

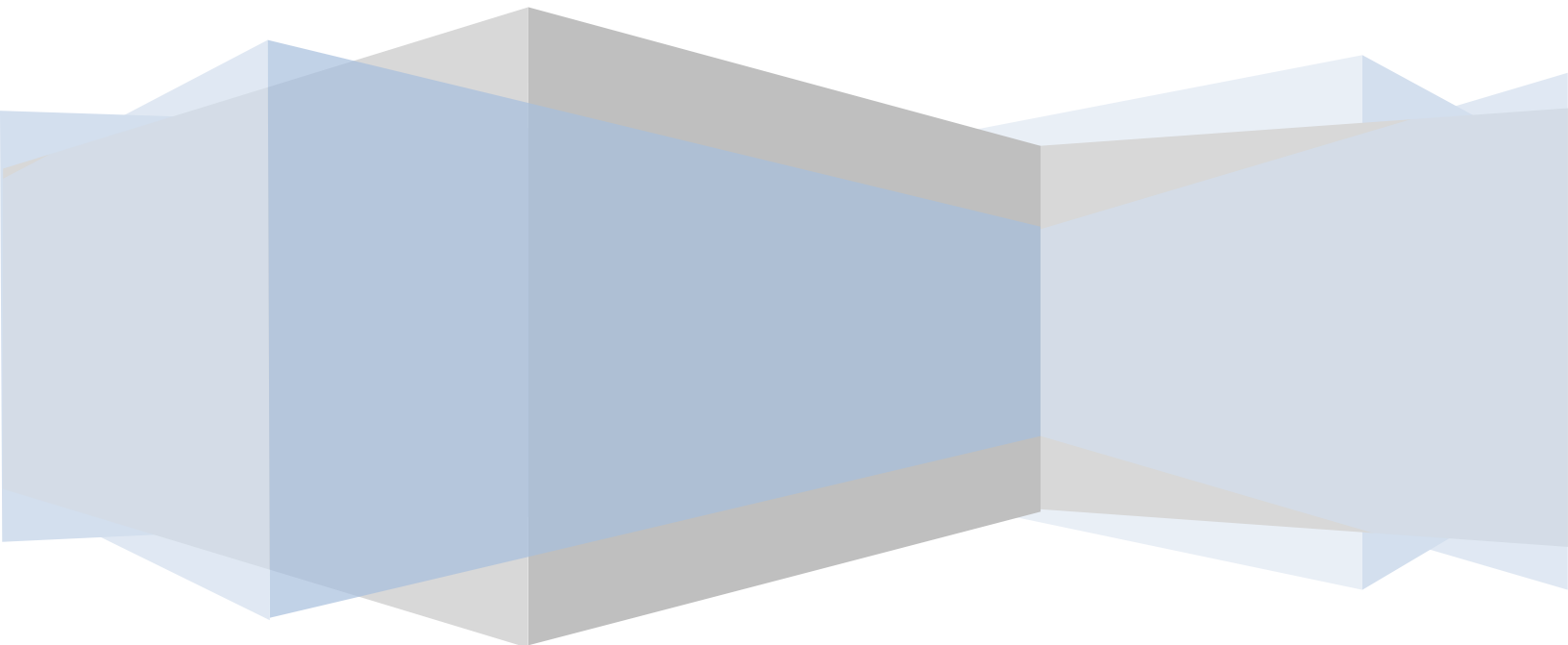
Written by Aji Issac when he was heading DA web marketing team

Covering few common customer queries

Be web business educated

[Weekly Educative series – XII]

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Prerequisite

You will need to understand some terms for this article:

1. **301 redirect:** Consider reading http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/URL_redirection. In simpler words, it is sending a visitor from page A to Page B in an automatic way with a 301 header (which means that Page A is permanently shifted to Page B; so search engines will transfer all attributes of Page A to Page B, which includes all the link power)

Covering few common customer queries:

Instead of a long article, we decided to cover 2 common and important customer queries this week. Please do forward more queries so that we can answer it in detail in the next articles.

1. I have many websites. How do I use all of them together?

This is one of the most common queries that we get. There are many who advise to split the main websites/business into various smaller websites as a marketing strategy. They call it mini website strategy. I don't advise it for almost 90% of the projects. In 10% cases, I advise it, being a special case. How does one take care of many websites then? Ask following questions:

1. **Are all the websites having the same content?** NO NO NO NO, please consider doing a 301 to the best domain. Choose the best domain by considering various advantages and disadvantages, do a 301 redirect for all the other websites. Having many websites with same content can be fatal. There can be issues with duplicate content, link juice distribution etc
2. **Are these websites on the same theme or selling the same product?**

If yes, then club it together under one website, as website is more than a website, it represents a brand. Building a brand is difficult; just imagine how difficult it will be to build many brands.

