

LOCAL WEBSITES

FIVE TIPS FOR MAKING THE MOST OF LOCAL WEBSITES

- » LOCAL WEBSITE STRATEGY
- » INTEGRATING LOCAL WEBSITES
- » BUILD SOPHISTICATION WITH AUTOMATION

Balihoo
Local Marketing. Automated.

PAPER INTENDED FOR:

BUYING STAGE:

- Education
- Local Website Implementation

AUDIENCE:

- Responsible for National Branding, Channel Marketing or Advertising

FOCUS:

- Benefits of Local Websites
- Local Website Strategy

ROLE:

- Decision Maker
- Influencer

FIVE TIPS: FOR MAKING THE MOST OF LOCAL WEBSITES

The CMO Council published a 2011 study called “**Localize to Optimize Sales Channel Effectiveness**” that found localized marketing is becoming a critical area of strategic focus and competitive advantage for national brands. Marketers in the study recognized the value of localized market engagement and how it can drive lead flow, differentiate brands, and create more lasting relationships for their channels, field agents, and sales representatives.

The study revealed that the most preferred channels for localized marketing are events, direct mail, localized websites, social networks, and electronic messaging. Respondents favored these channels far more than traditional media when it comes to share of localized marketing spend because they are return-on-investment top performers, according to the study.

With this in mind, let’s take a look at the specific importance of local websites in a national brand’s local marketing strategy, and how you can make the most of local websites.

49% OF MARKETERS BELIEVE LOCALIZED MARKETING IS ESSENTIAL TO BUSINESS GROWTH

Source: BIA/Kelsey

WHY DO NATIONAL BRANDS NEED LOCAL WEBSITES?

If you’re trying to launch or improve your national brand’s local marketing efforts, it’s important to put local websites in place first. Like your corporate website, local websites serve as the centerpiece, or hub, for all local marketing tactics – both online and offline. They are smaller variations of your corporate website, carrying through the brand’s image and messages.



For more in-depth information on Local Websites, check out Baliho’s white paper.

Local Websites: Driving Sales Growth for National Brands

BENEFITS OF LOCAL WEBSITES

- Allows your brand and its local resellers to be “found” at the local search level
- Ensures search engines direct customers to the right place at the right time, and customers are not routed to the competition
- Delivers relevant and meaningful local content that is consistent with national campaigns
- Functions as centralized landing pages through which you can drive, track and measure all local marketing tactics
- Provides aggregated metrics for local marketing investments

Once you decide to implement local websites, you want to make the most of them. Here are 5 tips on how to do that. Some of these tips may seem obvious, but you would be surprised how many national brands don’t do the basics thoroughly (for a multitude of reasons—rushing on to the next big project, resource constraints, etc.). But by following these tips and getting the basics in place, your brand will see improved local marketing – quickly!

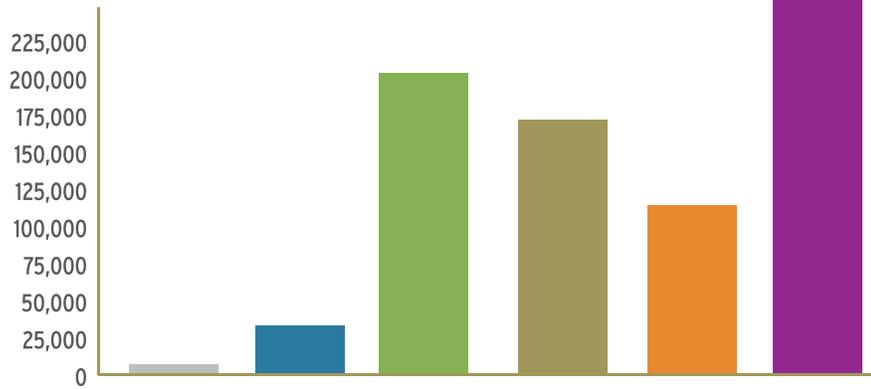
TIP#1: PLAN AHEAD TO REAP METRICS MAGIC

Remember to set your goals and decide ahead of time what you want to measure so that you can put essential tracking hooks in place on local website templates and programs.

