

Internet Marketing 101: Part 2



Source: www.TurfMagazine.com

Last month, I shared part 1 of my interview with Steve Wolgemuth of YDOP, located in Lancaster, Pennsylvania (see Part 1 [here](#)). Steve is a seasoned Internet marketer and I wanted to pick his brain on social media to benefit you, the lawn care or landscape business owner.

Without further ado, here is the conclusion to our interview.

WK: How can lawn and landscape companies get more traffic from search engines like you suggested in No. 3 from [“The Way You Think about Social Media”](#)?

SW: My quote was, “Use social media to increase your Web traffic and improve your search engine rankings.”

While many businesses focus on ranking on Google for a particular keyword, smart businesses take it to the next step. They consider share of voice on search results pages. How many times can they appear on the results page? For local searches, Google provides specific opportunities through locally targeted AdWords, in the “organic” or regular search results, through the map listings inserted into local search results pages, and by directory listings within which the business can have prominence. These four opportunities are each important. Combined, they give a business a dominant presence with multiple appearances on one search results page. This is what I mean by “share of voice.”

The business’ Google+ page becomes visible when the searcher hovers the mouse over the business’ map listing. If you have developed a professional presence on Google+, you’ll attract more clicks. If you have five or more reviews, Google will display your “stars,” making your appearance more prominent and trustworthy, which will attract more clicks (website visits) and provide “social proof” to your visitors.

[Read Baffled By Social Media? Get Help here.](#)

But Google+ isn't the only social platform that is important. Google often chooses to display social media findings in the search results, *especially when the searcher uses the company's name*. Search "YDOP" and after the expanded listing with the rating stars, you'll see YDOP's Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Yelp, Google+, and Glassdoor listings fill the search results page. It's one more approach to having prominence on the results page. If you're successful in creating a community around your brand with active discussions, Google will recognize those social signals and it will have some impact on your rankings. Frankly, it's a lot of work for a little effect, especially for a small business with limited time and money for marketing.

The same is true for using social media for sources of traffic. Websites like Pinterest send new visitors to businesses that use it effectively. But this visual sharing platform only works well for certain types of industries; those that are predominantly female and those that have an aspirational aspect. For example, brides-to-be spend a lot of time on this platform. If you're in that industry and you have a strong presence on Pinterest, you'll probably be seeing a worthwhile amount of traffic coming to your website over time. Is this for the green industry? Maybe.

But for many, using social media to build referral traffic to your website is like using meditation to lose weight. Sure, it's a good idea and it will contribute to your success, albeit indirectly. The main focus for dieting should be a lower calorie intake and an exercise increase. In the case of website traffic, 70 percent of it will come from search engines. That's why when I'm consulting with lawn care/landscape businesses, I usually (but not always) encourage them to prioritize local search optimization to gain prominence and share of voice on the search engine results pages. The most important goal should be reaching potential customers just when they are searching for lawn care products or services.

If the marketing budget and the stakeholders' time is limited (which is *always* the case), businesses need to prioritize. Local SEO is likely to have the biggest payout for the business' marketing dollar and it should be the first order of business. While there are exceptions, a search engine presence is usually more important than a social media presence for a lawn care or landscaping business.

WK: What else do lawn and landscape companies need to know about social media platforming for 2015?

SW: YDOP works with different types of lawn care and landscape companies. Based on what our company has learned so far, some could use social media in a powerful way to raise their visibility in their communities. Most need to focus more on having a website that authentically and meaningfully portrays the business and converts visitors. Most need to be fighting for search engine visibility in their local markets.

Many business leaders come to me and feel concerned that they're not using Facebook and Twitter. They'd be happy to pay YDOP to "keep their Facebook page updated." While this is low-hanging fruit in terms of a marketable service, we typically decline. Why? Using social media channels doesn't get

meaningful results when done just for the sake of participation. A smart marketing or public relations play that uses the power of social technologies is extremely powerful. Using social media just for the sake of using it might be a silly waste of time for a typical lawn care or landscaping business.

What about you? Do you have questions about how to leverage your lawn care or landscape company's website on Google? Do you have questions about social media and which channels will give you the best ROI? Then get in touch with Steve at contact@ydop.com.

[Read Anatomy of a Blog here.](#)