



CLICK.CO.UK®

MAKING A BUSINESS CASE FOR SEARCH MARKETING



CONTENTS

3	INTRODUCTION
4	OBJECTION 1
6	OBJECTION 2
9	OBJECTION 3
12	OBJECTION 4
14	OBJECTION 5
17	OBJECTION 6
20	CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

While search marketing is now a far more accepted endeavour for the modern marketer than it has been in the past, for those CEOs and executives that are not digital natives, it can still seem a shadowy and suspicious practice. There are, however, plenty of marketing managers that assume digital marketing to be inferior to traditional marketing methods (print, television and mail).

Every year, as April comes and goes, we hear many of the same questions – as to how people can convince departmental heads or company leaders to allocate or increase budgets. This eBook aims to provide answers to common misunderstandings about search marketing from both types of search sceptics.

As with any marketing endeavour, it is important to have buy-in from senior management – and to set appropriate expectations to ensure the right budget allocations are made over suitable time periods and to be ready, willing and able to address any challenges that may present themselves ([we have plenty of resources for any such occasion](#)).

With all this in mind, the following should help you prepare for the more common objections when the time comes to pitch search marketing.

What is Organic Search (SEO)?

Search engine optimisation (SEO) is the digital marketing practice concerned with optimising html code, content and site structure for good performance and high visibility in search engine results pages (SERPs).

What is Paid Search (PPC)?

PPC (pay-per-click) is the model of internet marketing whereby businesses pay a fee every time one of their ads is clicked on by a potential customer. Placing a PPC advert that correlates with a specific search can help expose your offering to a relevant audience, driving highly targeted traffic to your website. This happens if the ad links to a fully optimised site, with unique well written content. If this is the case you should be able to climb the paid results on the search engine results pages (SERPs).

What is content marketing?

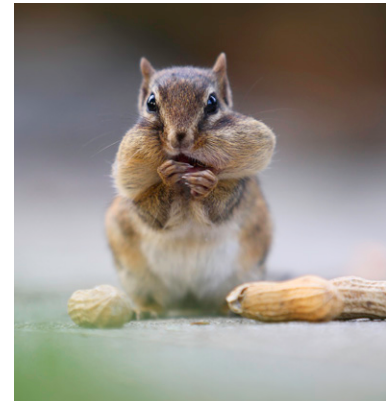
Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach involving the creation and sharing of materials – both online and offline – including blogs, videos, reports, whitepapers and social media posts among others with the intention of earning links, business and exposure and building consumer relationships.



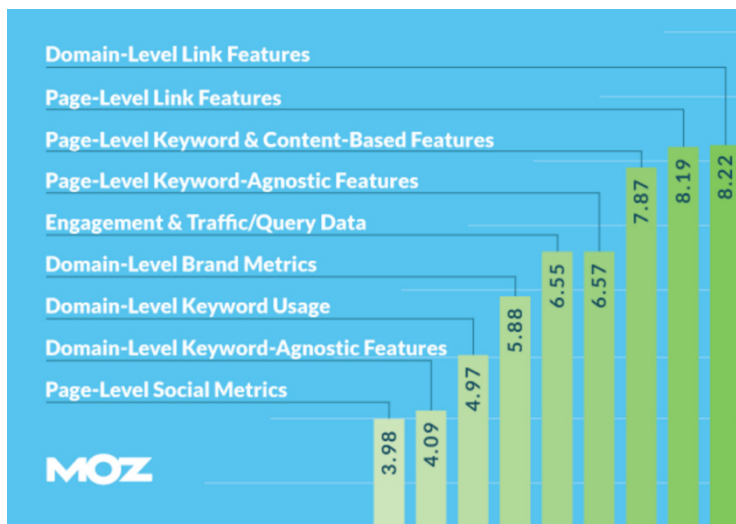
CAN'T YOU JUST PUT LOADS OF KEYWORDS IN?

THE SEO RESPONSE

Sadly, it's just not that simple anymore. While keyword stuffing or, more politely, over-optimisation of content, may have worked until relatively recently (at least as far back as 2010 when Google rolled out the [May Day update](#), before reinforcing its stance on low quality, thin or scraped content with the [Panda update in 2011](#)), any advantages gained using such tactics are likely to be short lived, and followed by a penalty.



In actual fact, there is a solid case to be made for creating a larger vocabulary of synonyms and long tail variations of important keywords for the brand – all of which takes time, research and work. While synonyms may be easy enough to come by, they need to remain sufficiently close to the target keyword to register with Google's attempts at [latent semantic indexing](#) (LSI).



Though it gets better all the time, Google's present vocabulary is far from complete – meaning that there should be a specific pool of synonyms and long tail variations which can be used to target important keywords when appropriate and natural to your brand's copy.

