

How Can Search Engine Marketing Techniques Enhance a Nonprofit's Online Visibility?

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in Philanthropy and Development  
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by

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**M.A. in Philanthropy and Development**

As administration and faculty of Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, I have evaluated the FINAL CAPSTONE PAPER:

How Can Search Engine Marketing Techniques Enhance a Nonprofit's Online Visibility?

by

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and recommend that the degree of Master of Arts be conferred upon the candidate.

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## Abstract

This research study was undertaken to determine how search engine marketing (SEM) techniques can enhance a nonprofit's online visibility. The study methodology was a review of current and relative literature available online and in print. SEM comprises the activities designed to improve search referrals to a Web site, and it encompasses both organic and paid search strategies. The literature review conducted focused on the use of search engine optimization methods to boost the organic or natural ranking of a Web site. Pay-per-click (PPC) and keyword purchasing strategies also were evaluated. The research specifically sought examples of nonprofits using these methods to increase traffic to their Web sites. The literature indicated that both search engine optimization and PPC strategies are effective. The research pointed out that a combination of both would yield immediate and long-term visibility of an organization's Web site. Nonprofits had some advantages, compared to for-profit organizations, such as the Google Grants program and free online advertisements.

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## Chapter One

### Introduction

#### *Purpose*

This research was undertaken to examine literature relating to the ways in which search engine marketing (SEM) techniques can enhance a nonprofit organization's online visibility. If someone is using the Internet to find information about a nonprofit, how likely are they to find what they are looking for? This research also sought to address what information is found after a Web site is located. If a nonprofit's Web site is not effective, how does that further its cause?

The bulk of the research within this paper relates to how search engine marketing techniques can help people find a Web site. "Search engine marketing, or SEM, is a form of Internet marketing that seeks to promote websites by increasing their visibility in the search engine results pages" (Wikipedia, 2007). The research revealed that marketing techniques are also needed to shape what information is found on a Web site and how it is presented. This research focuses on attracting more visitors to an organization's Web site so that the Web site can more effectively further the organization's mission.

Dawkins (2007) indicated that ignoring search engines is simply not an option for nonprofits that are serious about raising money. She states that Web site traffic and online donations typically are strongly correlated. When visitors reach a Web site, however, it is important that the organization have a plan. "What's the value of making your organization much better known if people distrust the face you show to the public? In the nonprofit sector, any news at all is not necessarily good news" (Warwick, 2000, p. 240).

Warwick (2000) did a good job describing how a nonprofit organization might develop a Web site, and the pitfalls it may encounter:

A sixteen-year-old volunteer or an avid staff member working after hours may be able to put together a perfectly respectable site, spending less than \$100 to register it's domain name....Unfortunately, however, sixteen-year-old volunteers and internet-surfing staff persons rarely know much, if anything, about how to use the many interactive tools available on the Web to build relationships with donors. (p. 268)

Technology is always changing. The Internet gives development professionals new ways to reach constituents but, as Brinckerhoff (2003) noted,

There is no substitute for the basics of fundraising: a good mission, a good message, and, most important, a good "ask." But even organizations that do those things well can lose their competitive standing if they don't use tech well. (p. 189)

### *Research Question*

How can search engine marketing techniques enhance a nonprofit's online visibility?

### *Background*

The Pew Internet & American Life Project (2007) conducted a demographic survey of Internet users between February 15, 2007, and March 7, 2007. The results of this survey showed that 71% of adults in the United States use the Internet. Table 1 shows the demographics of U.S. adults who use the Internet.

Oser (2006) wrote, "Once online, 80% of Internet traffic begins at a search engine, according to a Harris Interactive poll. Forty-one percent of Web users find brands through search rather than just typing a URL into their browser, a DoubleClick study reported" (¶ 6).



Table 1

*Demographics of Internet Users (N = 2,200 adults)*

Use the Internet (%)	
Total adults	71
Women	70
Men	71
Age (%)	
18–29	87
30–49	83
50–64	65
65+	32
Race/ethnicity (%)	
White, non-Hispanic	73
Black, non-Hispanic	62
English-speaking Hispanic	78
Geography (%)	
Urban	73
Suburban	73
Rural	60
Annual household income (%)	
Less than \$30,000	55
\$30,000–\$49,999	69
\$50,000–\$74,999	82
\$75,000+	93
Educational attainment (%)	
Less than high school	40
High school	61
Some college	81
College +	91

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project (2007). *Note.* Margin of error is  $\pm 2\%$  for results based on the full sample and  $\pm 3\%$  for results based on Internet users. Hispanic Internet usage statistics are taken from the Pew Research Center 2006 National Survey of Latinos and 2006 Hispanic Religion Survey ( $N = 6,016$  adults). Margin of error is  $\pm 2\%$  for results based on the full sample.

Wallace (2007) suggested that “an organization’s website is important to donors, not just those that make gifts online” (¶ 1). Reviewing a Harris Interactive poll, Wallace noted, “nearly 40 percent of people who support nonprofit organizations either as a donor, volunteer, or advocate report that they consult online sources of charity information before making donations” (¶ 2). In another article, Wallace (2002) reported a survey of 733 people who made an online donation. Forty-four percent of the respondents said they used a search engine to find the organization’s Web site, another 20% said they guessed the Web address, and 12% saw a link to the nonprofit site from another Web site and followed it.

This research revolves around nonprofits’ online visibility: When an Internet user uses a search engine to find an organization’s Web site, how visible is the organization? How likely is a prospective constituent to find a nonprofit Web site before possibly finding another?

“Visibility is about becoming familiar to the people who matter most” (Warwick, 2000, p. 27). Nonprofit constituents use search engines like Google, Yahoo!, and MSN to find an organization’s Web site. When they search for an organization’s name or other keywords that describe the organization’s mission, does the Web site show up on the first page of the search engine results or the tenth? If the Web site does display on the first page, is it the number one listing or farther down the list?

“Search engine marketing, or SEM, is a form of Internet marketing that seeks to promote websites by increasing their visibility in the search engine results pages” (Wikipedia, 2007). Search engine optimization (SEO) is based on strategies to improve a search engine ranking. SEO usually means making changes to a Web site’s design elements and content, and in most cases it costs nothing at all. SEM is not just search

engine optimization; SEM includes pay-per-click (PPC) strategies. SEM is doing what needs to be done to ensure that a Web site ranks as high as possible in search engine results and to bring more people to that Web site (Ledford, 2008).

In the corporate world, search engine marketing is thriving. “According to SEMPO’s annual ‘State of Search Engine Marketing’ survey, ... North American advertisers [were] spending \$9.4 billion on search engine marketing in 2006, a 62% increase over 2005” (Sherman, 2007, ¶ 1). The research pointed out that although a nonprofit Web site has different goals than a for-profit site, nonprofit organizations still benefit from increased traffic afforded by increased online visibility.

Drucker (1990) described the fundamental differences between for-profit and nonprofit organizations:

The “non-profit” institution neither supplies goods or services. Its “product” is neither a pair of shoes nor an effective regulation. Its product is a *changed human being*. The non-profit institutions are human-change agents. Their “product” is a cured patient, a child that learns, a young man or women grown into a self-respecting adult; a changed human life altogether. (p. xiv)

Drucker further explained that selling a concept such as a mission or vision is different from selling a product:

Although marketing for a non-profit uses many of the same terms and even many of the same tools as a business, it is really quite different because the non-profit is selling something intangible. Something that you transform into value for the customer. (p. 54)

“More and more, nonprofit Web sites are used to recruit new members or donors and to provide a host of services to existing members, in addition to public education,

community service, and many other important applications” (Warwick, 2000, p. 127).

In fact, one lesson from the technology revolution is already clear—a bold vision and good management will always have more impact than technology. So will poor focus and bad management. Organizations that struggled before the iPod will do so long after it is replaced by the latest phone-camera-laptop combination.

Groups that have always served their constituents well are positioned to use technology to ignite huge increases in public support. (McPherson, 2007, p. viii)

In addition to donors, many other people are searching an organization’s Web site for information.

Access to your organization online doesn’t limit itself to just the people you serve.

Go back to your list of markets. What about your funders? Your donors? Your volunteers? Your staff? Most if not all of them have the ability, even the desire to access [your Web site] . . . The people you serve are a *vital* market. But they are not your *only* market. (Brinckerhoff, 2003, p. 174)

### *Significance*

Marshall and Todd (2007) pointed out that every second of each day, 3,000 searches are performed on Google—180,000 searches per minute, all day, every day. Online advertising is becoming increasingly expensive. A major challenge for nonprofits is to spread the word about their organization, despite a limited budget. Nonprofits must balance the cost of advertising efforts that build brand awareness with those that generate donations (Linnell, 2007).

People are becoming increasingly more reliant on the Internet for information. Online newspapers and phone books are ever present. Wallace (2007) cited a study completed by Mindshare Interactive Campaigns and Harris Interactive: “The study found

that nearly 40 percent of people who support nonprofit organizations either as a donor, volunteer, or advocate report that they consult online sources of charity information before making donations” (¶ 7).

When a potential constituent, customer, donor, volunteer, or board member is trying to find an organization’s information on the Web, research indicates that they are relying on a search engine.

For-profit organizations have been using many techniques to increase the likelihood that they will show up very high in the results when someone tries to find them using a search engine. For example, when someone searches for a museum, the museum’s goal is that the search engine will return *their* museum within the first page of search engine results; hopefully the museum will show up as the number one ranking.

But what if an organization does not appear in search results when a Web searcher types in the organization’s city and the museum’s name? There are ways to optimize placement in the search engine rankings. “Research conducted in 2005 by search consulting firm oneupweb.com showed that top 10 placement in Google increased site traffic to five times its previous levels in the first month” (Grappone & Couzin, 2006, p. xiii).

That is what this research paper will focus on. Not only does SEM need to make sure that an organization’s Web site is visible on the Web, it also needs to address Web site content. Is the Web site effectively conveying the organization’s mission? Is it helping your organization build relationships?

This research seeks to provide a framework and background for search engine marketing by nonprofit development professionals. Using this research, such professionals should be able to increase the online visibility of nonprofit Web sites.

### *Definition of Terms*

HyperText Markup Language (HTML): The predominant language of Web pages, which attaches a set of codes (or tags) to text and describes the relationships among text elements.