One of the key benefits of local websites is the ability to track campaign and media effectiveness at the local level like never before. With local websites in place, you have the ability to view specific markets individually or all of your markets collectively. You can also see what is and isn't working across both digital and traditional media. As you know, this leads to better, faster decision-making about which programs to keep and which to eliminate. It won't really be magic, but it'll sure feel like it when the results roll in.

At Balihoo, we've found a combination of local metrics that works well for our clients. Take a look at this example to understand the level of detail you can track locally.

INTEGRATED DIGITAL ADVERTISING



| | JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH | APRIL | MAY | JUNE |
|------------------------------|---------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Impressions | 0 | 115,370 | 605,310 | 514,220 | 218,360 | 683,220 |
| Clicks | 0 | 3,520 | 21,420 | 19,450 | 7,290 | 23,508 |
| CPC | \$0.00 | \$1.98 | \$1.95 | \$2.11 | \$2.13 | 1.96 |
| Phone Leads (<2Minutes) | 0 | 920 | 3720 | 3580 | 1320 | 388 |
| Phone Conversions(>2Minutes) | 0 | 450 | 2950 | 2710 | 1080 | 3135 |
| Online Conversions | 0 | 230 | 990 | 990 | 400 | 1300 |
| Total Conversions | 0 | 680 | 3700 | 3700 | 1480 | 4435 |
| Average Order Value | \$0.00 | \$50.00 | \$50.00 | \$50.00 | \$50.00 | 50.00 |
| Total Revenue | \$0.00 | \$34,000 | \$198,000 | \$185,000 | \$74,000 | \$221,760 |

TIP #2: LAUNCH LIKE YOU MEAN IT

Create a plan to officially launch the local websites to your affiliates (i.e. dealers, distributors, agents, franchisees or retailers). Many times, new marketing programs roll out too slowly or too quickly without fanfare, and busy affiliates don't have time to fully embrace what is available to them and why it is there. Make it clear that this effort is going to improve their bottom line. They'll love you for it. Educate your affiliates. Define and communicate the objectives and expected benefits of the local websites. Be clear about the role of the local affiliate and any actions they need to take. Help them understand how the websites will drive local traffic to them and increase leads. If you ran a pilot program, publicize the results. Proof is powerful!

When possible, conduct hands-on training with the affiliates – perhaps with their area manager or in an annual sales meeting. Webinars, recorded presentations, and marketing portals are also good options. Make sure affiliates know who to call when they have questions. Affiliate buy-in increases the success of local websites.

TIP #3: KEEP UP THE COMMUNICATION (A.K.A. “THE BEST SURPRISE IS NO SURPRISE”)

Once local websites are rolled out, continue to communicate with your local affiliates. Let them know what's coming so they don't get caught off-guard. Create and publish a calendar that shows the frequency of content updates and topics or promotions, at least for the next quarter or two. Send reminder emails about monthly or quarterly content updates that let the local affiliates know how the new content impacts them. Is it a new product? New promotion? Seasonal content? Are there support materials like direct mail pieces, in-store banners, advertising, or social media content they should push locally?

Let them know if and by when they need to take any action. Can they modify the new content? Can they add supporting content? When should their content be launched? Send another email when the content is actually pushed out so they know it's been launched.

When affiliates know what's coming and have time to plan, they can help make the most out of a promotion. Everyone wins!

TIP #4: PUT YOUR LOCAL WEBSITES TO WORK

Now that you have local websites in place, they should be integrated into all of your local marketing programs. While this may seem like commonsense, it's not always top-of-mind to all the marketers on a large team.

Be sure the brand awareness and demand-generation programs you have in place strike the right balance between driving traffic to your brand's corporate site vs. local sites. When appropriate, use calls-to-action that point prospects to local sites, rather than sending them to your corporate site. Because creating calls-to-action for each individual market across multiple programs becomes a big job fast, consider implementing local marketing automation. It's a valuable management tool that dramatically cuts the time it takes to manage local websites. (See Tip#5 for more info on local marketing automation.)