THE PPC RESPONSE

Keywords are great – but which keywords? Which level of the [buyer's journey](#) is related to each keyword and, therefore, how much budget should we allocate each to ensure that we are achieving the best return on marketing investment (ROMI) for our campaigns?

While keywords are tremendously important for PPC, they need to be [thoroughly researched](#), there needs to be lists of negative keywords to prevent irrelevant traffic and needless spend, they need to be correctly grouped into campaigns, by intention level and monitored, tested, split tested and more in order to ensure that the best returns are being earned.

THE CONTENT MARKETING RESPONSE

Absolutely – provided you want your content to be virtually unreadable and unshareable – it takes a lot of experience to write keyword rich copy that reads naturally. In order for content marketing to work, however, keyword stuffing and any overt attempts to game the search engine results pages (SERPs) should be avoided at all costs. Not only because of potential algorithmic or manual penalties, but because the primary aim of content marketing should be to earn engagement and build relationships.

Content produced cynically will fail far more often than it succeeds – and therefore, keywords need to be targeted naturally, with content produced that consumers can connect with on an emotional level, earning the links, the keyword rankings and the relationships in an organic and sustainable manner.

THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD





2. CAN'T YOU JUST BUY A FEW LINKS OR SPEND MORE TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE?

THE SEO RESPONSE

Buying links was never a great idea, but it was widely practiced – so much so that in 2012, only a year after the Panda update, Google introduced the industry to [Penguin](#). It was the Penguin algorithm's role to penalise sites that sought to game SERPs by engaging in practices such as link farming and the purchase of links from third party sites, link spam (in blog or article comment sections) and payment to bloggers for link placement.



While it is not impossible to use some of these techniques, successive iterations of the Penguin algorithm, and its later incorporation into the core algorithm, have increasingly clamped down on suspect link building techniques. It is vital for a brand to have a natural link profile (which will often show a heavy weighting toward lower domain authority (DA) sites, with fewer high DA sites – DA being a Moz calculated score of site quality) in order to avoid being penalised.



This means that – as Matt Cutts, Google's former Head of Webspam said - the aim is not to make your links appear natural, but instead that they should be natural.

THE PPC RESPONSE

While there's no real use for links in paid search (PPC) – beyond ensuring ads link to the right page – increased bids might help but, in all honesty, while bid accounts for a sizeable amount of an ad's position – it is not the only aspect taken into account when Google calculates an ad's position relative to the competition. In fact, there is a good deal of emphasis paid to the ad's quality.

[Ad Quality](#) – the score Google uses, consists of a number of different things: whether the ad uses extensions, its relevance to the search term, the relevance of the landing page to the search term, expected click through rate (CTR) historical cost-per-click (CPC) and more. For an ad or PPC campaign to compete against competition, having a large bid just isn't sufficient.

In fact, improving the Quality Score (QS) of an ad can actually save money, reducing the CPC for an ad and improve the ad's position.

	Maximum bid	Ad Quality	Total Score	Position	Cost per click
Company 1	£5/5 points	10	50 points	1	£3.60
Company 2	£7/7 points	3	21 points	3	£6
Company 3	£3/3 points	6	18 points	4	Min. price
Company 4	£9/9 point	4	36 points	2	£5.25

Illustrative approximation of AdRank scoring – see our [Beginner's Guide](#)

THE CONTENT MARKETING RESPONSE

If you're looking to spend money on links, content marketing is a good place to spend it – but not on links per se. Money spent on content marketing can definitely earn links for a brand, and the better the standard of content being produced, the more links it can earn.

The benefits of earning links are numerous however – it's not just about avoiding penalties. Good content marketing will not only enhance your link profile, it will also create conversations around the brand, earn trust through brand ambassadors and give consumers an understanding of the brand's personality and, therefore, build brand loyalty among your target demographic.





3. PEOPLE WILL FIND US WITHOUT IT - WE'RE ON THE TELLY/IN THE PAPER...

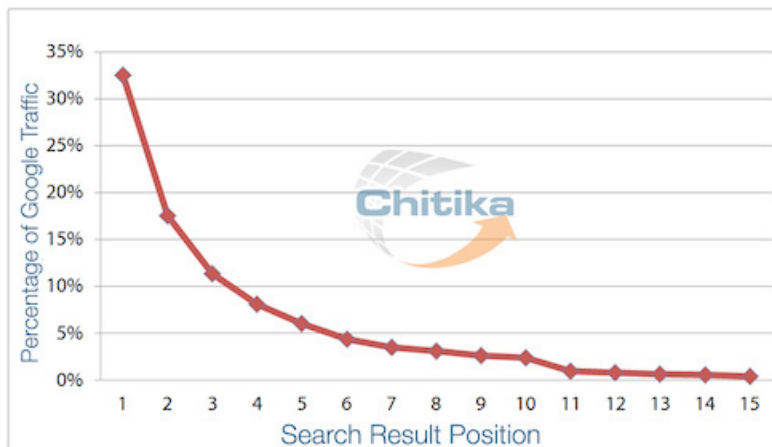
THE SEO RESPONSE

I'm sure they will, for now – at least the ones that still read newspapers and don't fast-forward through the ad breaks. If you don't have some kind of digital strategy in place, however, you'll likely be leaving money on the table while falling behind your competition.