Keyword: “A word or phrase describing an organization’s product or service or other key content on its website. A word or phrase entered in a search engine” (Grappone & Couzin, 2006, p. 307).

META tag: An HTML element that a Web developer places in a Web page header to inform Web robots about the page’s content (Schneider & Evans, 2003).

Nonprofit: A legally constituted organization whose primary objective is to support or to actively engage in activities of public or private interest without any commercial or monetary profit purposes.

Organic search: Results returned when a user types a particular keyword into a search engine. These are also called natural results and contrast with PPC advertising.

Pay-per-click advertising: “A method of marketing where a business pays a certain amount of money each time someone clicks on a small ad on a search engine’s results page or home page and is then taken to the advertiser’s website” (Mordkovich & Mordkovich, 2007, p. 180).

Search engine: A software application that indexes and serves content to an Internet user who is looking for something specific (Ledford, 2008).

Search engine marketing: “The activities that improve search referrals to a Web site, using either organic or paid search. Also known as search marketing” (Moran & Hunt, 2006, p. 518).

Search engine optimization: “The set of techniques and methodologies developed to improve organic search rankings (not paid search) for a Web site” (Moran & Hunt, 2006, p. 518).

Uniform Resource Locator (URL): The Web page address that directs a browser to display that page (Moran & Hunt, 2006).

## Chapter Two

### Literature Review

This review of the literature is divided into sections covering (a) the history of search engines, (b) the anatomy of a search engine, (c) organic search results, (d) pay-per-click or sponsored listings, and (e) nonprofit marketing.

#### *History of Search Engines*

To provide some background and framework for the research question, it is important to understand the history and anatomy of search engines.

In its infancy, the Internet wasn't what you think of when you use it now. In fact, it was nothing like the web of interconnected sites that's become one of the greatest business facilitators of our time. Instead, what was called the Internet was actually a collection of FTP (File Transfer Protocol) sites that users could access to download (or upload) files. (Ledford, 2008, p. 3)

In the early 1990s academics were using the Internet to store papers, technical specifications, and other kinds of documents on publicly available machines. The problem with retrieving something was that one had to know the exact name and address where the file resided in order to find it (Battelle, 2005).

According to Battelle (2005), "By most accounts, the honor of being the first search engine goes to Archie, a pre-Web search application created in 1990 by a McGill University student named Alan Emtage" (p. 39). Archie, which is *archive* without the V, downloaded the directory listings of all the files located on public, anonymous FTP sites, creating a searchable database of file names (Underwood, 2008). Using keywords, one could search the Archie database for the name of a document but not the contents. The



results led not to the exact article but only to a computer that contained it, where the user would have to search for the actual article (Battelle, 2005).

Gopher was a database archive created in 1991 by Mark McCahill at the University of Minnesota. It was named after the school's mascot. Where Archie had used FTP to create a searchable database of computer files, Gopher was able to index the titles of plain-text documents (Underwood, 2008).

In 1993 students at the University of Nevada developed a search engine that not only would find an article on the Internet but also would take the user directly to it, rather than just to the computer where the document resided. This enhanced search engine worked much like Archie, but substituted Gopher for FTP. Gopher was a popular and more fully featured Internet file-sharing standard than FTP (Battelle, 2005). These students, playing on the name Archie from the comic book, named their search engine Veronica (Very Easy Rodent-Oriented Net-wide Index to Computerized Archives). Still, the main limitations of both Archie and Veronica were that they would only search the title of the document, not the content.

“From 1993 to 1996, the Web grew from 130 sites to more than 600,000” (Battelle, 2005, p. 40). Watching the growth of the Internet was Matthew Gray, a researcher at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is considered a pioneer of the earliest Web-based search engine because he developed the WWW Wanderer. The Wanderer was different from any of its predecessors. Gray realized the Internet was growing faster than any human could track. The Wanderer was a program called a robot that would scour the Web and create an index of everything it found. Gray developed an interface that allowed searching the created index. “It wasn't the greatest search engine that ever was, but it was the first search engine that ever was” (Battelle, 2005, p. 41).

The robot used by the Wanderer is a program that automatically traverses the Web structure, retrieving a Web site and all the Web sites that it references. These Web robots are sometimes referred to as Web wanderers, Web crawlers, or spiders. “These names are a bit misleading as they give the impression the software itself moves between sites like a virus; this is not the case, a robot simply visits sites by requesting documents from them” (Underwood, 2008, ¶ 18). The concept of robots or spiders is very important to understanding search results from today’s Web browsers.

In 1994 Jerry Yang and David Filo created Yahoo!. It started out as a collection of their favorite Web sites, but Yahoo! also contained descriptions of what the user would find on the page. Within the year the two received funding, and Yahoo!, the corporation, was created (Underwood, 2008).

Later in 1994, WebCrawler was introduced, developed by University of Washington researcher Brian Pinkerton (Battelle, 2005). WebCrawler was of major importance in that it did not simply search and index the Internet for document titles; it indexed the entire document and made the entire document available to search. WebCrawler was purchased by America Online (AOL) in June of 1995. AOL used WebCrawler, its full-text search, and a simple browser-based interface to make the Web fit for mainstream consumption beyond academics and tech geeks.

The following quote reveals just how small the Internet was in its infancy:

When the Internet was young, when the Web comprised less than 10 million pages, when Yahoo! was a funky set of links and “Google” was just a common misspelling for a very large number, Louis Monier put the entire Web on a single computer. (Battelle, 2005, p. 42)

Monier was trying to create a sales demonstration for the new Alpha processor, basically a public relations ploy to show how powerful Digital Equipment Corp.'s new processor was. Monier put the entire Web on one computer to showcase the speed of the new processor; this is how the search engine AltaVista was born (Battelle, 2005).

With no marketing and no formal announcement AltaVista generated nearly 300,000 visits on its first day alone. Within a year, the site had served more than 4 billion queries. Four *billion*—nearly as many queries as people on the Earth. (Battelle, 2005, p. 48)

AltaVista went online in 1995. It was the first search engine to allow natural-language searches and other advanced search techniques. AltaVista also provided multimedia search capability for photos, music, and videos (Underwood, 2008). “By 1997 AltaVista was truly the king of search. Serving more than 25 million queries a day and on track to make \$50 million in sponsorship revenue (Battelle, 2005, p. 51). AltaVista in 1999 was the Google of its time and the most popular brand on the Web. The Web site was in a three-way tie with AOL and Yahoo! as the most important destination on the Web.

Google was launched in 1997 by Sergey Brin and Larry Page as part of a research project at Stanford University (Underwood, 2008). Google is the present king of search engines. What has made Google a household word is the accuracy of its search results. Brin and Page were able to achieve greater search accuracy by focusing not only on keywords, but also on link popularity. Link popularity looked at how many other pages linked to the pages with the keywords. These are just a few of the hundreds of criteria that search engines use in ranking the relevancy of Web pages (Ledford, 2008).

It wasn't long after the advent of search engines that advertisers noticed that search engine sites were receiving numbers of hits in orders of magnitude greater than any other type on the web. Receiving daily hits in the millions, search engines seemed like advertising gold mines. (Sonnenreich, 1997, ¶ 59)

Pay-per-click in its current form began when an entrepreneur named Bill Gross developed an idea for the first PPC search engine, goto.com, which changed its name to Overture in 2001 and was acquired by Yahoo! in 2003. People were initially skeptical of PPC search engines, thinking that users would not want to use a search engine filled with advertisements. It was not until late 2000, when Google introduced its AdWords program, that the industry started to mature (Mordkovich & Mordkovich, 2007).

From its inception as a business in the late 1990s to 2004, paid search as an industry grew from a base in the low millions to \$4 billion in revenue, and it is estimated to hit \$23 billion by 2010. (Battelle, 2005, p. 34)

Mordkovich and Mordkovich (2007) determined that many businesses have not taken advantage of this new type of online advertising “because it is relatively new, the terminology is quite technical, and the process can be confusing—in short, because they simply don't know where to start” (p. 4). Others may simply not understand what pay-per-click search engine advertising actually means. Mordkovich and Mordkovich also stated that PPC can be the easiest and often the cheapest way to advertise online.

### *Anatomy of a Search Engine*

Google, Yahoo!, and MSN are all examples of search engines. To understand how to use SEM, it is important to understand how a search engine works. “A search engine does not search the web to find a match; it searches its *own* database of information about Web pages that it has collected, indexed, and stored” (Schneider & Evans, 2003, p. 4.09).

Search engines all have three major pieces: “the crawl, the index, and the runtime system or query processor” (Battelle, 2005, p. 20). The process begins with the crawler. “The crawler is a specialized software program that hops from link to link on the World Wide Web, scarfing up the pages it finds and sending them back to be indexed” (p. 20). This is very similar to Matthew Gray’s earliest search engine, which searched and indexed entire files on the Internet, not just the titles. “The crawler sends its data back to a massive database called the index” (p. 21). The runtime system or query processor is the user interface you see on a search engine’s Web site, where you type in your search words.

[These are the] three critical pieces of search, and all three must scale to the size and continued growth of the Web: they must crawl, they must index, and they must serve results. This is no small task: by most accounts, Google alone has more than 175,000 computers dedicated to this job. That’s more [computers] than existed on Earth in the early 1970s! (p. 24)

The Web is huge; it is so big that it is hard to get an accurate count of Web pages. In January of 2004, it was estimated that the Web contained over 10 billion pages; with an average world population of 6.4 billion, that is almost two pages per person (Langville & Meyer, 2006). In 2003 Google reported that it served 250 million different searches per day.

Most people are using search engines in their daily lives to find information on the Web. The most recognizable part of a search engine is the query interface. This is the home page that is displayed when you visit a major search engine such as Google, Yahoo!, or MSN.

The query interface is the only part of a search engine that the user ever sees. Every other part of the search engine is behind the scenes, out of view of the people who use it every day. That doesn't mean it's not important, however. In fact, what's in the back end is the most important part of the search engine. (Ledford, 2008, p. 7)

Google is receiving the lion's share of the searches, with Yahoo! and MSN following up in second and third places, respectively (see Table 2).

