

How to Determine Your SEO Campaign Budget to Achieve Your Business Goals

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For online business owners, the future of their enterprise depends on becoming known to millions of people searching online for their products, services and information. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategizes and implements website initiatives to make your site, and your business, more visible to these consumers, who are your potential customers.

Over the past 20 years, SEO has become an integral part to running a successful online business. In the past, companies depended on direct mailing, print, radio, and television advertising to reach consumers. Today, business has become increasingly digital. Therefore a firm's online presence must also be positioned to be highly profitable. This need to succeed provides the most compelling reason to include SEO in every ecommerce marketing budget: its proprietary influence on ROI (return on investment).

Ranking is Not the Only Focus to Growing an Online Enterprise

The object of SEO is to increase an online business' influence by 'organic' (as opposed to 'paid') means. It is the most effective and inexpensive way for any company to compete for market share and to remain competitive in local, national, and global markets. This discipline first seeks to make your site visible to its prospect pool in order so send more qualified traffic (shoppers specifically seeking your goods and services) to your site. Therefore, every website's optimization strategy must be continuous and scalable. This means that once an SEO campaign is demonstrating steady returns to your ROI, you'll want to drive your brand even further. The best and most cost-effective way to reinvest in your brand is by increasing your SEO campaign budget.

Today, many successful SEO campaigns supplement their initiatives with supportive players, including Email marketing, Pay Per Click, Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO), and Social Media strategies. While each has great merit on its own, together these digital marketing initiatives will drive more prospects to your site from traditional and non-traditional channels. Once on-site they will be engaged, convert, and repeat visits will be encouraged. Budget increases for an expanded campaign are justified by the ROI which, given the multi-disciplined approach, will be achieved more rapidly as well.

In the following segment, we'll explain the value in using a multi-discipline approach and what it can mean to achieving online business goals.

The Importance of a Well-Rounded Marketing Plan

To continue to grow, every business plans for the future. When addressing budgetary considerations for any SEO campaign, the best approach is a well-rounded marketing plan. At the onset, most SEO campaign initiatives are directed toward increasing non-branded keyword visibility. This means that persons seeking your goods or services can readily locate and visit your site without being familiar with your company name. There are many more potential customers seeking your specialty who may not yet know about your company. Therefore optimizing to attract this demographic can give you a competitive edge over your competition as well as increase your ROI.

The Case for a Supporting Cast

Some companies devote their entire marketing plan to on-page SEO or PPC ads. While this will positively affect search engine results, it will not, for example, reach the desired social media audience, nor those who respond to email promotions. By not developing a 'supporting cast', an SEO campaign could be missing opportunities to realize more conversions and greater profit. Simply put, a well-rounded marketing plan will attract a larger audience for your online business and increase its revenue.

SEO campaigns that have been expanded to include content marketing and PPC ads alongside traditional SEO will not only help a company reach their target audience, but also help to grow their brand. By increasing your SEO campaign budget from the start, you'll ensure a stable foundation to build upon for a successful future.

In the next segment, we'll discuss what to expect for a given SEO budget.

Budget #2: \$5,000/mo and Up

Active Web Group's Enterprise Solution affords clients at this level all the requisite optimization campaigns and initiatives concurrently. It incorporates all previous level components yet expands their package to include content development, and custom-link building elements. Fresh and freshened content of value to readers is a critical factor in their purchase decision. Custom link building provides another venue to attract qualified site traffic. Whether your focus is quality traffic (leads-only) or conversion/revenue, these measures allow our clients to achieve their online business goals more rapidly. Industry-wide, at the present time this approach affords the best methodology for attracting quality site traffic and influencing conversions.

Budget #3: \$1,000 – 1,499/mo for Small Businesses

Participants at the lower end of this spend will be offered a selection of 10-15 relevant keywords with varying search volume. These keywords will be used as the basis for your initial SEO campaign, which encompasses on-page SEO work and some link building as well. AWG recommends this starting point for localized SEO efforts, online reputation management, or as a basic level option for smaller national accounts.

Budget #4: \$1,500 – 2,499/mo for Small Businesses

This range will provide 15-20 keywords for your campaign as well as extensive link-building, which is key to establishing your business as an online authority. This campaign level covers all on-page SEO initiatives along with more extensive link-building and some content development as needed. This budget range is recommended as an initial budget for localized sites and smaller national accounts.

In the next segment, we'll discuss how to direct your digital marketing efforts to grow your market share and to achieve your business goals.

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How Do I Reach My Demographic?