Rankings are not likely to become more easily achievable – Google's business model requires that it delivers the best possible user experience (UX) and that means that quality guidelines become stricter as time goes by. Every day a brand neglects its online presence is a day it makes it harder to catch up in future.



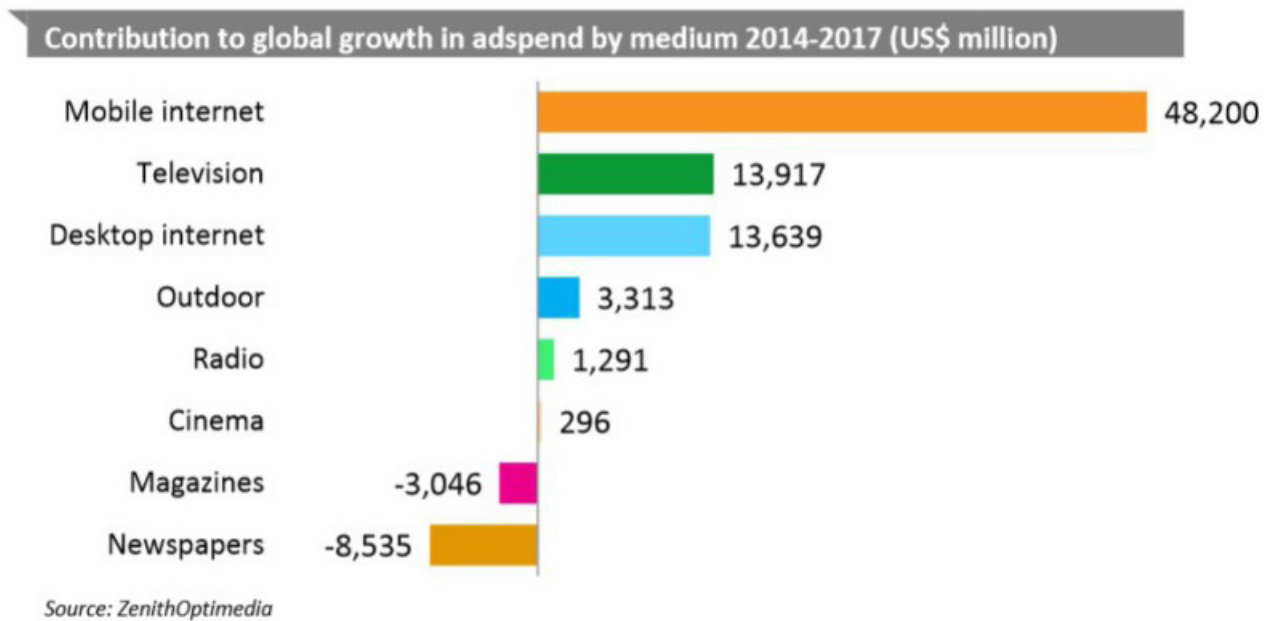
Percentage of Traffic by Google Results Position



THE PPC RESPONSE

As things stand, 2016 was the first year so far that digital ad spend has surpassed TV ad spend. According to Forbes, that leaves digital with a total of 36.8% share of total ad spend in the US. The UK and Europe are not far behind.

While traditional media is certainly a good target to reach certain demographics, they only reach those specific markets – whereas digital will most likely reach them and more. Virtually the entire UK now owns a smartphone and most of them will likely search for goods and services online.



There's a reason the trend is toward digital and away from physical mediums for advertising – and that is that it works.

While people may well find a brand on TV or in the paper, you could be massively limiting your audience and, therefore, possible revenue without a carefully considered PPC strategy.

THE CONTENT MARKETING RESPONSE

That's great, and the creatives we produce are sure to make a good impression – but how many people do you tend to show your newspaper to? One of the fantastic things about online content is how shareable it is.

If you can make someone laugh, or cry or feel any strong emotional response to content in a TV or newspaper advert, you'll reach that person – maybe they'll show it to someone in the next room. Online, that same person is likely to [share it with their entire network](#) – across a number of social media platforms.





CAN'T YOU JUST GET ONE OF THE TEAM TO DO IT FOR AN HOUR A WEEK?