Table 2

*U.S. Search Rankings, November 2007*

Search engine	Share of searches (%)
Google sites	58.6%
Yahoo! sites	22.4%
Microsoft sites	9.8%
Ask network	4.6%
Time Warner network	4.5%

Source: ComScore (2007)

This paper focuses on two different SEO strategies. The process of optimizing a Web site's structure and content for the highest search results is called organic search. A second strategy, called pay-per-click, or sometimes paid search, is when an organization pays to have its Web site included in searches based on keywords. The research results echo the point made by Grappone and Couzin (2006): "The vast majority of businesses do best when they use a holistic approach to SEO, combining elements of organic and paid search with a healthy dose of good writing and usability" (p. 51).

### *Organic Search Results*

This research posed the question, how can search engine marketing techniques enhance a nonprofit's online visibility. Two phrases need to be defined to help with the rest of this literature review. The first is *search engine marketing*, which is "activities that improve search referrals to a Web site using either organic or paid search" (Moran & Hunt, 2006, p. 518). The second is *search engine optimization*, which is "the set of techniques and methodologies devoted to improving organic search rankings (not paid search) for a Web site" (p. 518). "Search engine optimization is the science of customizing elements of your web site to achieve the best possible search engine ranking" (Ledford, 2008, p. 18).

The basic concept of a search engine is that the user types a word or phrase into a search box and clicks a button. "Wait a few seconds and references to thousands (or hundreds of thousands) of pages will appear. Then all you have to do is click through those pages to find what you want" (Ledford, 2008, p. 5). Some of the results are called organic results, or natural results. These are the most relevant matches for that search request among all of the indexed Web pages (Moran & Hunt, 2006). There also are paid placement listings, which can show up on the top or the side of the search engine. "Paid placement listings are described as the technique by which a search engine devotes space on its search results page to display links to a Web site's page based on the highest bid for that space" (p. 514). Some search engines differentiate the two types of listings; others do not.

This section of the research will focus on organic results and how to increase the likelihood that a search engine will rank one site higher than others. The subsequent section is devoted to paid listings.

An organization's Web site likely will rank within the first few thousand results in a search engine. However, as Ledford (2008) pointed out,

That's just not good enough. Being ranked on the ninth or tenth page of search results is tantamount to being invisible. To be noticed, your site should be ranked much higher. . . . Most people won't look past the third page of search results, if they get that far. The fact is, it's the sites that fall on the first page of results that get the most traffic. (p. 18)

Every Web site is being indexed by crawlers or spiders. It exists with the millions of other sites on the Internet. To get a Web site noticed by the crawlers, certain elements must stand out. Making those elements stand out is the process of search engine optimization (Ledford, 2008).

Web sites are text files that exist on Web servers. These text files are much like the files created and used by word-processing software. To enable Web browsers such as Microsoft's Internet Explorer, Mozilla's Firefox, or Opera to read these files, the files must be formatted according to a generally accepted standard. The standard used on the Web is HyperText Markup Language (HTML). HTML uses codes, or tags, that tell the Web browser software how to display the text contained in the text file (Schneider & Evans, 2003).

For example, a Web browser reading the following line of text

`<B>A Review of the Book <I> Wind Instruments</I></B>`

recognizes the `<B>` and `</B>` tags as instructions to display the entire line of text in bold and the `<I>` and `</I>` tags as instructions to display the text enclosed by those tags in italics. (p. 2.03)



When assessing a Web site for search engine optimization, one should review a number of elements, including site and page tagging, page content, site links, and the site map. Each of these elements is crawled by search engines to determine Web site ranking (Ledford, 2008). Each of these elements should be addressed separately.

*Site and page tagging.* “The HTML page title is today’s hands-down leader, and an Eternally Important factor, in search engine ranking algorithms” (Grappone & Couzin, 2006, p. 68).

In addition to the bold and italics tags used to format text, there is another tag on Web sites called the meta tag. Meta tags are included in the coding of a Web site and are essential to having the site listed properly in a search engine (Ledford, 2008).

A META tag is HTML code that a Web page creator places in the page header for the specific purpose of informing Web robots about the content of the page.

META tags do not cause any text to appear on the page when a Web browser loads it; rather, they exist solely for the use of search engine robots. (Schneider & Evans, 2003, p. 4.13)

Ledford (2008) pointed out that the most important meta tags to a search engine are the title and the description tag. Schneider and Evans (2003) also discussed the use of meta tags, including a keyword meta tag. They stated that many search engines’ crawlers, spiders, or robots do not search an entire Web site. “Some search engine robots collect information only from a Web page’s title, description, keywords, or HTML tags; others read only a certain amount of the text in each Web page” (p. 4.13).

Schneider and Evans (2003) demonstrated the first few lines of HTML from a Web page that contains information about electronic commerce:

```
<HEAD>
```

```
<TITLE>
```

```
Current Developments in Electronic Commerce
```

```
</TITLE>
```

```
<META NAME = "description" CONTENT = "Current news and reports about  
electronic commerce developments.">
```

```
<META NAME = "keywords" CONTENT = "electronic commerce, electronic  
data interchange, value added reseller, EDI, VAR, secure socket layer, business  
on the Internet">
```

```
</HEAD> (p. 4.13)
```

Developing the correct keywords to get a site ranked higher than others is a big part of organic search engine optimization (Moran & Hunt, 2006). To develop the correct set of keywords, however, one must know which keywords searchers are using. There are many different ways to build a list of keywords, including brainstorming, looking at the competition, and using keyword-building tools. Wordtracker is the leading keyword research tool. Yahoo! and Google both have their own keyword-building tools, and Trellian's KeywordDiscovery has quickly become the biggest competitor to Wordtracker (Moran & Hunt, 2006).

*Page content.* After keywords are developed and added to the site tags, the Web site content needs to be adjusted to make sure the keywords are prominently featured throughout the Web site (Moran & Hunt, 2006). "It seems obvious, but you would be surprised at how many site owners miss this simple point: In order to rank well for a particular set of keywords, your site text should contain them" (Grappone & Couzin, 2006, p. 68). Some SEO professionals recommend that a Web site should have 250 to 1,000 words per page and that 5% to 10% of those should be the organization's

keywords. The number of keywords per page divided by the number of words per page is called keyword density.

Search engines also may begin to ignore a Web site if the content is old. Ledford (2008) pointed out that the content of a Web site should be regularly updated: “How fresh is your content? How relevant is it? How often is it updated? And how much content is there?” (p. 21).

Although organic search is cheaper than the paid placement that is the focus of the next section of this research, updating content may be difficult for some nonprofits. Cortes and Rafter (2007) conducted a series of interviews in 2004 and 2005 to determine the technology adoption of San Francisco–based nonprofits. They noted that some nonprofits relied on volunteers or students to create their organizations’ Web sites. The organizations had to count on those people to update their Web sites, but that presented a problem:

A number of organizations, when asked for examples of how they kept their Web sites current, stated that they returned to the volunteer who had originally built it. When that volunteer was no longer available, they struggled to find a replacement, sometimes with no success. (p. 170)

One organization had its Web site developed by a student so that it could easily update the content on its own.

Grappone and Couzin (2006) gave an example of a nonprofit and the challenges it faced in updating content on its Web site:

Mon Yough Community Services is a nonprofit organization near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It embodies some of the common challenges of nonprofits: lack of funding, lack of resources, and an organization that embraces “low tech.” MYCS’

website, developed and hosted by a company offering pro bono services to nonprofits, hasn't had a major update in seven years. If you ask Gina Boros, MIS manager, what kind of effort they put into SEO, she'll just laugh. (p. 36)

*Site links.* Inbound links to a Web site, meaning other Web sites have a link to that Web site within them, also are important to SEO. They are important because they can indicate a page's quality, popularity, or status on the Web, yet site owners have little control over which sites link to them. When links became part of the criteria used by crawlers to rank Web sites, some unscrupulous SEO marketers developed "link farms" to artificially increase rankings. Today, links usually must be related to the content of the page; if a Web site's inbound or outbound links do not match the keywords the site is listing, they will be of little value to the site's ranking (Ledford, 2008).

Google and Yahoo! have tools that allow a user to see all of the Web sites that are linked to a particular site. To view links to a Web site in Google, open the Google search engine and type "link:" before the Web address. An example of this would be link: <http://www.smumn.edu>. To view links in Yahoo!, open the search engine and type in the Web address, adding "linkdomain" to the beginning and making sure to leave off "http://", like this: linkdomain: [www.smumn.edu](http://www.smumn.edu) (Moran & Hunt, 2006).

Grappone and Couzin (2006) pointed out that nonprofits have a huge advantage with regards to site links:

The culture of the Web generally adores noncommercial content—something your website should be chock full of. And, let's face it, giving you a link doesn't cost a thing. Any webmaster or blogger who supports your cause—or at least has no major problem with it—will see adding a link [from their site to yours] as a

cheap and easy way to help out. You will want to adjust your SEO plan accordingly, giving extra effort to link building. (p. 34)

*Site map.* A site map can help a Web site become more accurately linked. This site map should not be confused with the site map used to help people navigate a Web site.

This site map is an XML-based document at the root of your HTML, that contains information (URL, last updated, relevance to surrounding pages, and so on) about each of the pages within a site. Using this XML site map will help to ensure that even the deep pages within your site are indexed by search engines. (Ledford, 2008, p. 22)

There are a number of additional factors that can influence Web site ranking. Google, for example, probably includes hundreds and possibly even thousands of factors in its algorithms (Grappone & Couzin, 2006). There is an inherent problem with SEO, which is that no one really knows the exact algorithm used to determine site ranking. Grappone and Couzin described this conundrum the following way:

Here's something that drives people crazy about SEO: You can't ever be 100 percent sure that what you're doing will be rewarded with the rank and the listing you want. This is because the search engines keep their internal ranking mechanism, even the criteria by which the ranking is determined, under wraps. Welcome to the secret formula of SEO: The Search Engine Ranking Algorithm. (p. 43)

Each search engine has its own proprietary algorithm to sift through a multitude of factors and determine page rank. Some of these factors include keyword repetition, page titles, inbound links, and even the age of the site. Each search engine also will

change its algorithm from time to time, often without so much as a friendly warning (Grappone & Couzin, 2006).

They guard these proprietary algorithms because if people knew exactly how the algorithms worked, they would take advantage of that knowledge to ensure the site they were promoting ranked first. “The little bits of [the] algorithm that people figure out themselves often get so abused that the search engines eventually devalue them” (p. 44).

