



MARKETING / OFFICE / STAFF

Online Marketing Basics: Google Ranking, Part 1

Stephanie Beck

We all know there is so much opportunity with online marketing. And, let's face it, if you don't have a presence online with a website and social media, you are probably not where you want to be. All the different options make it a challenge, especially when all you want to do is help your clients feel better. Obviously, online marketing is a broad topic and I can't possibly cover every aspect in this one article. Over the next several issues, we'll look at various aspects of online marketing and discover what you don't know.

In this article, I am going to help you clear out misconceptions and differences when trying to find the best person to work with you for keywords and Google ranking. In future articles, I will cover websites, social media and sales funnels.

First Misconception

I'm an acupuncturist, why do I have to market my practice? The last thing most acupuncturists want to consider is marketing. Perhaps it will help to think about it in this way, as a practitioner your #1 job is to work with your patients. Well, as a business owner, your #1 job is to market your business. So you are really pulling double duty and even though most schools offer a certain amount of business planning, they really can't fully prepare you for the real-world application.

The universities and colleges do their best, but until you really hit the ground running, you have no idea what to expect. Your whole passion was to go to school to be an acupuncturist so you could work with people daily, but until you find those people (and they are out there) you might still be working that part-time job while you are spending countless hours creating a plan to reach more people so you could quit that part-time job and be a full-time practitioner. Not all things are going to be perfect, newsflash some things are going to fail miserably, but the important thing is to give yourself a break. You will never succeed if you stop trying.



Second Misconception

All Google ranking services cost the same. In every type of sales, there are three options: Good, Fast, and Cheap. Obviously, your goal is to stay in business for more than five minutes so no one can ever compromise on good. Whenever you want something done fast, there is always an additional cost. A great example is shipping fees. The cheapest way is to select ground, but it takes longer, and you can always upgrade to 3-day, 2nd day or next day air, but those always cost more. Even if you are a "prime" customer and offered next day air at no charge, it costs extra to be that prime customer or you have to spend additional amounts for "free" shipping.

The faster you want something done, the more it will cost. You want to be on page one of Google for a particular competitive term within 48 hours. Very special online Google experts can make that happen, however, the more competitive the term the more it will cost. One of the quickest ways to make it happen is paid advertising, creating a ton of content and publishing it to article sites, blog sites, blog review sites, videos, and more. All of those items have a cost because, believe or not, all those people already had other jobs they were paid to do. Expecting to get these services for free or at the same price isn't fair.

Can you get to page one of Google? Most of the time, yes. How long does it normally take? That answer is a little more complicated. How much content do you want to pay for and how much do you want to invest in online ads? How competitive is the keyword you are trying to rank for? One thing is for sure, if someone is saying they will get you to #1 spot on Google for any keyword you choose for \$200 or less, that is a set up! Don't do that deal unless you know for sure you have a true converting keyword that you know your customers are typing on the Internet when they want to book a massage.

Third Misconception

All Google ranking services are the same. There are good, fast and cheap options with every type of service. The struggle most people have when they are trying to make buying decisions is to know what is really "good" when it comes to online marketing services and in this case Google ranking. Because "You don't know what you don't know," how do you know what is good? Most of the time, feelings get hurt when there is a breakdown in communication. It isn't that the online marketer has malicious intent or "don't know what they are doing" or that "they are idiots." Just like in any profession, there can be charlatans and snake oil salespeople. However, sometimes online marketers get labeled as such unfairly because they are simply delivering a service the best way they know how to perform. Or in some cases, it is the interpretation or lack of knowledge on the customer's end that causes the problem. There are experts that are really good at one portion of online marketing like getting websites ranked to the top of page one of Google. So a customer thinks that if they pay good money to get quickly to the top of page 1 of Google that their business is going to explode and they will have more clients than what they ever thought.

When the fact is, unless you have a strategic plan around it, that tactical move of paying extra money to get to the top of Google may give you some results, but most likely there will be money left on the table. That Google ranking expert did exactly what they promised, however was it the best keyword to rank for? Does that keyword match your paying customer's mindset? Are your potential clients typing those exact words into the website url when they are looking to book an appointment? If not, then even though you are ranking at the #1 position for that keyword, you may not be increasing the number of patients booking appointments with you. That isn't to say that the person providing the service isn't the best at getting websites ranked.

They are providing a tactical service. You requested to be ranked for a particular word and that is what they delivered. Now, if this Google expert also provided some questions about your practice like: Who is your target audience? What are their pain points? How has your service helped meet those pain points? And then offered keyword research prior to ranking, more than likely you will get much better results for the money. You may have thought Google ranking should include keyword research and ranking for the best terms, but unless that is specifically stated, that isn't always the case.

Now, you do know what you didn't before and are able to make a better choice. Back to our Google experts. That person may not be the expert at helping to figure out the best keywords, but they might be the quickest and best person for getting your website ranked. This is why you have to know what you don't know and learn how to ask the right questions.

AUGUST 2015