THE SEO RESPONSE

It may be possible to ensure your site's meta tags are kept up to date with an hour a week, but to develop a fully formed strategy you need time – and not just time, but experience. While it may be cost effective to brief a member of your team to undertake a brand's SEO, even an hour a week would be wasted if they are not familiar with best practices.

The idea of having the work carried out in-house is not necessarily a bad one – but serious thought needs to be put into the results you want to achieve and the budget that can be allocated to achieving them.

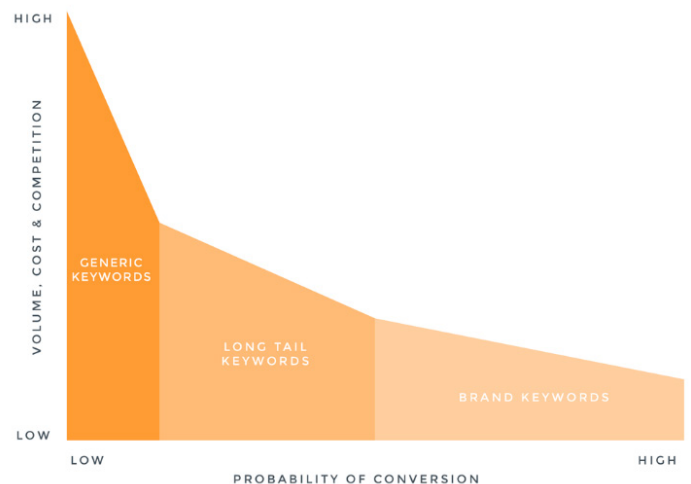
You need to have a clear idea of costs/benefits for your brand's needs and ambitions. Both [in-house and agency led SEO have their benefits](#), but whichever way you decide to go, expertise should always be the primary concern over time and money.

THE PPC RESPONSE

Provided you want your first PPC campaign to go live within a decade, you'll need more than an hour a week. The amount of research necessary to ensure your ads show for the right search terms would likely surprise the uninitiated.

While a successful PPC campaign need not be monitored 24 hours a day, the optimisation process could easily warrant a full time position.

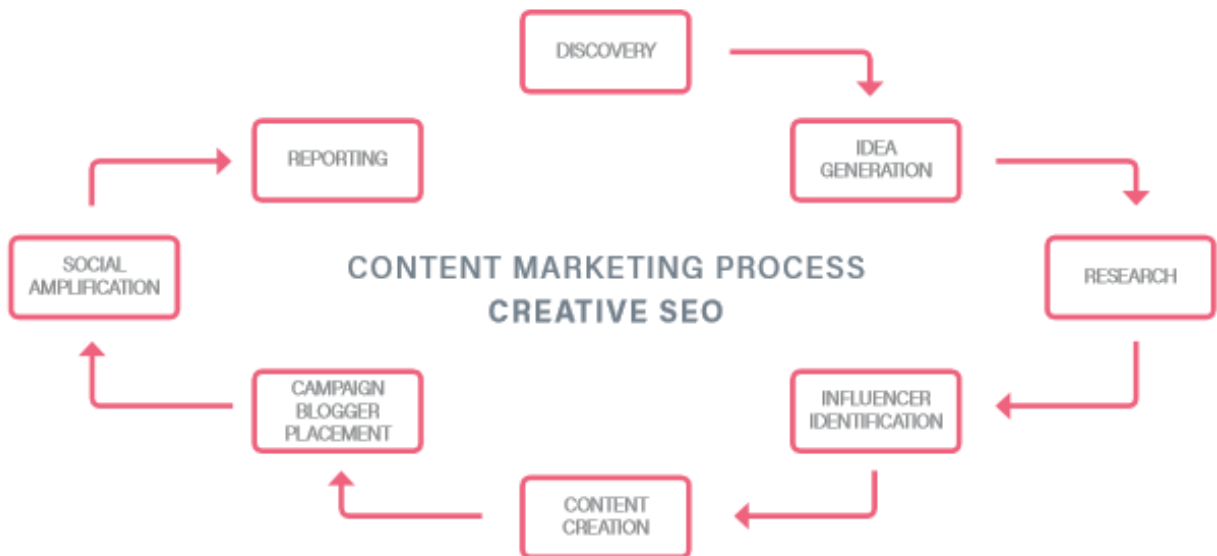
Again, the discussion should not be around how long a staff member should devote, but how much time you would require an expert for and whether you should look to outsource or hire for an in-house PPC professional.



THE CONTENT MARKETING RESPONSE

The effort required to develop a content marketing strategy and the high quality assets required to ensure its success are more than likely beyond the capability of a single person let alone in short bursts.

Ideally, content marketing would require a content writer, a designer, a proof-reader or editor, a social media manager and someone to manage the large number of publisher relationships necessary to ensure long-term success. As brands become increasingly search savvy, success becomes more difficult and, consequently, so too does [the work of a content marketer](#).