Grappone and Couzin (2006) asked Danny Sullivan, who they consider the best known and most respected authority on search today, what he considers to be eternal about SEO. He replied, “Good HTML titles, good body copy, great content, ensuring that your site doesn’t have blocks to crawling—these have worked for nearly a decade” (p. 44). Grappone and Couzin noted that Sullivan did not mention anything about trying to figure out the elusive algorithm.

The research did point out that SEM efforts should avoid spamming the search engines. Moran and Hunt (2006) call this “spamdexing,” also known as spam. They define spamdexing as, “Unethical (but legal) techniques undertaken by a Web site designed to fool organic search engines to display its pages, even though they are not truly the best matches for a searcher’s query” (p. 520). Some of these methods include keyword stuffing, in which one repeats the content of the meta tags over and over. Keyword stuffing is designed to make the search engine crawler rank a Web site higher based on the specific meta tag keywords that are being repeated. Duplicate content is another spam technique designed to trick a search crawler into ranking a Web site higher than a more relevant Web site. Another spamdexing technique is the use of a link farm, a page of links that is created only to artificially boost a linking strategy, so that a page ranks higher in search results.

Penalties for such techniques will differ among the different search engines, but they can include delisting of a Web site from the search engines. If a Web site is delisted, an organization will have to explain to the search engines what happened, and it could take months to fix the problem.

Ledford (2008) noted that the purpose of a search engine is to find, index, and serve content to a user looking to find something. If an organization approaches the creation of a Web site in the same manner a search engine approaches serving content, then the goals will naturally align.

#### *Pay-Per-Click (Paid Search) or Sponsored Listings*

The previous section focused on organic search. This section focuses on pay-per-click, sometimes called paid search. Battelle (2005) stated, “About 40 to 50 percent of all search queries now return paid ads” (p. 35). By far the most profitable and fastest growing source of revenue for search engines is advertising. Google presents normal organic results in a main list and paid listings on the side as sponsored links. Companies choose a keyword, or multiple keywords, associated with their product or service. They then bid on what they are willing to pay when a searcher clicks on a link (Langville & Meyer, 2006).

Dawkins (2007) pointed out that one of the benefits nonprofits have in purchasing keywords relevant to their mission is that those keywords are not in high demand by commercial organizations. She stated, “In fact, bid prices are so low on some of these keywords that many small nonprofits can run highly effective in-house search engine marketing campaigns for as little as \$200 per month” (§ 15). Advertisers’ placement on the results page is determined by how much they are willing to pay if someone clicks on their ad. Minimum bids may vary, but they generally start at around \$0.05 per click and

can go all the way up to \$100 per click for some mortgage-related terms (Mangalindan, 2003).

A 2005 study by the Pew Internet & American Life Project showed that 62% of people using the Internet do not understand the difference between organic and paid listings on a search engine results page (Mordkovich & Mordkovich, 2007).

Langville and Meyer (2006) gave an example of how paid search works:

A bike shop in Raleigh may bid 5 cents for every query on “bike Raleigh.” The bike shop is billed only if a searcher actually clicks on their ad. However, another company may bid 17 cents for the same query. The ad for the second company is likely to appear first, because although there is some fine tuning and optimization, sponsored ads generally are listed in order from the highest bid to the lowest bid.

(p. 45)

Pay-per-click advertising is an innovation in marketing. Small businesses that would not traditionally advertise on the Internet are now spending much more on Web advertising because it is so cost-effective (Langville & Meyer, 2006).

The format of a PPC using Google AdWords, for example, includes a headline that is limited to 25 characters, a second and third line that are limited to 35 characters, and a fourth line that provides the URL, or Web address, that people will see in the advertisement (Marshall & Todd, 2007). Marshall and Todd offered as an illustration a PPC advertisement placed by the marketing and publicity director of TruthQuest, a nonprofit that hosts speakers and discussions on current topics in religion and theology. Soon after the success of *The Lord of the Rings*, its sequel *The Two Towers* was in theaters.



We found ourselves a speaker, Professor Jerry Root, of Wheaton College, who could talk about the movie and the philosophical point of view of its author. No matter how great the speaker may be, it doesn't matter if nobody shows up. So the title was crucial. Someone suggested a preliminary title: "Is Lord of the Rings Christian?" I didn't like it. Not intriguing. Too easy to say "No" or "Yes" . . . Our group brainstormed four titles and I let the world [Internet] vote on them using Google AdWords and had an answer in 18 hours. (p. 145)

Table 3 shows how many times each ad was clicked and the bid for each time it was clicked.

The author took the four titles and came up with the Google Ads shown in Table 3. "I purchased the keyword 'Tolkien', and 'Tolkein,' a common misspelling that people often mistakenly search on" (Marshall & Todd, 2007, p. 145). The four ads ran in simultaneous rotation when a searcher typed either "Tolkien" or "Tolkein" into Google.

Table 3

*TruthQuest Google Ads*

Ad text	Clicks	Cost per click
<i>The Two Towers</i> : Tolkien, <i>The Two Towers</i> , and spiritual symbolism	11	\$0.06
<i>Lord of the Rings</i> and the spiritual powers of hobbits	8	\$0.06
Spirituality of Tolkien: Hidden messages in <i>The Two Towers</i>	20	\$0.05
Tolkien spirituality: Is there hidden Christianity in <i>The Two Towers</i> ?	16	\$0.06

Source: Marshall and Todd (2007)

Bidding on misspelled words is less expensive because other people may not be bidding on them. "Yet one out of every seven searches misspells the name 'Tolkien!'" (p. 145).

The ads began running about 3 p.m. on a weekday and were stopped at 8 a.m. the next morning. Table 3 is based on the 4,130 combined impressions for all four ads. The number of impressions is how many times the ads appeared when a user searched on one of the two keywords. The clicks column indicates the number of people who actually clicked on each ad. The “Cost per click” column is how much was paid to Google for each click. The most popular ad was “Spirituality of Tolkien: Hidden Messages in the Two Towers.” This method was vastly better than any focus group, and the numbers were very different for the four different ads.

Wallace (2003) gave another example of a nonprofit using paid placement:

Christian Children’s Fund pays search engines to ensure that its Web site appears as one of the top links in search results when users type in the organization’s name or terms like “international child development,” or countries in which the organization works. (¶ 35)

The charity pays a small fee each time a user searches for one of its keywords and clicks through the ad to its Web site. Heather Fignar, manager of interactive communication for Christian Children’s Fund, said,

The strategy is a cost-effective way to drive traffic to the site and makes it easy for people who have seen one of the charity’s television advertisements to find the organization. The beauty is that if a [key]word isn’t working for us, we don’t pay for it. (¶ 36)

Montuori (2003) talked about how another nonprofit has been leveraging PPC.

Ever since the A. P. John Institute for Cancer Research discovered online advertising in a paid inclusion search engine, it can now leave its public service radio messages behind.

The institute’s president and CEO, John Angelo, said,

The group was lucky if it received 25 calls during the two days after it was featured on a radio talk show. [With the PPC ad campaign in place,]...its Web site, [apjohncancerinstitute.org](http://apjohncancerinstitute.org), gets between 250,000 and 300,000 hits each month. (§ 2)

The institute pays from \$0.10 to \$0.17 each time one of its Internet advertisements is clicked. Angelo is sticking with PPC, “which he said is necessary ‘for any hope of being found’ [on the Internet], because the organization can only afford to pay pennies for keywords” (§ 28).

Montuori (2003) also talked about the competition for keywords that would benefit a nonprofit that accepted donations of cars. In this example, it is clear that keyword bidding can get quite expensive.

In late September, Cordova, California–based America’s Car Donation Charity Center, ranked first in [www.overture.com](http://www.overture.com) [now Yahoo!] for paying \$17.21 per click for “car donations,” while Charity Cars Inc. in Longwood, Florida, and Cars 4 Causes in Oxnard, California, tied for second when they each paid \$17.20 per click. Children’s Cancer Fund of America in Knoxville, Tennessee, came in third because it paid \$15.50 per click for the same term. (§ 21)

Grappone and Couzin (2006) mentioned that nonprofits may have some internal issues stopping them from a successful SEO plan. They talked about an overworked and underpaid workforce, a lack of funding, and a lack of a clear bottom line to evaluate an organization’s efforts. They noted that a small nonprofit may not even have a marketing person to manage the content of its Web site. However, they pointed out one advantage nonprofits have over for-profit organizations when it comes to pay-per-click advertising:

Many nonprofits think that there is no way that they can survive in the competitive world of paid listings. It's very possible that the keywords that matter most to you are not the same words that commercial organizations are vying for. After all, nobody's out there selling "AIDS in China." Even better, both Google and Yahoo! offer free advertising programs for nonprofits. (Grappone & Couzin, 2006, p. 35)

Mangalindan (2003) detailed the Austin Music Foundation's use of PPC in its marketing campaign. The Austin Music Foundation helps musicians learn what it takes to build a sustainable career. Colin Kendrick, the executive director, wanted to increase the foundation's membership, so he started an ad campaign on Yahoo! and MSN. He bid on the following keywords: "Texas music," "Austin music," and "nonprofit music" and won the top spot for each listing, paying \$0.10 to \$0.35 per click. He saw an immediate increase in Web traffic. In four months the foundation's membership grew from 800 to 1,400. Kendrick said:

In the fourth quarter of 2002, 6% of all the people who clicked on the foundation's ad signed up as members. That is at least twice the conversion rate many marketers expect from direct mail. The cost? An average of \$20 a month for eight months. (¶ 16)

Google and Yahoo! also offer something called contextual advertising. This form of advertising uses yet another algorithm to place an organization's ads on partner Web sites that have similar content. Using contextual advertising allows an organization's pay-per-click (PPC) advertisements to show up on thousands of smaller sites. Yahoo! calls its contextual advertising program Content Match. If an organization opts in for this service, its PPC ads will show up on major Yahoo! partnership sites such as CNN.com as well as

many smaller sites. Google calls its contextual program AdSense, and it will show PPC ad on Google, AOL.com, ask.com, shopping.com, and thousands of smaller sites. What these ads mean is that if, for example, a nonprofit that helps the elderly has a Web site and an advertiser dealing with the elderly has signed up for contextual ads, their PPC advertisement may appear on the first nonprofit's Web site (Grappone & Couzin, 2006).

