

BENCHMARK

SEARCH CONFERENCE

2018

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A photograph of Ellie England, a woman with blonde hair, speaking into a microphone at a podium. The background is blurred with blue and purple stage lighting.

ELLIE ENGLAND

Sales Director, Bing Ads

LET'S DO AI - HOW ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS AMPLIFYING HUMAN AND ALSO MARKETING INGENUITY - TODAY

“*AI is not going to take over the world or replace human intelligence, even at its most powerful. Instead, it's helping us to live our lives better, achieve more and, as marketers, to create dramatically improved customer experiences*”

- Artificial intelligence (AI) already touches some form of your life every day. From smarter web searches to Netflix recommendations to voice assistants – AI is integrated into how you live, work, and communicate in the world
- Technology is only a tool – it's not about what technology can do, but what you can do with it. AI empowers us.
- A recent IBM study indicates that we create 2.5 quintillion bytes of data every day – and 90% of the world's data has been created in the last two years.
- Deep learning is an essential everyday tool that help make sense of the vast amount of data we create in real-time for actionable results.
- AI delivers marketing personalisation, automation and operational efficiencies that free up marketers to focus more on creativity.

A man with glasses and a beard, wearing a black t-shirt and a green lanyard, is speaking at a conference. Behind him is a large screen displaying the text "On The Tools" and "CONSTRUCTION".

LEE WILCOX

CEO, On The Tools

HOW TO GROW A NICHE AUDIENCE USING VIDEO CONTENT

“ People don't want to be sold to with video,
they want to be entertained ”

- To succeed with growing a social following:
 - Quality content
 - A niche audience
 - To stay on top of any algorithm/feature changes
- Know your audience - and your niche. On The Tools targeted construction workers who were engaged by the kind of humour they experience in that workplace.
- Regular visitors to niche websites are more likely to be very loyal.
- A tightly focused business that appeals to a small audience in a specific niche can be more rewarding (and indeed profitable) than more broadly focused sites that attract millions of readers.
- Content + relevancy = social media gold.
- Adapt your strategy as social platforms evolve.
- Some companies like Cisco predict that by the year 2021 almost 82% of all internet traffic will be video traffic.
- It is very clear that people want someone to both show them and tell them the information they're looking for, instead of having to read it.
- B2B doesn't need to be boring!



OMI SIDO

Senior Technical SEO, Canon Europe

TECHNICAL SEO ISN'T SUFFICIENT, BUT IT IS NECESSARY. THE CORRELATION BETWEEN TECHNICAL SEO AND RANKINGS

In my mind there is only one SEO and if you came to my company tomorrow for a job interview and told me that you are content only or technical only then you are not going to get the job

- Content is king but only when the Googlebot can see it - your content is useless without traffic.
- Getting rid of inactive, orphan pages can improve your ranking.
- Clearly define and optimise your category pages to ensure they rank well for specific keywords and avoid cannibalising your traffic.
- Migrating subdomains to the subdirectory can improve internal linking and user experience (UX).
- Accelerated Mobile Pages (AMP) are the web's first steps into the performance age and the early adopters of this Mobile-First strategy are benefiting.
- Internal linking is like football. The goalkeeper has to pass (link) to defenders, who must pass to midfielders, then to strikers and only then can they score a goal.

gandua

Rumor

iminal messaging

ADKSEARCHCON

BAS VAN DEN BELD

Digital Marketing Strategist, State of Digital

HOW YOUR AUDIENCE WILL BELIEVE ANYTHING – THE PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND THE FAKE NEWS

“All content is biased. It all has a background and purpose for existing”

- ‘White’ lies influence our lives from the start, from Santa Claus to fairy tales, then to movies and magic tricks. We’ve always been ‘fooled’ and been willing to be fooled.
- Fake news isn’t new - technology just helps it to reach more people.
- People act on what they remember. Details of memories get lost and we fill in the details that we miss based on what we’ve been taught.
- Why do people believe fake content? By evoking emotions (especially anger), reinforcing a memory and rationalising habits. You can argue that consumers are complicit - AI and VR will make it easier to propagate.
- People trust local news more than national news; this allows information to spread from the bottom up.
- People create fake content for three reasons: receive attention, push an agenda - or make money.
- Fake content falls into seven categories: parody, click bait, to discredit others, to mislead, imposter content, manipulated visuals and content that’s completely untrue.
- It’s difficult to change people’s habits and beliefs and prefer content that reinforces them.
- You can make fake news seem more ‘human’ and plausible. VR will make us question everything we see.