5.

WE'RE ON PAGE ONE ANYWAY, WE DON'T NEED IT

THE SEO RESPONSE

Fantastic – but while you rest on your laurels, you can be certain that competitors are not so content with the status quo. Regardless of how competitive the SERPs may be at the moment for your industry, they are only going to become more so. If you stand still, you will quickly be overtaken.

In fact, while your brand tops the SERPs may be among the best times to work on SEO strategy – as it gives you a solid base upon which to build. It allows you to target new keywords, refine your pages and carry out conversion rate optimisation (CRO) testing to ensure you're making the most of your position.



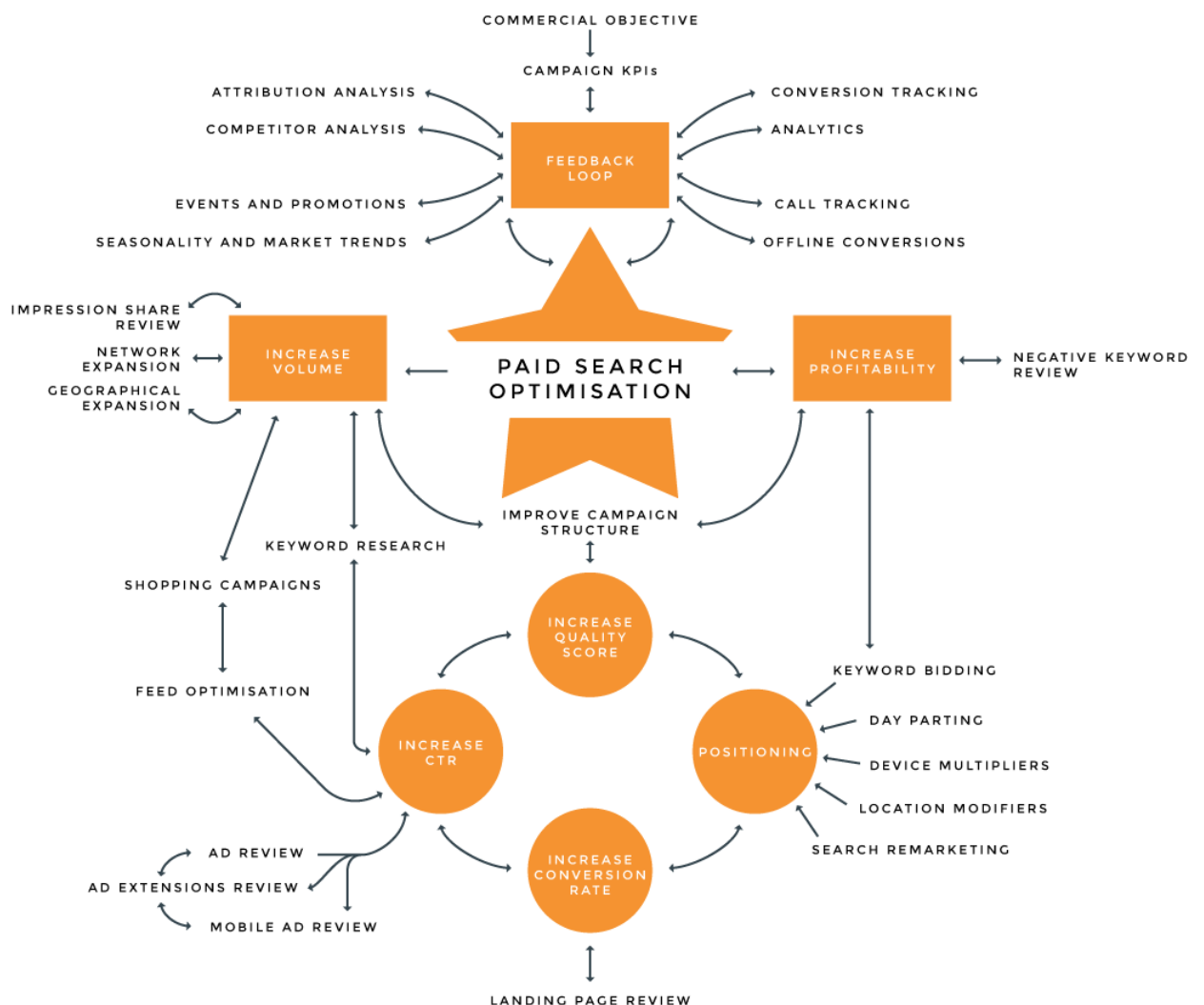
THE PPC RESPONSE

Having your ad on page one is all well and good – but what has to be considered is whether it's the right page one, for the right key terms, and whether the ad is achieving anything worthwhile. While appearing on page one is a fantastic start, it is by no means a place to stop.