When researching PPC strategies for nonprofits, Google Grants need to be taken into consideration because the program rules may change the direction of a PPC plan. Google Grants can help nonprofits pay for Google AdWords advertising. "The program is designed to help organizations extend their public service messages to the global audience, in an effort to make a greater impact on the world" (Google, 2008, ¶ 1). Grant recipients receive at least three months of advertising through Google AdWords, with a per-month spending cap of \$10,000. Sheryl Sandberg, Google vice president of global online sales and operations, said, "When we thought about what we could give back, what we obviously do is search and advertising, and it would be a great opportunity for us to refer people interested in the topics that these non-profits work on" (Kerner, 2004, ¶ 3). Graham (2005) quoted Sandberg: "Google has given away \$33 million in free advertising to 850 non-profits in the last two years. We don't see any limit to this. We want to keep it growing" (¶ 7).

"The Google Grants program supports organizations sharing our philosophy of community service, and with a strong mission to help the world in areas such as science and technology, education, global public health, the environment, youth advocacy, and the arts" (Google, 2000, ¶ 3). Organizations that are not eligible include groups that are already participating in the AdWords program. Also not eligible are organizations that are religious or political in nature, including those groups focused primarily on lobbying

for political or policy change. The Google Web site lists three award recipients and the results they have achieved:

Room to Read, which educates children in Vietnam, Nepal, India and Cambodia, attracted a sponsor who clicked on its AdWords ad. He has donated funds to support the education of 25 girls for the next 10 years.

The US Fund for UNICEF's e-commerce site, Shop UNICEF, has experienced a 43 percent increase in sales over the previous year.

CoachArt, supporting children with life-threatening illnesses through art and athletics programs, has seen a 60 to 70 percent increase in volunteers.

(Google, 2008, ¶ 6)

Satterfield (2006) described another nonprofit taking advantage of Google Grants, the Literacy Center Education Network, an organization that provides free online literacy lessons to help parents and teachers educate their children. The organization has seen a marked increase in Web site traffic since starting the program in 2005. According to founder and CEO Linda Hahner, more than 125,000 people have clicked the organization's Google ad, which has helped increase its outreach. According to Hahner, "The process was surprisingly efficient and extremely egalitarian" (¶ 6). She goes on to praise the Google Grants support staff for helping the Literacy Center find the keywords they would use in their campaign: "Their team must have played with our lessons before suggesting words for our AdWords Campaign, because the keywords they suggested—'Learn To Read', and so on—were spot on" (¶ 33).

The Sunlight Foundation develops and deploys Internet technologies to make information about Congress and the federal government more accessible to the American public. They received a Google Grant. When someone is using Google to search for

keywords such as “open government” or “ethics reform,” Sunlight’s text-based advertisements appear alongside or above Google search results. Executive Director Ellen Miller had this to say about the grant they received: “We expect this grant will strengthen our ability to connect citizens to tools Sunlight created to effectively watchdog Congress” (Schneider, 2007, ¶ 2).

Graham (2005) pointed out a few examples of nonprofits taking advantage of Google Grants. For example, in 2003 Ray Rickman, the director of a nonprofit called AdoptADoctor.org, decided to put up a Web site to attract donors to his cause. He was raising money to pay doctors to treat people in Africa and Asia. Before he signed up for Google Grants, he was averaging two visitors a day and one donation per week. After signing up for Google Grants, he started averaging 300 visitors per day and 25 donations weekly. Rickman said, “[Donations came in] from all over the world . . . Substantial money, like \$5,000 or \$8,000 a pop, from people who just found us on the Internet, thanks to Google” (¶ 4).

Graham (2005) also referred to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, which raised \$14 million in 2004 from direct mail. Graham quoted Zachary Stahmer as saying, “Google is more effective [than direct mail]. Direct mail gets a 2% to 3% response rate compared to 6% online” (¶ 21).

Graham’s (2005) final example was that of a Los Angeles shelter for abused and homeless teens. The executive director, David Brinkman, uses his Web site not only to raise funds but also to help kids find his site and reach out when they are at their lowest ebb. Brinkman says, “When you have a kid contemplating whether they’re going to continue to live on, and they’re on the Internet, trying to find a connection, and they can find our number, well, that’s very moving” (¶ 25).

ASAP Africa works on projects that share knowledge and skills with communities in southern Africa. In a press release listed on their Web site, the organization's leaders said they were thrilled to have been chosen for a Google Grant because it would help get the word out about the project they were implementing to eliminate poverty in rural Zimbabwe.

When you type in some keywords such as Zimbabwe charity, ASAP Africa will appear in your sponsored links on the right side of the page. This promotes the awareness of our organization and makes it much easier to become an active member of our team. (ASAP Africa, 2007, ¶ 2)

Kerner (2004) described a few other nonprofits that are using Google Grants. The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society has had a significant upsurge in visits to its Web site. Spokesperson Sara Krynitzki was quoted, "Because it has increased our Web site traffic, it has been working to improve our name recognition. We consider it more of a communication tool than a fundraising tool" (¶ 6). Kerner also quoted Jason Willet, director of communications at VolunteerMatch.org: "Since October, nearly 35 percent of our traffic has come directly from the VolunteerMatch ads on Google" (¶ 8).

America's Second Harvest also has used Google Grants. It runs an AdWords ad that reads, "Create a hunger-free America. Your donation will help feed millions." According to Gabriela Fitz, the online strategist/project manager for America's Second Harvest, Google Grants referred 12,000 visits in December 2003 alone. Fitz was quoted as saying, "Google has consistently been our largest referrer. We've seen it in a lot of places where people come to us and say, we found you through a Google ad" (Kerner, 2004, ¶ 10).



There are many accolades for Google Grants, but one article did point out some drawbacks. Linnell (2007) pointed out that one drawback of Google Grants is that advertisements will only be seen on Google. Google supplies advertisements for many affiliates, such as AOL.com and ask.com, but advertisements using Google Grants would not be seen in those results. He also noted that with Google Grants an organization is limited to bidding only up to \$1 for keywords; but some keywords will require a higher bid to compete for top listings. He recommended a strategy of using both Google AdWords and Google Grants—and knowing when to pay with one or the other—for optimal results that are the most cost-effective.

Graham (2005) pointed out another drawback of Google Grants: The program is open only to nonreligious and nonpolitical groups. Graham quoted Google's vice president of global online sales: "We want to be fair and unbiased in everything we do" (¶ 16). That stance means that groups such as Amnesty International, the Sierra Club, Greenpeace, and Catholic Relief Services do not qualify. Graham quoted Pat Tillman, the director of marketing at Catholic Relief Services: "It's not fair. We help on the basis of need, not creed" (¶ 16).

If an organization's business is primarily local and not nationwide, it may not want to pay for advertising outside a desired local area. Local PPC advertising, a trend that matured significantly through 2006, allows an advertiser to target PPC campaigns to the local market. A June 2006 report by the Kelsey Group found that 54% of search engine users have substituted Internet search for the phone book. Given the growing influence of local search, many search engines have at the very least introduced a geographical targeting option into their PPC programs. Other search engines have added a local search component to the engine itself (Mordkovich & Mordkovich, 2007).

Local PPC ads are the same as standard PPC ads except they can be targeted to specific countries, states, or most importantly, cities (Marshall & Todd, 2007). PPC advertisers purchase general-purpose keywords that only show up for users in the locations they specify (Moran & Hunt, 2006). “Many businesses have become disillusioned with organic search results. They have found that PPC is a reliable option for their ad dollars, and adding the local touch is the icing on the cake” (Mordkovich & Mordkovich, 2007, p. 90).

### *Nonprofit Marketing*

The research indicated that there are an increasing number of nonprofits competing for support; this emphasizes the need for a sound marketing plan.

In the late 1940s there were a few thousand nonprofits; today there are nearly a million and a half. Since the mid-1990s the number of nonprofit organizations has been growing at about 5 percent per year, more than twice the growth rate of the private sector. (Anderson, 2006, p. 88)

The subject of marketing and goals was a central theme in the literature about how to increase traffic to a nonprofit’s Web site. “Many of us [nonprofits] may wish marketing were not necessary. . . . Why should we have to do this [marketing] when our cause is so worthy?” (Anderson, 2006, p. 5). Anderson explained:

Marketing requires us to think more dispassionately than we often do. It requires us to orient ourselves not according to our mission and our convictions, but according to the perspective of our audiences, the actions of our competitors, and the reality of our marketplace. We have to go from being inward-looking to being outward-minded, switching from the perspective of “what you should do for me because it’s right” to “here is what I can do for you.” (p. 5)

The present research centers around getting more people to an organization's Web site. Anderson (2006) argued that organizations need to make sure they have the right message when people arrive. "If we can't make a compelling case that prompts people to act, then we have failed to make a difference and wasted valuable time, effort, and, often, donor and taxpayer dollars" (p. 9).

Kerner (2004) described the problem of generating traffic to a nonprofit Web site: Generating awareness and driving Web site traffic can be financially draining for any organization. The challenge is even greater for non-profits, which often limit marketing expenditures to ensure more money and resources are directed to the causes they represent. (¶ 1)

Grappone and Couzin (2006) emphasized the need to make sure a SEM plan directs people not only to an organization's Web site but also to a specific page of that Web site. They used the example of ElderPets, a nonprofit organization that provides meals, walks, and veterinary assistance to animals belonging to elderly owners. ElderPets had an SEO goal to increase online donations. Grappone and Couzin advised thinking backward, first determining where a visitor should end up and then finding a great page at which to start that visitor off. So, instead of using SEO to drive traffic to the ElderPets home page, they advised driving traffic to a page called Dogs in Need, which had a compelling message. The Dogs in Need page is called a landing page, and its main function is to speak to the desired audience and to contain a call to action. ElderPets' desired audience was pet lovers with surplus income, and the call to action was to make a donation on their Donate Now page.

Maintaining SEO efforts relies on tracking results and monitoring what works and what does not. If an organization's goals are not monetary, it can create other goals:

newsletter signups, filling out a form, or even visitors requesting additional information. To monitor the progress of SEO efforts, an organization should know where its Web site appears in search rankings before beginning SEO efforts. This can be done by searching for an organization daily over a period of time, using multiple keywords on various search engines. If an organization is using this method of analyzing historical success, it will need to know where the site appeared before the SEO efforts were implemented.

