resources to devote to a regular blog or podcast

Social Media Websites

Have grown exponentially in the last year

Great way to network with folks
(without the painful schmoozing!)

Build relationships and leads through these websites

Takeaways

Your website is often the first impression of your business

Have a plan, goals and track your successes and failures

Leverage as many opportunities as possible and see what works for you

Recommended Books

Web Design for ROI - Loveday / Niehaus

Ultimate Guide to Google Adwords -
Marshall / Todd

Search Engine Visibility - Sharon Thurow

Don't Make Me Think - Steve Krug

Web Design and Marketing Solutions -
Kevin Potts

Recommended Websites

seobook.com

websitegrader.com

afterthelaunch.com (newsletter)

campaignmonitor.com

tunnel7.com

Thank You

derek allard
Tunnel 7

derek@tunnel7.com | 413.529.0754