WebPosition
BY WEBTRENDS

Customer Success

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Sesame Communications' Orthodontists Achieve Top Search Engine Visibility
As Measured and Mastered by WebPosition 4 Professional

"It's our job to differentiate each of the orthodontic practices in the Sesame family, both in terms of heightening the online patient usability experience and in terms of raising the 'public interface' and profile of the orthodontic practice on the web through search engine optimization. WebPosition is the best resource to continually measure and refine our search marketing strategies. It most ably serves our doctors as well as their communities."

—FRITH MAIER , CEO and Founder of Sesame Communications

BUSINESS OVERVIEW

Busy doctors need results. In the field of dental and orthodontic health care, over one thousand of these dedicated professionals count on Sesame Communications™ for their online communications presence and marketing performance. Dental Sesame™ and Ortho Sesame™ make things easier by providing patients with 24/7 online access to account, appointment, and treatment information, effectively replacing endless front office calls and creating more time for greater patient care. The flexible system provides automated email reminders, interactive multimedia engagement with patients, online payments and automated recurring payments processing.

Sesame Communications understands the importance of online visibility for each of its doctors' practices in the local markets they serve. Competition for new patients is geographic, not demographic, and is ongoing in practically every community in the U.S. The ubiquity of the Internet and the emergence of the web as a preferred method for locating and accessing local professionals have initiated a sea change in connecting doctors with patients and systematically growing their health care practices.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Together, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) are the art and science of increasing a web site's visibility across the major search properties on a strategically defined list of relevant keywords and phrases through "natural" search engine optimization and paid search advertising. Orthodontists seek to attract members of their community and acquire more qualified visitors—visitors who go on to learn about and utilize the full range of orthodontic services for their families.

CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

A major challenge for local and regional orthodontic practices is targeting those most likely to use their services, based on their location. Since regular orthodontic care depends on proximity to the orthodontist, it's foolish for these practices to overlook the importance of local SEO and local SEM. To help with that problem, Google, Yahoo!, AOL, and other major search providers are investing heavily in local search technologies and capabilities. MSN offers the capability for searchers to find related web sites "near me" by caching address information that is visible on the web page. Simply put, they want to make their search results as geographically relevant to online searchers as possible.

As shown in the Sesame Communications web site screen shots (below), the best practice of including location and office information in the title tags, meta tags, and on the page in the footer section is followed diligently. This allows the web site to be found by searchers entering the keywords [orthodontist] and [city name], the most popular keyword construction for locating these health care professionals.

THINKING LOCALLY, TAGGING GLOBALLY

Every page should provide a geographic reference point to give the searcher an easy way to locate services within their local area. Sesame-hosted sites ranked highest of any industry competitor for visibility when searching for orthodontists with location information, as determined by WebPosition analysis.

COMPETITIVE OVERVIEW

Using WebPosition 4, Sesame analyzed the organic search engine rankings of over 200 orthodontic web sites, each hosted and professionally managed by service firms including Sesame, TeleVox®, PBHS, Officite, and Solutions By Design. The study utilized the top ten most popular search terms, as determined by Wordtracker, to measure visibility on 16 search engines—A9.com, AlltheWeb, AltaVista, AskJeeves, Excite, Google, HotBot, LookSmart, Lycos, MSN, Netscape, Open Directory, TEOMA, Webcrawler, Wisenut, and Yahoo!.

SEARCH MARKETING USERS — LOYAL AND LOCAL

Search engines have both a loyal and a local audience. According to ComScore qSearch data, 99 percent of Internet users utilize search, and 59 percent utilize search at least once a day. 21 percent of total Internet users utilize search four or more times a day. Compared to passive user participation in media like television, radio, or billboards, Internet searchers are active participants in seeking out the information that they consume. A user's geographic location is determined via a search query on engines like Yahoo! and MSN, and Google, which offer automatic location relevance via Geo-IP automation based on the location of the users' Internet Service Provider. In either case, matching a local search query with a local dentist or orthodontist requires both diligence and care in the optimization process. Algorithmic listings by the search engines display results based on relevance and site optimization. In organic SEO, incorporating not only the exact physical address but the greater community area, county and other location descriptors becomes integral to being matched with corresponding keywords.

SESAME RAISES THE BAR

Sesame Communications' marketers have been using WebPosition to track the visibility of their doctors' web sites over time. In July of 2005, using WebPosition 3, the company measured the visibility score and visibility percentage of over 200 practices using the most common keyword combination to locate an orthodontist—namely the keyword [orthodontist] combined with the [city name] of the practice location. In that study, web sites produced and managed by Sesame were the most visible sites in natural search listings with the highest natural Visibility Percentage representing more top ranked, search positions than any other organization.

Sesame sites were ranked universally higher with no "stragglers" compared to competitors who had numerous web sites with only minimal visibility and some sites which were practically invisible to search engines.

WebPosition's "Search Engine Visibility Percentage" reflects a site's ranking within the first three pages of search results for the keywords and search engines examined. The first 30 search positions are weighted to calculate the Visibility Percentage and a site that has number one positions on each of the search engines examined would have a Visibility Percentage of 100 percent.

"First, there was Yellow Pages advertising, then came the Internet Yellow Pages. Now Search Engines like Google, Yahoo! and MSN make it even easier for members of our community to connect with our practice. We give credit to Sesame for the know-how, know-what and know-where in online marketing communications. Thanks to their being #1 in expertise, we show up #1 on the search engines."

Dr. Earle A. King
Orthodontist, Wexford, PA
www.kingorthodontics.com

WEBPOSITION 4 CONFIRMS THE BIGGER PICTURE

In January of 2006, Sesame added an additional web site design competitor to the study and expanded the keyword coverage to the top 10 search terms for orthodontics as measured by Wordtracker, the industry-leading database of over 220 million search terms updated on a weekly basis.

In addition to measuring the key term [orthodontist] and the local market descriptor, the 2006 study included the terms [orthodontic], [teeth], [find orthodontist], [family orthodontist], [braces], [invisalign], [smile], and [cosmetic].

The orthodontic firms studied were geographically diverse representing all regions of the United States and included both major metropolitan areas and suburban markets.

With WebPosition 4, WebTrends offers organizations a solution for managing the entire Search Engine Optimization process: organizations can conduct keyword research through the integrated Wordtracker service, gain insight into a web site's search engine saturation and link popularity, increase visibility and improve search engine positions with WebPosition, and understand conversions and revenue from paid and natural search terms with WebTrends On Demand Analytics 8.

ABOUT WEBTRENDS

As the acknowledged global web analytics market leader for more than 12 years, WebTrends is leading the way in Marketing Performance Management. With an uncompromising focus on delivering the most accurate and actionable metrics, WebTrends enables thousands of web-smart organizations to improve campaign performance, web site conversion, and customer relationships. More than half of the Fortune and Global 500 rely on WebTrends as their trusted standard for award-winning technology, consulting services and industry expertise across the broadest range of vertical markets. Through software and on-demand options and a full range of data collection methods, WebTrends is unmatched in its ability to meet any analysis objective with accuracy, privacy and security best practices.

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