Baseline statistics also should be collected before beginning to implement SEO strategies. Record the number of visitors to the Web site. This number can be used to measure results after the SEO program has been started. If the numbers are not improving, something may have been done incorrectly, or there may be some other factor that needs to be adjusted. Additional statistics programs, which can be found online for free, can be used to track performance on additional statistics such as page views, unique visitors, and keywords used by search engines (Ledford, 2008).

Grappone and Couzin (2006) noted that the world of search is always changing, and an organization's SEO plan will need to change with it. "Technological changes in personalization, local search, demographic targeting, synonym recognition, keyword categories, and so on will require constant adjustment" (p. 278). They also pointed out that with good SEO habits in place and a strategy for continued learning, an organization should be able to ride the waves of change in search engine marketing.

The research was consistent in the need for a plan. Developing a sound SEO plan is a key factor in an organization's SEO success.

One of the greatest failings of many SEO plans, like all technology plans, is the lack of a clearly defined goal. The goal for your SEO plan should be built around

your business needs, and it's not something that every business requires.

(Ledford, 2008, p. 19)

## Chapter Three

### Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter presents conclusions drawn from the literature and identifies topics for future study.

#### *Conclusions*

The literature suggests that more research and benchmarking are needed to show actual examples of how nonprofits are using SEM techniques. Data is available about how for-profits are using SEM, but not enough information about nonprofit use. The literature did indicate that using SEO to increase organic listings while also employing PPC strategies is effective. The research pointed out that a combination of both would create immediate and long-term visibility for an organization's Web site.

Along with organic search and paid search, another method of achieving higher rankings is to list a Web site in directories. These directories differ slightly from standard listings because they are manually edited (Grappone & Couzin, 2006). Directories are lists of Web sites browsable by subject or by categories and subcategories (Ledford, 2008). Examples of these directories include Yahoo! Directory, the Open Directory Project, and smaller paid or niche directories.

The literature conflicted about the utility of entering a site into directories. Some of the material pointed out that directories had fallen out of prominence, going so far as to call them dinosaurs of the SEO era (Grappone & Couzin, 2006). Ledford (2008) pointed out that the more directories in which an organization's Web site is listed, the better it will perform in search results. She further went on to point out that steep fees may be required to get a Web site included in directories. Moran and Hunt (2006) pointed out challenges of directory listing, such as limited exposure, lack of responsiveness from

the actual directory personnel, and the fact that directory editors can make changes to a listing. Despite these challenges, they stated that “paid directory listings are among the best investments you can make” (p. 68).

Technology is improving rapidly. Statistics about Internet use are constantly changing, and finding the most recent data was challenging. Some of the literature reviewed from just five years ago is exceedingly out of date. This study will be useful for organizations wanting to improve traffic to their Web site, but the future of technology will surely change, just as it has done before.

At times there were so many different names for paid search that it was difficult to quote multiple passages, which used different terminology but were talking about the same thing. Paid search could also be called pay-per-click, paid inclusion, pay for placement, pay for performance, or cost-per-click (Mangalindin, 2003).

Some organizations will rank very high in search engine results simply based on their name and mission. These organizations would not need to enhance their online visibility because they can already be found. However, organizations that are competing with similar organizations could certainly use the increased online visibility and exposure that can be garnered through search engine marketing techniques.

#### *Recommendations for Further Study*

The literature pointed to a new form of online community called social networking. One question related to this capstone research is whether social networking or bookmarking can be used to improve traffic to a Web site. The literature mentioned popular social networking Web sites like MySpace, Facebook, and even Second Life, which have millions of registered users. There has been philanthropic activity on each of these sites. Grappone and Couzin (2006) asked whether social bookmarking systems and

“human intelligence” Web sites will eventually alter the search engine algorithm. They also wondered whether search eventually will become integrated with television, replacing television ads. YouTube has been attracting an enormous amount of popularity; how can a nonprofit take advantage of that technology to increase online visibility?

Further study might examine the ethics of purchasing competitor keywords. What are the legal and ethical ramifications resulting from buying keywords associated or possibly trademarked by another organization? Research also highlighted a need to find additional ways to benchmark and track the success of a nonprofit Web site.

### *Summary*

The study of search engine marketing techniques is increasingly important to the field of philanthropy. Web sites need to be found, not only to attract donors but also to help further the nonprofit’s mission. Nonprofits are no less capable than their dot-com counterparts of mastering these techniques through trial and error. In fact, SEM techniques make even more sense as a marketing tool for small nonprofits with more manpower than cash to invest in their marketing efforts (Dawkins, 2007).



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## Annotated Bibliography

Anderson, K. (2006). *Robin Hood marketing: Stealing corporate savvy to sell just causes*.

San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

The author is vice president of marketing at Network for Good, the Internet's leading charitable giving site. The text shows how a nonprofit can take marketing examples from the corporate world and apply them to nonprofits. Anderson helps put the research in perspective by describing the rapid increase in nonprofits. She also mirrored what others have written about increased competition for donations to nonprofits. The intended audience is nonprofit professionals and people who support a cause. Anderson supported other literature reviewed for this capstone research by stating that marketing efforts should be directed to the supporter. This work further enhanced the research by stating that nonprofits should look at their Web sites in reverse, meaning a nonprofit should look at their Web site through the eyes of a donor. Anderson also emphasizes the need to track marketing results so future marketing efforts can be changed or modified based on past results. To summarize she stated that even though an organization has a great cause, they still have to conduct marketing in this competitive market.

ASAP Africa. (2007, March 2). *Thank you Google Grants*. Retrieved December 12, 2007, from [http://www.asapafrika.org/2007\\_03\\_01\\_archive.html](http://www.asapafrika.org/2007_03_01_archive.html)

ASAP Africa works on projects that share knowledge and skills with communities in southern Africa. This article is important to the research in that it describes exactly how this organization used a Google Grant to purchase keywords to help people find them using the Google search engine. In developing a research question, the author of this capstone was not sure if there were examples of

nonprofits using SEM techniques. ASAP Africa and this article were one of the many specific examples of nonprofits cited to enhance the research question. This article provides specific proof that organizations are taking advantage of Google Grants. The researcher had contacted Google directly for a list of organizations receiving Google Grants. At the time of the research, Google did not provide that information; finding this organization's Web site and blog helped strengthen the research by giving specific examples of nonprofits that could be cited. The intended audience of this article is donors, prospects, constituents, and others looking to learn more about ASAP Africa.

Battelle, J. (2005). *The search: How Google and its rivals rewrote the rules of business and transformed our culture*. London: The Penguin Group.

John Battelle is a founding editor of *Wired* magazine and the *Industry Standard* as well as thestandard.com. The intended audience of the text is people interested in the history and future trends of search engines. This book was important to the research in that it was one of many books that helped create a chronology of search engines. Specifically the author details the inside story of Google's history. Although Battelle's work focuses specifically on Google, his research does include the other major competitors in the search engine market. There were a number of books and articles that had a timeline of the different milestones of search technology. Some authors had contrasting timelines. Battelle's work served as a central point of reference to the other historical timelines that were reviewed for this research. The scope of this text revealed the past, the present, and what could be the future of search engines technology.

Brinckerhoff, P. C. (2003). *Mission-based marketing*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

The author received his bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania and his master's degree in public health administration from Tulane. His books are used as core texts in over 70 graduate and undergraduate university programs in nonprofit management. The intended audience is nonprofit leaders seeking to make their organizations market driven in order to achieve their missions. This book added to the literature some real-world examples of nonprofit Web sites and details about competition in the nonprofit marketplace. Brinckerhoff had the specific example of a homeless man explaining to a shelter that he found them using the Internet. His work also echoed the point that most people are turning to the Internet as their first way of researching and contacting organizations. He also confirms that there is a significant need to make sure an organization's Web site is delivering the right message. He states that even organizations that are doing a great job can lose competitive standing if they do not use technology well.

comScore. (2007, December 21). *comScore releases November U.S. search engine rankings*. Retrieved January 10, 2008, from

<http://www.comscore.com/press/release.asp?press=1984>

comScore, Inc. is a global Internet information provider and a leader in measuring the digital world. In December 2007 it released its monthly comScore qSearch analysis of the search marketplace. Among core search engines in November 2007, Google Sites remained the top search property, with 5.9 billion core searches conducted. This is relevant to this research paper in that it shows the number of monthly Internet searches and allows a comparison of the top three

search engines. This search analysis corroborated other research conducted for this capstone paper in that it places Google as the dominant search engine. Search engine statistics are ever changing; this analysis was also important because it was conducted very close to the time this research paper was written.

Cortes, M., & Rafter, K. M. (2007). *Nonprofits & technology: Emerging research for usable knowledge*. Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books.

The authors explain how a nonprofit can make better use of today's rapidly changing information and communications technology. The book is recent, so the material is timely and relates to the research. Michael Cortes is the former director of the Institute for Nonprofit Organization Management at the University of San Francisco. Kevin Rafter is a research associate at the same institute. The intended audience is the nonprofit professional looking to make better use of today's rapidly changing information and communication technology. The authors point out that nonprofits can use technology to further their missions. But, they also address barriers that nonprofits face when they are trying to adopt new technologies. The text mirrored what other authors have said about how nonprofits lag behind in the adoption of technology when compared to for-profit organizations. They also wrote that measuring performance of a nonprofit is more difficult than a for-profit organization because the nonprofit is focusing on organizational effectiveness and performance compared to monetary gains.

Dawkins, N. (2007). *Nonprofits and search engine marketing: Myths and realities*.

Retrieved December 27, 2007, from

[http://www.sempo.org/learning\\_center/editorials/nonprofits\\_search](http://www.sempo.org/learning_center/editorials/nonprofits_search)



SEMPO is a global nonprofit organization serving the search engine marketing industry and marketing professionals engaged in it. The author, Nan Dawkins, draws on over 20 years of experience with nonprofits of all sizes, including some of the world's leading nonprofit brands. She is cofounder of RedBoots Consulting, an online marketing firm that helps nonprofit organizations drive new, qualified traffic to their sites, promote issues and causes, increase online donations, improve member/donor retention, and integrate online and conventional media campaigns. This was important to the literature in that it discussed the myths and realities of nonprofits and search engine marketing. During the research phase of this paper, requests were sent to a number of search engine marketing professionals seeking information about nonprofit use of SEM. On more than one occasion the research pointed to Nan Dawkins website. During this capstone research, there was very little written on nonprofits adopting SEM techniques. Dawkins research was not only timely and specific, but it also corroborated the other limited information about nonprofit adoption of SEM techniques.