A successful PPC campaign relies as much on optimisation as it does on position – if your ad is not optimised, you could be missing out on conversions, visibility and – most importantly – revenue.

Appearing on the first page of appropriate SERPs should be considered an achievement, certainly, but also as a starting place from where you can push on and ensure that you are achieving the best results possible and, of course, the best ROMI.

CLICK CONSULT'S OPTIMISATION PROCESS



THE CONTENT MARKETING RESPONSE

Page one gives a brand a great selling point to leverage to potential publishers and a position more easily capitalised upon to project thought leader and industry leader status. Not only can you offer your rankings as evidence that bloggers you work with will be cooperating with a reputable brand, but also that they will be associating with and, therefore positioning themselves, as industry leaders.

The key is then to use this position to grow the business, achieve position one and solidify the position while branching out and looking to broaden the range of key industry terms for which the brand rank. By increasing the scope of your content marketing, you can look to improve Domain Authority and your link profile – allowing you to be more competitive, increase traffic and build your brand and audience alike on the back of present successes.





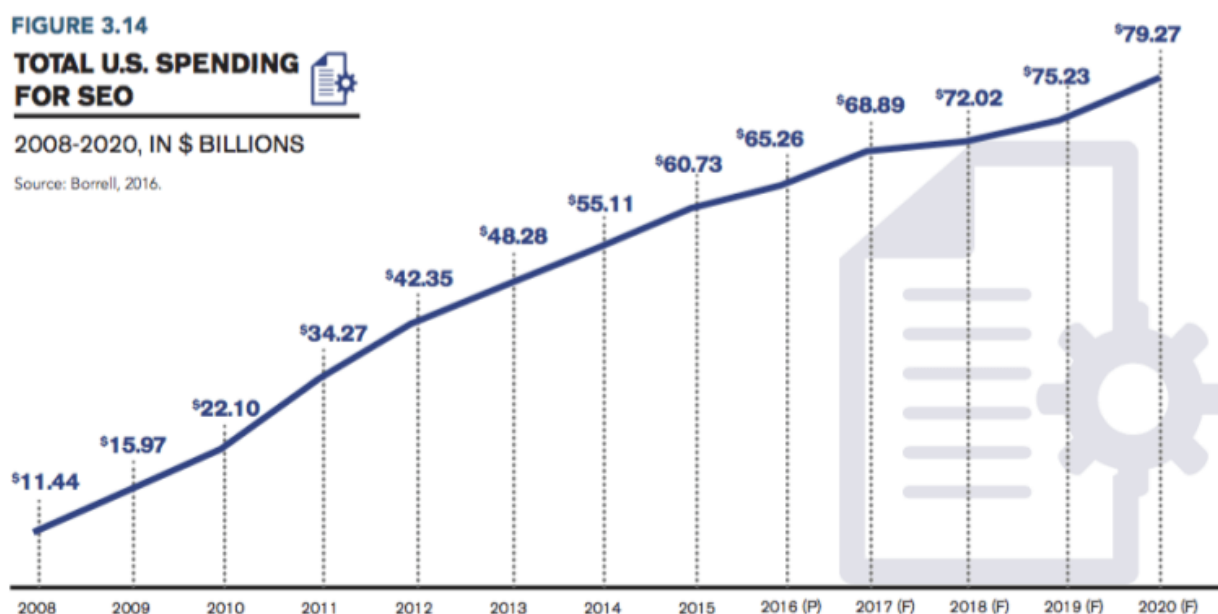
SOUNDS LIKE A LOT OF MONEY

THE SEO RESPONSE

It can be – and search marketing gets more expensive as the industry grows. There are reasons for that, however. As search marketing increasingly becomes a main constituent part of the marketing strategy of brands across industries, the competition becomes more intense even in niche markets.

Not only this, but the ever evolving Google algorithm also ensures that search marketing becomes increasingly specialised and complex – meaning that the time it requires to achieve similar results extends.

Semantic mark-up (the html code formats that serve as additional information to search engines) has gone from an afterthought to an endeavour vital to local search, shopping and – increasingly – appearance for any search query. It is not something you can place in the hands of Google Tag Manager and hope for the best; there has to be strategy to the mark-up. In fact, strategy is now vital across all aspects of SEO – from coding to sitemaps to menu structure, navigability, and keyword selection. SEO is no longer an arena for quick victories – it is investment in long-term success and sustainability.