Just as SEO is not a one-size fits all proposition, neither are the approaches utilized to speak to your site's demographic sector in the tone and language they will understand:

Localized Service Sites

Localized sites, such as websites for attorneys and contractors, are positioned to reach prospects in a targeted area seeking the specific services offered. These sites focus on specific locations and compete with other businesses in the same industry and locations. AWG offers these sites primarily to clients on the initial two budget levels. Investing in a Budget #4 range, however, will initiate a much faster ROI and assist these businesses to achieve their goals more quickly.

Lead Generation Sites

Lead generation can be localized, focus on national demographics, or do both simultaneously. These sites benefit from a larger budget to gauge their demographics' needs. This is accomplished by PPC lead generation, on-site submission forms, and by other means of acquiring customer information, such as their email addresses. National sites will require link building as well as additional keyword ranking to remain competitive, and can expedite results when they begin their campaigns at the Budget #1 or #2 levels. By investing in budget #2, national sites can rank higher through PPC, ad campaigns, and guest blogging in order to successfully keep up with their competition.

Quote Request Cart Sites

Quote Request cart sites focus on both national and localized sales through quote request forms. These sites should focus on wide scale promotion through content marketing, PPC and on-page SEO. In addition, a Social Media campaign should be considered. Since each product on the site will have a dedicated webpage, the budget should be adequate to focus on optimizing each page. A good starting budget would be **\$2,000**. Laying the foundation for these sites is very important and a sizable budget is essential for achieving the desired results.

The following section presents three AWG client case studies who required different approaches to achieve their online business goals and to remain competitive in their fields.

Project A: Niche Market With Fierce Competition

Company A, despite its status as an industry leader, at the time they engaged AWG they had a website that was over a decade old. The client's website had also experienced significant difficulty gaining and sustaining quality traffic. Company A's site has a few hundred pages of acceptable content and a very focused audience. Based on their niche product line, designed for a limited number of users worldwide, their universe of potential clients is limited.

Despite a healthy budget, however, Company A is competing with some of the world's strongest and well-resourced companies for the same market share. The firm has approximately 100 targeted keywords and, in their industry, a good lead may yield several million dollars in revenue. To Company A, investment in a well-rounded digital marketing campaign made sense. After significant research, Company A signed with Active Web Group to assist the company to regain, maintain, and to increase their competitive edge online.

Our Solution: SEO Web Redesign, Keywords and Link-building Strategies

Active Web Group performed a substantial web redesign and completely reorganized site content. Despite the seemingly large size of the site, the site pages per keyword ratio were not well-balanced. Due to the financial strength of their competition, with an equally substantial budget for optimization, Active Web knew the results would be gradual but durable to maintain high rankings and to attract quality leads. After the site architecture was repaired and the on-page SEO elements overhauled, AWG embarked on an aggressive link building campaign.

SEO Results – Website Trac Doubled in One Year!

Eureka! Keyword-driven traffic has risen at a steady pace. When the client first engaged AWG they had been receiving 2,200 organic visitors monthly. By the following July the site had achieved 4,261 monthly organic visitors. The biggest growth spurt occurred after 11 months. More than 75% of the site's organic visitor growth took place after the initial 6 months of optimization.

Project B: Recreational Industry Retailer Realizes Across the Board Increases (WSM)

The client is a reseller of recreational merchandise in a specific industry. When the client first approached AWG, however, their in-house Pay-Per-Click initiatives were no longer yielding prospects and orders. The client turned to AWG for successful organic strategies that would broaden their brand's reach and assist to swiftly regain and grow both market share and revenue.

A thorough initial site assessment uncovered literally thousands of critical errors which, understandably, were impacting the site's visibility to consumers. The errors ranged from pages that were invisible to search engines, therefore, would not rank on Search Engine Results Pages (SERPs). These pages are where most consumers select the websites they will visit to make their purchasing decisions. Many pages that were visible to search engines, were also not being indexed as these lacked key components necessary to rank on SERPs. Actual page content was another red flag as much of the product text was duplicated from the manufacturer's website.

AWG's SEO Remediation Rollout Yields Results

Active Web Group's SEO team comprised of an analyst, SEO specialist, Account Manager, and Copywriter instituted remediation techniques. These included, but were not limited to, on-and-off-page optimization initiatives, deep internal linking, and fresh and freshened content that provides readers with the information they are seeking. These and other initiatives, continuously applied, have led to higher keyword rankings, greater site visibility, more qualified site traffic, and increases in both conversion and revenue.