Drucker, P. F. (1990). *Managing the non-profit organization*. New York: HarperCollins Publishing.

The author Peter F. Drucker is acknowledged as the father of modern management. The intended audience is nonprofit management professionals. This text has great examples of how nonprofits differ from for-profit corporations. He emphasizes that a nonprofit is selling a concept which is much harder than a for-profit selling a product. That theme was ever present in this research. Published in 1990, this text is still highly relevant. A message present in this text that supports

the research is that a nonprofit must continue to improve or they will fail. He maintains that it may be unpopular to seek or to question a successful organization, what they could do better. He further states that if a nonprofit does not improve, they will go downhill pretty fast. Those points mirror what the research indicated as to the lag of nonprofits in the adoption of technology compared to for-profits. With the increasing number of nonprofits competing in the marketplace, Drucker's advice is sound.

Google. (2008). *Google Grants*. Retrieved January 17, 2008, from

<http://www.google.com/grants>

At the time of this research, Google was the dominant search engine. They have created Google Grants to provide free PPC advertising to various charitable organizations. The program is designed to help organizations extend their public service messages to a global audience, in an effort to make a greater impact on the world. Google also lists a few nonprofits that have had success with the program.

A list of nonprofits using Google Grants but was requested but declined.

However, Google did advise that in the future they may publish that list. The research indicated that if a nonprofit was engaged in SEM techniques and met the criteria for Google Grants, they could gain increased exposure for their nonprofit on Google. Although this would benefit many organizations, Google does exclude religious and political organizations. Also it should be noted that if a nonprofit organization is already using Google AdSense, they are also not eligible.

Graham, J. (2005, December 12). *Google gives non-profits a free ride to donors*.

Retrieved December 19, 2007, from

[http://www.usatoday.com/money/industries/technology/2005-12-26-google-grants-usat\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/money/industries/technology/2005-12-26-google-grants-usat_x.htm)

This article helped support the research by listing specific nonprofits that were using Google grants. This was important to the research because Google does not provide that information. Not only does the article support the research, some of the examples were quite interesting. Using Google grants, one nonprofit went from a few Web site visitors a month to three hundred a day. That same nonprofit has increased its donations from one per week to 25 per week. That example is a dramatic response to SEM and helps illuminate the fact that SEM is a viable marketing choice. Graham does reiterate a main problem of Google grants is that they will give free ad space only to non-religious and non-political groups. Included in this article was an interesting statistic comparing return on investment for direct mail and online advertising costs.

Grappone, J., & Couzin, G. (2006). *Search engine optimization: An hour a day*.

Indianapolis, IN: Wiley Publishing.

Jennifer Grappone has been focusing exclusively on SEO since 2000. Gradiva Couzin has been working on SEO since 1998. The intended audience is the beginner-level search engine marketer. Using a day-by-day, step-by-step approach, they cover search engine marketing quite thoroughly compared to other sources in this research. This text not only offers information pertinent to SEO but also has specific examples of nonprofits and the challenges they encountered with SEO. One of the challenges of this research paper was finding examples of nonprofits using SEO techniques. Not only did the authors provide specific examples to add to the research, they also corroborated other research by agreeing

that nonprofits could also thrive in the PPC advertising market. The authors also restated what many of the other sources suggested; the need to find specific ways to measure the success of a nonprofit marketing plan. Measuring success is difficult for a nonprofit because often the goals are not monetary.

Kerner, S. M. (2004, January 27). *Google grants non-profits a break*. Retrieved December 24, 2007, from <http://www.clickz.com/showPage.html?page=3303971>

The ClickZ Network is the largest resource of interactive marketing news, information, commentary, advice, opinion, research, and reference in the world, online or offline. This article was relevant to the research in that it detailed numerous examples of organizations using Google grants. Google does not currently provide information on what nonprofits are enrolled in the program. The examples in this article corroborate the research by listing specific organizations and the increased Web site visibility they achieved using Google grants. Kerner makes an excellent point by stating that nonprofits have a greater marketing challenge than for-profits because of smaller marketing budgets. She goes on to state that most money and resources at a nonprofit are directed to the causes they represent, not marketing efforts. Kerner does mention that at the time of her article, most of the Google grant recipients were approached by Google. The researcher would have to assume that as of today, many nonprofits have contacted Google directly about enrollment into the Google grants program.

Langville, A. N., & Meyer, C. D. (2006). *Google's PageRank and beyond: The science of search engine ranking*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Amy Langville is an assistant professor of mathematics at the College of Charleston. She studies mathematical algorithms for information retrieval and text

and data mining applications. Carl Meyer is professor of mathematics at North Carolina State University. In addition to information retrieval, his research areas include numerical analysis, linear algebra, and Markov chains. The text focused on the mathematical history of search engines. The book is directed toward the scientifically curious reader and the technical computational reader. Because the background of the authors is mathematical, this text provides the mathematical theory behind search engines. Compared to other articles cited in this research, this work was based more on how a search engine computed Web site rankings and quickly moved from the history of Google to the mathematical concepts. The text was useful for this research in that it helped detail the anatomy of the search engine and the early history of Google.

Ledford, J. L. (2008). *SEO: Search engine optimization bible*. Indianapolis, IN: Wiley Publishing.

The author has been a freelance business technology writer for more than 15 years. She has written over 750 articles, profiles, news stories, and reports. She also develops and teaches technology training courses for such companies as IBT Financial, Hewlett Packard, and CNET. Because search engine marketing is constantly evolving, a challenge of the research was finding up-to-date information. The text is very timely and discusses in detail search engine marketing techniques to increase Web site traffic. The text helped compile the anatomy and history of search engines. Ledford also noted the rise of social or viral marketing that other research had addressed. The work was valuable to the research in that it helped define vocabulary used in the SEM industry. The research indicated that social or viral marketing may be an area for future study.

Linnell, N. (2007, April 8). *Leveraging Google Grants for nonprofits*. Retrieved January 2, 2008, from <http://endlessplain.com/2007/08/08/leveraging-google-grants-for-nonprofits>

This article was taken from a blog. The author is the analytics and campaigns manager for Serengeti Communications. It is important to the research in that it is timely and discusses the challenges of nonprofit advertising. The author describes the benefits as well as the drawbacks of using Google Grants. The intended audience is nonprofit professionals seeking to increase the online visibility of their Web site using Google Grants. Graham does a good job summarizing eligibility, benefits, and drawbacks of using Google Grants. He reiterates other research by stating that a major challenge nonprofits have is how to spread the word about their organization with a limited marketing budget. The drawbacks of Google Grants he discusses include that an organization is limited to bidding only up to one dollar per keyword and that some keywords would cost much more than that. He also points out that if you participate in the Google grant program, your ads will only appear on Google and not any of their partner Web sites such as Ask.com or AOL. He concludes by stating that a nonprofit should not simply sign up for Google Grants without a specific and well thought out strategy for what they are trying to accomplish.

Mangalindan, M. (2003, June 16). *Playing the search-engine game*. Retrieved November 11, 2007, from [http://www.morevisibility.com/news/wsj-playing\\_the\\_searchengine\\_game.html](http://www.morevisibility.com/news/wsj-playing_the_searchengine_game.html)

Mangalindan is a staff reporter for *The Wall Street Journal's* San Francisco bureau. The intended audience is organizations that want to increase prospective customers through Web searches. Although it was published in 2003, this article shows a specific example of a nonprofit that successfully used search engine marketing techniques. This article provided valuable insight into tracking the success of a SEM campaign. The author shows statistics for the Austin Music Foundation. This article was important to the literature review in that it details specific results of search engine marketing. The author was able to show that the Austin Music Foundation has signed up as a member six percent of all the people who clicked on their Overture advertisement. Mangalindan also warns that using unscrupulous methods to improve Web site rankings may result in a Web site being eliminated from search results. That warning was a common theme throughout the research.

Marshall, P., & Todd, B. (2007). *Ultimate guide to Google AdWords*. Irvine, CA: Entrepreneur Media.

Perry Marshall is a leading specialist on buying search traffic. He has developed strategies that generate 500 million clicks per month for his clients. Bryan Todd is an international marketing consultant and a Google AdWords specialist. This text was important to the research in that it showed how to develop and test a Google AdWords campaign. The authors explained that it is easy to set up an account with a search engine and start spending money. They offered advice to avoid unnecessary spending. They corroborated the other research in the need for a specific marketing plan. The intended audience is people interested in learning how to enhance their Google AdWords PPC accounts and generate more Web site

traffic. Their work added to this capstone research insight and knowledge into keyword generation and advertisement development and testing. It also was a source for specific examples of how a nonprofit can utilize search engine marketing techniques.

McPherson, R. C. (2007). *Digital giving: How technology is changing charity*. Lincoln, NE: IUniverse.

The author founded McPherson and Associates in 1984. He has advised Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr., former president Jimmy Carter, the United Nations Environment for Europe Program, and leading nonprofit organizations in the United States and Europe. He is a faculty member of New York University's George H. Heyman Jr. Center for Philanthropy and Fundraising. The intended audience is nonprofit professionals wanting to use Web technology for building and managing relationships with donors. McPherson's book is technical in nature, but can be easily understood by a non-technical reader. The subject of the book is specific to how nonprofits can better use technology to achieve their organizations' goals, and his insight is recent and timely. The author recommends that to maximize its investment in technology and increase the relevance of its direct mail an organization should remove the inherent barriers between those departments. The author stated that to remove the barriers, there should be better communication between those responsible for Internet activity and those responsible for fund raising and direct mail. McPherson agreed with the other research on the need to test a SEM plan and then make adjustments based on the results.