 LOCAL SEARCH ADVERTISING REVENUES ARE FORECAST TO INCREASE FROM \$5.1 BILLION IN 2010 TO \$8.2 BILLION IN 2015

 LOCALLY FOCUSED ADVERTISING IN SOCIAL MEDIA IS EXPECTED TO GROW AT AN ANNUAL RATE OF 33% FROM \$400 MILLION IN 2010 TO \$2.3 BILLION IN 2015

BY 2015, 30% OF ADVERTISING WILL BE LOCAL IN NATURE



Source: BIA/Kelsey

Here are some programs you should revise to leverage local websites:

Email Marketing – Modify the content of your email marketing campaigns so that they're sent either jointly with the local affiliate or solely on their behalf. Be sure to provide the information a consumer needs to move to the next stage in the sales cycle at the local level. Of course, content will vary depending on your campaign, but think about offers, how-to guides, local customer reviews or quotes. Be sure to include the local business contact information, location and map.

Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Campaigns – Create tailored PPC messages that can be used in local markets and that click-through to local websites. Emotionally, consumers are more comfortable with locally-oriented PPC ads – they feel more connected with the message and know what action to take. PPC ads that click-through to local sites generally perform better than ones that click-through to broader, national brand sites.

Social Media – Consider a social media strategy – whether it's Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or Google Plus – that puts infrastructure, processes and guidelines in place that support planning globally (by the national brand) and acting locally (via affiliates or local community managers). Social Media allows your national brand to have place-specific communities where consumers can have personal interactions with the brand that are more relevant to their daily lives, and where you can monitor and manage your brand's reputation. Local sites also provide more avenues through which the brand can push demand-generation activities.

 7 OUT OF 10 CONSUMERS ARE MORE LIKELY TO USE A LOCAL BUSINESS IF IT HAS INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON A SOCIAL MEDIA SITE. 

Source: ComScore Networks/TMP Directional Marketing

Provide affiliates with good content and make sure they understand that the “pay-off” for anything communicated in social media should be back at the local website.

Include social media icons and plug-ins on your local websites that invite prospects to like, follow or share your local content. Also consider featuring social media feeds on local website pages.

Traditional Local Media: Print, Broadcast, Newspapers, Out of-Home – You likely already provide and create templates for traditional media programs to your affiliates. Going forward, make sure these materials include a call-to-action that sends the consumer to the local website.

TIP #5: BUILD SOPHISTICATION WITH AUTOMATION

If you have a large number of local markets and affiliates associated with your brand, automation enables you to save time and money and improve time-to-market of national campaigns. It also enables local affiliates to have sophisticated marketing programs without the in-depth marketing knowledge required to plan and execute such campaigns.



Automation may be as simple as providing ad templates via an ad builder, or as sophisticated as engaging in comprehensive local marketing automation across all marketing programs. As you know, traditional “marketing automation solutions” automate repetitive tasks associated with marketing processes. For national brands trying to make an impact in hundreds of local markets, local marketing automation may be a better solution. A comprehensive local marketing automation solution enables you to execute digital campaigns on behalf of your local affiliates and direct the leads to the specific dealer or affiliate in that market. It also enables you to update all of the local websites simultaneously so that you can launch national campaigns across all markets at the same time. And, if appropriate for your brand, local marketing automation lets you provide traditional, customizable media such as print, radio, Out-of-Home (OOH) and TV spots to affiliates.

By implementing local websites and following these tips, you and your affiliates are sure to see an increase in brand awareness and leads at the local level.

ABOUT BALIHOO

Balihoo is the premier provider of local marketing automation technology and services to national brands with local marketing needs.

Balihoo enables enterprise-class marketing at the local level and gives national brands full visibility into all local marketing activities and results.

Providing a combination of web-based software and services, Baliwoo enables national brands to dramatically reduce marketing expenses and immediately increase local sales revenue. For local affiliates, Baliwoo takes the complexity out of local marketing—making it easy to quickly implement an expert, integrated marketing strategy that is consistent with the national brand.

Let Baliwoo help your brand assess its online local marketing effectiveness.

Balihoo

Local Marketing. Automated.



866-466-9914



sales@balihoo.com



Balihoo.com



@Balihoo



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