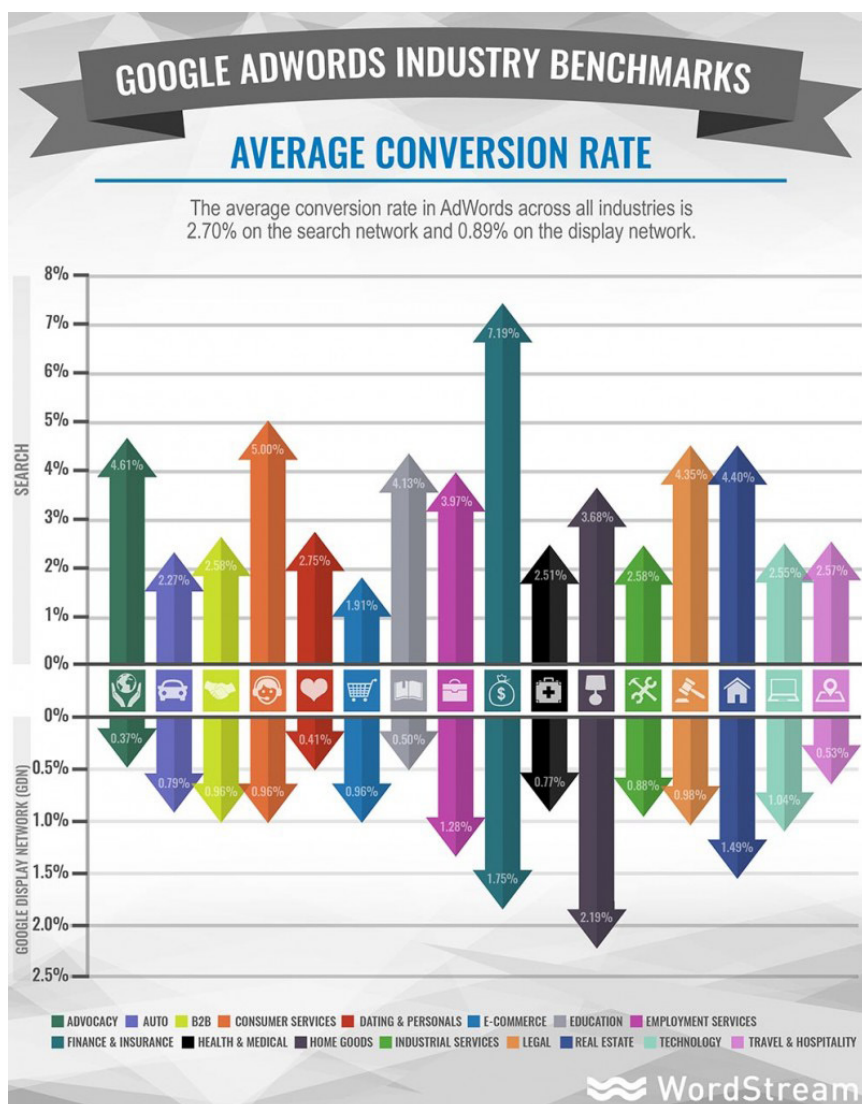


THE PPC RESPONSE

While PPC may cost more than it has in the past, it is also true that there has never been a better time to invest, nor has there been a time that could offer better ROI. The options available for [personalisation and targeting](#) are now so much more refined that, though CPC may be more than it has been in previous years (in certain industries), it is still possible to run efficient and high performing campaigns that deliver returns far in excess of most other marketing techniques.

In addition to this, there are ways to maintain performance while keeping costs manageable – methods which were not available in the past and which can offer refined targeting and better results.

All in all, while it may cost more to run a PPC campaign than in the past, the results achievable have also grown. PPC is one of the best ways to reach the right audience at the right time and PPC campaigns, if managed properly, will invariably return more than they cost to run.



