

visionary, the developer of that vision and most importantly the marketing team. These suggestions **are not an inclusive** listing of who and what is needed, but it is where I usually start with clients. I believe all three groups need to discuss, design and develop in cohesion to produce traffic and ultimately conversions. [No, not conversions in the religious sense. These are people who have engaged with what you have offered, and in return you now have acquired a new name.] To have one without the other is a poor digital business strategy and where many people waste their dollars. For instance, the right digital marketer will know how to guide you through beta-testing, so you don't spend money on functions that do not reach your desired market. A well-seasoned marketer will also help guide both the developer in what functionality works. Developers do not always understand the trends of a marketplace, and a creative designer will not always fully comprehend what is happening outside of creating graphics or videos. Having a team where each knows their area of expertise can genuinely assist with fine tuning the goals of the visionary realistically. Establishing the right group of people is essential!

Depending on one's budget, hiring an outsourced agent is not always conducive to the pocket. There are some initial development and marketing steps that one can take with lower end productions. Not everyone has to bleed out millions with a hope and a prayer that the marketplace will desire their vision. In many ways we are producing products that have been tested already, especially within the realm of ministry. The good news is that a lower end overhead can get non-for profits on the digital map. Of course, this all comes down to your mission statement and what you are seeking to provide, as well as what your end goal of receiving (conversions) indeed is.

Obtaining Traffic

Think of the Dewey Decimal system: without this algorithm for organizing books, libraries would never have been successful like they have. The internet is also organized by algorithms, and the information is found by search engines. You are already familiar with some of them, such as Google, Yahoo, and Bing. These engines are not to be confused with browsers, which are Explorer, Chrome, Firefox or Safari (for our fancy

Mac users). A search engine is just what it sounds like, it is a function that searches for you. Digitally, each search engine uses a software application called a *Bot* that is created to automatically run a script at a designated time. This process has also been known as search engines sending out *spiders*, also known as *crawlers*, that crawl the web searching and finding keywords, phrases, and links on a website. They take the data they discover and index it into a massive catalog. Spiders, crawling??? Yes, the verbiage for online is strange, right? Cookies always got me!

How can the search engine bots find your website, you ask? Well, there are some standard steps you can take that will help people locate you online. Today, we can't trick search engines as we used to through meta-tags, although they are still used. In the past, we told a search engine the keywords that related to our website. Developers would literally stick many keywords or phrases into something called a meta-tag and call it a day. As technology has become the heartbeat of society, it also has and will continue to evolve. Spiders are smarter now, and they read the content on your site looking for headers, links and full sentences to index them. Therefore, when writing copy for your site, it is imperative to be clear. The following bullet point checklist is an excellent resource to use when creating or migrating a website. As times change, please use this checklist understanding that this too shall evolve.

- Comprehensive, long-form useful content early on – on the website
- Keywords in website URL
- Keywords in page URL
- A high-quality website/web pages – Make sure it is responsive by design
- Quick to load, latest software, standards
- Multi-media and images embedded that are tagged correctly
- Keywords in the title tag of a page
- Keywords in the H1 tag (headlines tag of HTML)
- Outbound links to quality websites within the same sphere
- Links to additional documents and material internally
- Ironically — Social Media links

Ultimately, following search engine standards along with understanding your market will create a value-based marketing strategy as you develop. If we truly understand what is most valuable to those we are trying to reach, then we can convey how to bring them that value clearly on a website. Remember, just like when you are listening to someone speak if they are not clear you can all of a sudden have ADD. If we convey the who, what and where of our product clearly along with a well-designed website that passes search engine tests, we have taken the first big step. Position ranking, which used to occur primarily from meta-tagging, is necessary. Today many people purchase their ranking. A high volume of visitors is also necessary but today's standards point towards a value-based strategy. That is clear and concise language on your website. How you rank will happen organically as you build, test, and continue to strive towards what the consumers want versus what you think they want in your copy (language).

It is important to sprinkle keywords throughout the page. We can do extensive research to understand what keywords and phrases are being highly searched, and I have provided tools below that you can use. Also, your website should contain links to other well-designed sites in the same niche market, as well as creating links from within. That is, on your homepage link to those important pages using a keyword as the URL text. The spiders move from website to website by following links, so linking from within helps them understand what is most important on your website. Linking to other well-established sites gives your website credibility in the indexing order. Therefore, a clear and clean website can be sure to achieve crowd intelligence - a page ranking that is substantial on a search engines result page.

Search engine marketing tools (SEM) is where you pay for your website to show up in search results or display ads. Paying for advertisement can help achieve these goals too without modifying a site. Paid advertising tools are excellent to use, but this paper is not aiming to talk about how to use the various paid for marketing tools. The thing is, why purchase something before you understand how your online presence performs organically? If you have deep pockets, and a product to acquire names, then I would say do not wait, use SEM immediately as you develop everything else. However, not

everyone has the golden ticket, if you remember as Chosen People did with the Isaiah 53 book. With that understood, there are significant benefits to paid advertising since you can achieve incredible conversion results. If you are like me, though, and many of the companies that I have helped since establishing my own business, you will want to achieve optimal performance organically before you spend a dime. This way you understand things such as your audience, how you rank via specific search results, how your conversion rate is with a particular call to action, and, ultimately, where you need to spend the money to achieve better results.

There are plenty of free tools that can assist you. They can help you write your SEO content and know if your website is optimized well enough for spiders to crawl your site quickly. If your load time is high, you will be lucky if one word or phrase gets indexed. The faster the load, the more likely you will be well cataloged. Also, these tools can help you benchmark against other sites that are performing well and showing up high in specific search results. Here is a list of some of those tools.

Free Tools

1. Google Suggestions
2. Google Trends
3. Google Adwords
4. Ubersuggest
5. Keyword Eyes
6. Webmaster Tools via Google, Bing, Yahoo (Many tools)
7. MOZ – Not free (To a point it is free)
8. Keyword Planner by Google

Conclusion

I hope and pray that this paper has given you a basic understanding that building a website and having social media is only one step in reaching your audience, with many more steps to go. Creating a solid foundation that meets SEO standards can at least start drawing a genuine organic traffic flow to your website. Paid ads are easy, and anyone can

produce results through that means. However, to stand out, your website needs to be fast, clean, responsive, connected to other similar well-designed sites and clear to what and who you are. In the sphere of ministry, there are many and willing able hands that want to help you achieve what God is leading you to do. You do not have to wait until you can afford the best of the best for every aspect of a team. Sometimes you can find your team members in your local congregation. Asking for help, praying that God will bring the right people, and your own time spent researching and learning will eventually deliver answered prayers — the traffic and results your ministry has been praying for digitally over the years.