



MarketWise

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Online Espionage

Last month at one of the network meetings we were discussing some new online business building strategies for clients. One of the members showed us what he did for one of his largest clients – an auto dealer.

Now, no one is in more trouble than auto dealers. They have to keep advertising and they have to come up with ways to differentiate themselves from other dealers selling the same brand in their marketing area. They are going deeper in debt to finance their operations which means less and less for local advertising.

The agency had seen its revenues from this large dealer decline substantially. The dealer wasn't necessarily selling more units and was beginning to struggle. The agency was faced with losing the account just because the dealership did have the funds.

Enter the strategic thinkers.

The agency knew that a majority of vehicle buyers review brands and dealers on line to give them model, pricing and service guidelines.

Using the internet to do some research, the agency logged on to Google.com/car dealer reviews at Edmunds.com, dealerrater.com and more. Here is what they did:

1. They read all the reviews of all the dealers who were competitive to their client's brand.
2. The agency found that there were not a lot of reviews, maybe a dozen or so. Some were negative, and few were positive.

3. A presentation was prepared to show the dealer the "bad press" it was receiving on line. The agency printed out the dealer and competitors' reviews; took the print-out to the client and showed them their mixed on-line presence. The client had 2 positive and 4 negative reviews. The competitors had about the same.
4. The strategy was to get more positive reviews and have them posted to Edmunds and the other rating services. People who had a sales or service transaction were solicited for comments. The agency felt that if they could get a lot of reviews (positive and negative) the prospect would be attracted to the dealer for a new car purchase or service work.
5. The agency offered to write the review for the customer. The customer approves the review prior to posting to Edmunds, etc.
6. The client agreed to pay \$3,500 per month for the agency to build the on-line presence. (The funds came from the print/broadcast advertising budget).
7. It worked. The client did not have to find more money to pay for the program. They already had it in their budget for newspaper, radio, television and internet advertising.
8. The agency receives \$3,500/month in pure AGI\$. The agency earns about 6 to 7 times the AGI\$ they would have made if the same \$3,500 purchased traditional media.

This technique can be applied to almost any client in almost any market or market segment. To get started,

all you have to do is go to Google and search for the category you want.

There is so much information on the internet that we are beginning to take it for granted. You can do a lot of on-line espionage to search for the basis of a strategy. The AMR Network agency did just that and was rewarded with a nice chunk of AGI\$. Needless to say, they are taking this same idea and applying it to other clients in their marketing area.

Smart! Real smart! ■

A Look Ahead at the Survey

The 2009 Salary & Benefits Survey is just about ready to analyze. The response has been good, but we are waiting for another 45 agencies to give us the information so that we are statistically viable.

Some Highlights

Respondents by number of employees:

Less than 5 employees = 12%
 5 to 9 employees = 31%
 10 to 20 employees = 30%
 21 to 30 employees = 10%
 More than 30 employees = 17%

Health Insurance Contribution to Employee's Premium:

With all the problems we seem to have with the rising cost of healthcare insurance, I thought that we should know three features of programs being offered. At one time it was popular to pay 100% of the employee insurance premium and a portion of the family premium.

Company does not contribute = 2%
 100% of premium = 34%
 75% to 99% of premium = 23%
 51% to 75% of premium = 24%
 26% to 50% of premium = 15%
 25% or less of premium = 3%

Coverage the Company Provides:

I find it interesting that 57% of those surveyed pay at least 75% of the employee premium and only 24% pay both employee and family insurance. Most of the respondents (46%) offer the employee insurance with the option of enrolling the family.

Employee only = 24%
 Employee and Family Coverage = 24%
 Employee with Optional Family Coverage = 46%
 Other type of coverage = 7%

Type of Health Insurance:

The traditional health care insurance programs dominate. Although within this category there are a variety of deductibles, the traditional forms of coverage are the ones offered most often.

Traditional Health Insurance = 70%
 HSA or MSA = 3%
 Combination of Traditional/HSA and MSA = 14%
 Don't provide Health Insurance Program = 9%
 All others = 3%

Upcoming AMR Workshops and Seminars

AE BootCamp – Atlanta, GA

March 16-17 at the Embassy Suites Hotel / Buckhead

Inside Interactive – Scottsdale, AZ

April 3-4 at the AIR Conference Center

Whale Hunters / New Business Program

June 5th at the Embassy Suites Hotel / Rosemont, IL

Winning Whales with an RFP / New Business Program

June 6th at the Embassy Suites Hotel / Rosemont, IL

Tuition: check the website for special pricing for AMR Network agencies