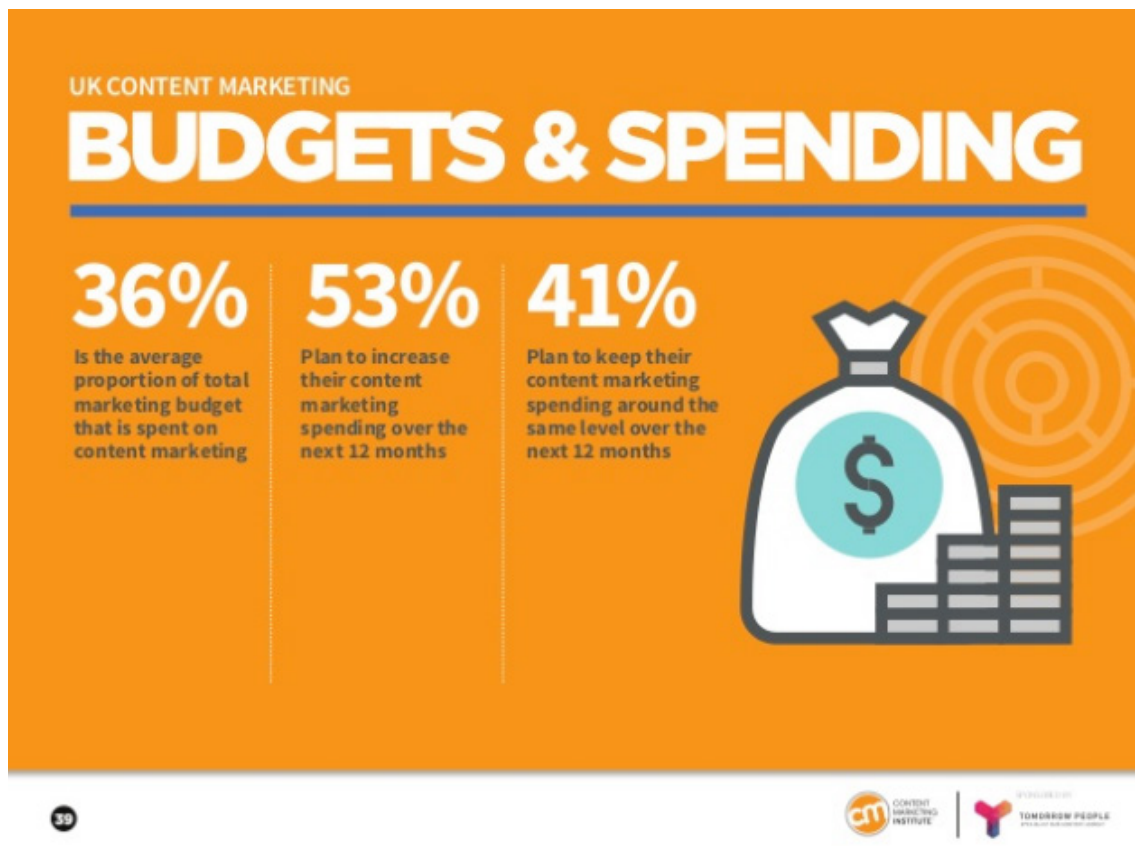
THE CONTENT MARKETING RESPONSE

This really depends on how you want to portray your brand – content marketing can cost as much or as little as a brand wants to spend, but results require quality and quality requires time and costs money.

For content marketing campaigns to be considered successful, they need to be shareable and inspire a reaction in your consumers and the publishers with whom you'll be looking to partner. While there are certainly low budget successes, these are few and far between – and with the Content Marketing Institute revealing that 79% of surveyed brands intended to create more content in 2017 than 2016, quality content has never been so important.

Content marketing is rapidly becoming one of the most important tools available to marketers – it is effective, it builds relationships, builds audiences and encourages brand loyalty. It is also competitive.

For this reason, while cost can sometimes seem prohibitive, content marketing should really be done well or not at all.



CONCLUSION

Now, more than ever, it's important for brands to excel across digital platforms and online marketing methods. While the death of physical retail has been overstated, there are digital elements important even to the least likely off-line brand interaction – with online searches and resources in-store ever more common for example.

As such, it is vital for brands that are not as yet present online to become so and for those that are to up their game or face being outperformed by their rivals. As such, these responses to common objections can serve as the first steps to real change for any brand.



GET IN TOUCH WITH US TODAY

ABOUT US

Click Consult is a multi-award winning search agency and winner of the FSB's Digital and Social Media Business Award 2016. Working with SMEs, we turn social media and content marketing into measurable returns on a brand's budget.

Our [website](#) features a comprehensive [resource](#) page, full of useful eBooks and actionable insights. We also write a [blog](#), where you can find an abundance of search marketing tips.

If you're feeling social, get in touch on [Google+](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

Find out how Click Consult can help you with all of your search marketing needs, call:

0845 205 0292



WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

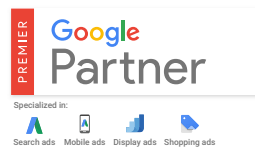
"From the outset of the project, Click Consult clearly understood our business objectives and formulated a search strategy that would help to deliver commercial results across key product areas. They have been professional in their approach, shown great attention to detail and the results achieved to date have been thoroughly impressive. We are looking forward to a successful future partnership."

LloydsPharmacy Online Doctor

"Click have really stepped up to the plate when it comes to performance marketing, their tenacity and desire to help us as a company improve is second to none. They're always offering up the best in cost per lead performance, which is seeing our ROI on digital marketing grow exponentially as our relationship goes on. Brilliant project planners, superb project delivery and results to boot, what more could you ask for?"

Adjustamatic Beds

OUR ACCREDITATIONS



OUR TECHNOLOGIES

monitor **TRAX**[™] rank **TRAX**[™] feed **TRAX**[™] link **TRAX**[™] pro **TRAX**[™]



EXPERTS IN SEARCH. SIMPLE.