Montuori, T. (2003, November 15). *Search engine strategies*. Retrieved December 29, 2007, from [http://www.nptimes.com/dme/Nov03/dme\\_1.html](http://www.nptimes.com/dme/Nov03/dme_1.html)

The *NonProfit Times* is the leading business publication for nonprofit management. The intended audience is nonprofit management embracing search engine marketing techniques. This article is important to the literature in that it details the A. P. John Institute for Cancer Research and how it has been using PPC with great success. The author explains how the institute received less than 25 calls after a radio advertisement; but after a PPC keyword campaign, their Web site gets over a quarter million hits per month. Montuori also gave examples of PPC strategies where keyword bidding had become excessive. Nonprofits soliciting donations of cars have paid upwards of \$15 per keyword. This article supports the argument that some nonprofits would not benefit from Google Grants because Google Grants limits the maximum keyword bid to one dollar.

Moran, M., & Hunt, B. (2006). *Search engine marketing, inc.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: IBM Press.

Mike Moran is an IBM distinguished engineer with more than 20 years experience in search technology. He developed the first linguistic search engine and holds four patents in search technology. He led IBM's original search marketing strategy and the integration of its site search technology. Because the authors had significant industry experience, the capstone researcher contacted them seeking guidance of specific nonprofits using SEM techniques. Moran responded by providing guidance and direction during the initial phase of the research. Bill Hunt is CEO and founder of Global Strategies International, and a pioneer in search engine marketing since early 1994. The intended audience is

Internet managers and others looking for a comprehensive guide for search engine marketing. The authors' work was a detailed guide to setting up and managing a search engine marketing program. The work was important to the research in providing definitions and clearly explaining how search marketing actually works.

Mordkovich, B., & Mordkovich, E. (2007). *Pay-per-click search engine marketing handbook*. Brooklyn, NY: MordComm, Inc.

The authors are cofounders of the Internet marketing firm MordComm, Inc. They have been involved in the online advertising industry since 1999. The authors combine their expertise with tips from 17 other PPC experts. The text was important to the research findings in that it helped show how a successful PPC campaign would be run. The intended audience is people wanting a thorough compilation of paid search strategies and search engine industry knowledge.

Many of the other sources cited in this capstone research concentrated on Google. These authors detailed all of the major search engines including Google, Yahoo!, MSN, and other search engines. They also incorporated statistical surveys that backed up their statements with evidence. One such survey detailed that most Internet users were unaware of the differences between organic and paid listings.

This work was also important to the research in that it helped to define concepts.

Oser, K. (2006, April 24). *Why you need search*. Retrieved January 10, 2008, from [http://adage.com/abstract.php?article\\_id=108777](http://adage.com/abstract.php?article_id=108777)

The author reported on the use of the Internet by U.S. consumers in 2006. This research shows how consumers decide which products they should buy. Oser's main point in the article is that most television marketing plans should also include a search engine marketing component. This research did not focus on

television advertising, but Oser does an excellent job describing how and why search engine marketing works. This article clearly explains how marketers integrate keyword search into their ad programs. Oser's article added to the research by detailing that once online, 80% of all Internet traffic begins at a search engine. Oser's statistics are extremely important to the research question because if an organization can increase its presence on search engines, they will also increase their overall Web site visibility. Oser further corroborated this capstone research in that he explains that just a minority of marketing plans include search engine marketing. Although his article is directed at the for-profit market, the capstone research suggests that his points would also be true of nonprofit organizations.

Pew Internet & American Life Project. (2007, June 15). *Latest trends*. Retrieved January 9, 2008, from <http://www.pewinternet.org/trends.asp>

The Pew Internet & American Life Project produces reports that explore the impact of the Internet on families, communities, work and home, daily life, education, health care, and civic and political life. In the Latest Trends section of this organization's Web site, there is an updated table showing the current demographics of Internet users. That data also included percentages of Internet users who engage in a given activity on a "typical day." When researching how to increase a nonprofit's online visibility, it was important to know the demographics of who was actually online.

Satterfield, B. (2006, August 11). *Search engines help nonprofits raise funds, get publicity*. Retrieved December 12, 2007, from <http://www.techsoup.org/learningcenter/funding/page5652.cfm>

One of the oldest and largest nonprofit technology assistance agencies, techsoup.org offers nonprofits a one-stop resource for their technology needs, providing free information, resources, and support. Satterfield is a staff writer for techsoup.org. The intended audience of this article is nonprofit professionals who are interested in how search engines can improve their organizations' online visibility. This article points out that nonprofits can use Google Grants to fund their PPC campaigns. It also gives a specific example of an organization that is using this program and the process of developing keywords. Because Google does not provide a list of nonprofits receiving Google grants, this article was important to the research in that it describes a specific nonprofit.

Schneider, G. (2007, September 18). *Google grant offers Sunlight free Web advertising.*

Retrieved December 12, 2007, from

<http://www.sunlightfoundation.com/node/3939>

The Sunlight Foundation supports, develops, and deploys new Internet technologies to make information about Congress and the federal government more accessible to the American people. The article is a press release for the Sunlight Foundation. This was important to the research in that it showed the exact keywords this organization was using to gain more visibility on the Google search engine. Schneider's work corroborated other examples that proved using PPC could enhance a nonprofit's online visibility.

Schneider, G. P., & Evans, J. (2003). *New perspectives on the Internet*. Boston: Course Technology.

Schneider is a Professor of Accounting and Information Systems at the University of San Diego. He has a Ph.D. in accounting from the University of Tennessee, and

a M.B.A. in accounting from Xavier University. Evans has edited over 30 books on programming languages, database concepts, SQL, Oracle, database applications, and electronic commerce. Because this work is a text book used at the college level, the intended audience is students seeking to gain in-depth knowledge of the Internet. This text was important to the research in that it defined parts of the HTML language used in creating Web pages. The research indicated that organic search was a large part of search engine marketing. A Web site creator or editor must understand the HTML language to be competitive in organic search rankings.

Sherman, C. (2007, February 8). *Search engine land*. Retrieved January 10, 2008, from <http://searchengineland.com/070208-095009.php>

The author, Chris Sherman, is executive editor of searchengineland.com and has written about search and search engines since 1994. Sherman holds a master's degree in interactive educational technology from Stanford University and a bachelor's degree in visual arts and communications from the University of California, San Diego. This article has some detailed statistics gathered from SEMPO's State of Search Engine Marketing survey. The most powerful statistic cited was the 62% increase in search engine advertising spending from 2005 to 2006. The trend in spending indicated the number of organizations that are competing for search engine rankings and supported the research question in that nonprofits need to include search engine marketing in their overall marketing strategies.

Sonnenreich, W. (1997). *A history of search engines*. Retrieved January 14, 2008, from <http://www.wiley.com/legacy/compbooks/sonnenreich/history.html>

Sonnenreich received a B.S. in Computer Science and Music from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He has written numerous articles on search engine marketing and network security. The purpose of this work, as clearly stated in the title, is the history of search engines. This text is relevant in that it summarized this history and pointed to the fact that search engines would soon become advertising Goliaths. There were many different opinions on the history of search engines and the major players involved. Sonnenreich helped the research by providing additional historical markers that could be compared with other references.

Underwood, L. (2008). *A brief history of search engines*. Retrieved January 14, 2008, from [http://www.webreference.com/authoring/search\\_history](http://www.webreference.com/authoring/search_history)

Underwood is the Managing Editor for WebDeveloper.com, ScriptSearch.com and DomainNotes.com. In addition, he serves as an Associate Editor for WebReference.com. The intended audience is anyone interested in the history and development of the Internet. This article included references that were needed to complete the history of the search engine, particularly the origins of the name Gopher and its uses related to search engine marketing.

Wallace, N. (2002, March 21). *Outlook for online donations is cloudy, experts say*. Retrieved December 12, 2007, from

<http://www.philanthropy.com/premium/articles/v14/i11/11002701.htm>

The *Chronicle of Philanthropy* is the newspaper of the nonprofit world. Nicole Wallace is a senior writer at the *Chronicle of Philanthropy* and has been reporting on nonprofit technology trends since 1999. The intended audience for this article is nonprofit leadership interested in the trends of online donations after the

September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Wallace corroborates other works cited in that a nonprofit needs to make sure that its fundraisers and technology staff have open lines of communication to ensure an optimal use of an organization's Web site for fundraising purposes. This article has an interesting statistic about the number of donors who used a search engine to find a nonprofit's Web site.

Wallace, N. (2003, June 12). *Online donations make gains*. Retrieved December 10, 2007, from

<http://www.philanthropy.com/premium/articles/v15/i17/17002001.htm>

The *Chronicle of Philanthropy* is the newspaper of the nonprofit world. Nicole Wallace is a senior writer at the *Chronicle of Philanthropy* and has been reporting on nonprofit technology trends since 1999. The intended audience are nonprofit professionals interested in online giving trends. This article was written in 2003 and reviews earlier adopters of online donation programs. The author makes a specific reference to an organization that has used paid search listings to drive traffic to its nonprofit Web site. This article reinforces the research question by specifically showing how a nonprofit can use SEM techniques to enhance its online visibility.

Wallace, N. (2007, September 6). *Many donors go online to learn about charities*.

Retrieved December 12, 2007, from

<http://www.philanthropy.com/premium/articles/v19/i22/22003301.htm>

The *Chronicle of Philanthropy* is the newspaper of the nonprofit world. Nicole Wallace is a senior writer at the *Chronicle of Philanthropy* and has been reporting on nonprofit technology trends since 1999. The intended audience of this article is the nonprofit professional seeking to understand the importance of a nonprofit

Web site. Of the three articles written by Wallace cited in this research, this is the most recent and is very relevant to the research in that it cites habits of Internet users. The author reveals some interesting facts about the importance of a nonprofit's Web site and how donors find nonprofit Web sites.

Warwick, M. (2000). *The five strategies for fundraising success*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

The author is a leading consultant, thinker, and practitioner in the field of fundraising. The intended audience is fundraising professionals seeking a comprehensive and easy to remember method for analyzing, planning, and evaluating an organization's fundraising strategy. Warwick had an excellent example about how to think strategically about fundraising costs with regards to an organization's Web site. For this research, his visibility strategy and information about benchmarking goals were most relevant.

Wikipedia. (2007). *Search engine marketing*. Retrieved December 12, 2007, from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search\\_engine\\_marketing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search_engine_marketing)

Wikipedia is a free online encyclopedia with a concise definition of search engine marketing and some relevant statistics about its growth.