AWG's remediation rollout proved successful. Highlights included:

- Organic Sessions increased by 66.54% from 2015 to 2017
(Source: Google Analytics)
- Organic Revenue grew by 190.05% from 2015 to 2017
(Source: Google Analytics)

To date, the business relationship has grown to one of both trust, mutual respect, and collaboration. For 2018, the client has greatly expanded their relationship with AWG, increasing their SEO budget several-fold, and has signed for additional services including Pay-Per-Click and Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO).

Project C: A Family Business Stays Competitive in the Digital Age (C&E)

Client C is a family-run enterprise, in business over 75 years, that resells new and used transportation industry products. The company had been built on customer service, and that is one feature that differentiates this firm from their peers. In 2017 a new Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategy was adopted for the client site to overcome roadblocks which prevented key site pages from being indexed. AWG's SEO Specialist's task was to pinpoint the location of the blockage and remediate to improve the site's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to achieving the firm's online business goals.

The SEO clean up campaign included an on-and-off-page strategy that included URL title and meta formatting changes, page layout redesigns, a revamped sitemap, and Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO) initiatives to influence buying decisions.

New AWG SEO Strategy Yields Results

This strategy produced exponential metric increases. The supportive SEO/Digital Marketing campaign increased numerous KPIs by an average of 55.67% YTD. Specifically, the on-and-off-page strategies boosted quality site traffic, and that volume also facilitated the sales funnel bringing about more conversions and higher revenue. Those highlights include:

	YTD 2017
Total Sessions	+45.16% YoY
New Users	+40.63% YoY
Transactions	+36.36% YoY
Overall Revenue	+100.64% YoY

Project D : Small B2B Retailer Increases Online Net Margin

Company D is a B2B retailer with sales of 6MM-7MM per year. They have had a website for several years, but were realizing few ecommerce sales. The year prior to signing with AWG, their previous 12 month average sales were about \$4K per month. The client has stiff competition including industry goliaths, yet a relatively small budget. Their preexisting site had only nominal and outdated SEO initiatives performed and the site derived almost no traffic from non-branded organic search. This client was concerned that a small budget would not bring enough power to overcome the need for a better site and a marketing effort.

The company engaged Active Web Group based on AWG track record of success with companies whose initial budgets had been small. Through AWG's optimization initiatives, these firms were able to build both their online businesses and SEO spend in time.

The AWG Solution: Website Redesign and Ecommerce SEO

Active Web Group replaced the poor quality, off the shelf ecommerce solution that Company D was using with the proprietary, highly cost-effective, hosted ecommerce solution AWG developed and markets. How cost effective was AWG's solution? Company D essentially received a \$200,000-calibre website for the price of a web design and a monthly hosting and maintenance fee. This particular site cost only \$7,000 to go live and the hosting and code management fee is \$1,000 per month. Company D also agreed to invest \$1,500 per month in SEO once the site was launched.

For a company that was realizing only \$4k a month in total online sales, they saw even this modest investment as a risk. Active Web Group understood that gaining their trust by providing a cost-effective solution for them was substantial, but we also were very confident in our hosted ecommerce solution and our highly experienced SEO team.

SEO Results –Website Revenue Increased Over 9x in 3 Months!

The client is pleased. After a few months of design and pre-SEO work the site relaunched in May. Traffic has increased from 384 visitors on week 1 to 1,176 visitors after 9 weeks. Sales in May were just under \$5k (partial month). This had been better than their average full month to date. Sales in June surpassed \$15k and July sales surpassed \$37k! The client works on a margin of about 35%. AWG's fees of \$2,500 per month are now generating \$12,950 in margin after only 3 months. That is a huge increase from \$1,400 in margin per month from the old site. A net margin increase of over \$9,000 in only 3 months! They have already recouped their design fee and are in the black! Postscript: The client doubled their SEO budget in September.

About Active Web Group

As a full service Digital Marketing Agency located on Long Island, Active Web Group (AWG) offers a comprehensive range of services which blend our extensive technical knowledge with brilliant design, content that engages and converts, and online marketing expertise. Singly or as a supportive, multi-disciplined approach, our Digital Marketing services are essential for any sized business to achieve their business goals and to increase their online success. We invite you to maximize your business potential with Active Web Group (AWG). Our services include:

- Responsive and Mobile Web Design
- Content Development
- Social Media Marketing
- Email Marketing Services
- Website Design and Development
- eCommerce
- Pay Per Click (PPC) Management
- Online Reputation Management
- Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO)
- Branding

Email us or call 1-800-978-3417 today, and we'll get started on making your website visitors into viable patrons. AWG can help reach your sales goals, grow your business and boost your bottom line in the highly competitive digital landscape. Attract and convert more prospects and retain your existing clientele with customized Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategies from AWG today!