Example: xyzexamplemortgageblog.com should be shifted to xyzexamplemortgage.com/blog/ and xyzexamplemortgageblog.com do a page-wise 301 redirection to xyzexamplemortgage.com/blog/ to maintain Search Engine ranking.

If the websites are on different themes and selling different products, ask the following question,



“Can it be clubbed under one brand?”

Example about.com offers many services but all the services come as sub-domains (or subservices). If you are a financial company XYZ Example mortgage offers mortgage with a domain xyzexamplemortgage.com and if your company decides to offer insurance under the new company name XYZ Example finance, then consider shifting to a new domain mortgage.XYZexamplefinance.com and insurance.XYZexamplefinance.com.

Even after that if the websites total on different themes like juices and computers, consider having two different websites.

3. **Finally, the why part. What are the advantage/disadvantages of separating the websites?** Some common answers can be (You need to choose by comprising at some points by looking at long term goals):

1. **Search engine disadvantages for separating the websites.** The link power, content power and other domain based strength will be distributed across many websites. It's easy to win the war with one website than many, provided the websites are under one theme. Links to sub domains will also strengthen the main website.

2. **Maintenance:** Maintaining too many domains can be really cumbersome. Maintaining different theme websites under same domain can also be difficult. For choosing the right domain, folder, sub-domain and multi domain strategy are very important from maintenance point of view.

3. **Integration:** One of the biggest problems can be integration. Google offers most of its services with same cookie and folders (or sub-domains). This helps them to integrate it really well.

4. **Community building:** Oh! One more registration!! One more password to remember!!! Where do I ask this question? Which blog should I follow for official announcement? These can be common questions to community based disintegrated websites. It will be great to build a community and offer them various related (even a little unrelated) products and services under one umbrella. Integrated websites help in community building.

5. **Branding:** Building many brands is difficult. One needs to brainstorm really well before deciding the domain, folder, sub-domain and multi domain strategy.



6. **Domain name advantage:** I have seen that most of the people have different websites because of domain names and you can have a different domain with 301 to improve phone testing results.

4. **Consult online friends:** There are various online communities than can help you get a better answer. Use the communities to get a better and personalized answer.

2. **When will our website start getting a lot of traffic?**

This is another common question that is being asked many times a week. Clients expect fast results. If web marketing/SEO companies can turn the websites upside down in quick time then they better do it for themselves and earn a lot of money. There are no shortcuts but yes, there are smart cuts (Did I invent this word; if short cut is taking the shortest route then smart cut may be the taking the smartest route). One needs to take the right mix to ensure that clients are getting the sales and traffic increments every month. Ask following questions to your web marketing /SEO firm to see if the strategies are in the right direction:

1. **How many keywords are you targeting?** What is the competition level and market for these keywords? Expected time to rank and expected traffic. (This will help you get a better answer for search engine strategy.)
2. **Should we focus on PPC as well?** For quicker results, one must focus on PPC.
3. **What are doing beyond Search engines?** Web marketing firms go beyond Search engine strategy. That's one reason why we insist on web marketing more than SEO or SEM. This will answer some more queries.
4. **What is your follow up strategy for the website?** (This is where you can see how the firm is improving the conversion and user experience)

If you feel that your web marketing/SEO firm is taking the right direction, then support them to get success faster.

Please do have patience with web marketing. It is no rocket science. First few months will be a little slow as those months are used to setup all the required accounts and do the analysis and set the right team. Divide website marketing into the following phases:

1. **First 3 months:** Directing the project into right marketing trajectory with the right mix of strategies. (Judge the project directing ability of the firm. See how they answer your queries, how they suggest various things etc. Call them many times during this phase.)



2. Next 6 months: To judge the work. See how the team is able to work on the provided plan. Understand the work.
3. Next 6 months (6 month strategy every time): Select a plan for the next 6 months and work together to achieve it.

Some unanswered questions:

We will be answering the following question in the next article.

1. How long does it take to rank for a keyword and how much will it cost?
2. What is the difference between 'organic' search results and 'sponsored links' on search results?
3. Would better rank in search engine assure better sales?