KRISTAL IRELAND

**Head of Ecommerce and Retail Technology,
London North Eastern Railway**

5 WEEKS TO MAKE IT – HOW TO KEEP YOUR COOL AND SWITCH A MAJOR BRAND ONLINE IN ONLY 5 WEEKS

“*When facing a challenge, get comfortable with chaos; concentrate on your minimum viable product (MVP) and work backwards.*”

- Earn your leadership every day.
- Acknowledge, accept and respect the emotional impact of change on your team.
- Get comfortable with chaos.
- Select, energise and cement your A team.
- Accept help... Even if it's painful.
- Be clear and consistent on MVP.
- Communicate to senior stakeholders what MVP is and manage expectations.
- Plan, plan and re-plan... also plan what happens if you fail (because you might).
- Don't sack your agencies - they are part of your team.
- Celebrate success at every opportunity.



DAVID KARELLEN

Head of Paid Search, Click Consult

MACHINE LEARNING: FRIEND OR FOE?

“Attitudes to machine learning in the paid media industry are polarised - fear or enthusiasm. We need to get the balance right to avoid missing opportunities”

- In PPC, machine learning allows automated bidding strategies and ad rotation settings.
- Look at ways of integrating machine learning with your own tools (or a third party's). Testing is key.
- Control and automation don't need to be mutually exclusive.
- Anyone with a good Excel knowledge can build these tools and can take them further with Scripts, but the philosophy of retaining control and transparency must remain at the heart.
- To make real gain over competitors you need to be able to uncover trends for yourself.
- Get actionable trends from your business data by analysing search term reports for word trends rather than whole terms to:
 - Inform what terms might be worthwhile to use, not just as keywords, but in ads, landing pages, and other channels such as email
 - Gain a competitive advantage by exploiting trends that aren't necessarily being examined by other advertisers
- Test high positive review products in higher positions, and look at how this impacts your bottom line (this isn't something that is considered by machine learning algorithms).
- Data-driven attribution uses machine learning to determine how best to attribute value in multi-step conversions. Don't cling to last-click PPC attribution.
- Automate menial tasks, but use human touch to make competitive gains and add creativity.

A photograph of Sabrina Garufi, a woman with dark hair, wearing a dark top and a green lanyard, speaking at a conference. She is gesturing with her hands. In the background, a large screen displays the word 'MARKSEARCH' vertically.


SABRINA GARUFI

Agency Development Manager, Google

MARKETING IN THE AGE OF ASSISTANCE

“The ways we connect, the way we buy, the way we watch, the way we shop, has changed forever thanks to mobile”

- In one internet minute, over 4M YouTube videos viewed, 3.5M Google Searches and approximately \$750 million USD spent through online shopping
- The shift to mobile is going to look small in comparison with the impact of machine learning.
- More than seven times as much data today as in 2010, and the challenge for everyone has been to use this data, to deliver insight, build brands, and drive action.
- Digital natives, the generation that have grown up with mobile phones and constant internet access are used to being part of the action and having more choice.
- Mobile optimisation is not just for B2C customers - B2B users are relying on mobile for decision making.
- Marketers need to:
 - Be there across your customer's purchase journey
 - Offer meaningful & relevant ad experiences at the right time
 - Deliver on customer needs & intent in real-time by leveraging automation
- Ocado uses Google Cloud and machine learning algorithms to modernise their approach to customer service.
- Consumers are changing and businesses are lagging behind. <50% of EMEA companies have a mobile-optimised site.

A portrait of Lukasz Zelezny, a man with long dark hair and a beard, wearing a black hat and a green patterned scarf. He is looking slightly to the right.

LUKASZ ZELEZNY

Director of Organic Performance, uSwitch

CONTENT OPTIMISATION AND SEO IN 2018 – HOW TO WIN THE GAME!



Use your competitors as a great source of data to find the path you need to take to improve your rankings



Find low hanging fruit:

- Use Google Search Console to find where you already rank and improve this ranking.
- Use AccuRanker to track keywords and pair them with the URLs.
- Export the data to give you the data you need to start on-page SEO: keywords, clicks, impressions, click rate, positions and URLs.
- Analyse 250 keywords a week for the optimum results.

Content gap analysis:

Use SEMrush to find out what content competitors are creating to rank for certain keywords, or what products they are offering that you aren't.

Link building with brand tracking:

- Use tools such as TalkWalker, Brand 24, Fresh Web Explorer and Google Alerts to track keywords.
- This allows you to find mentions of your brand name wherever it appears online and request a link back to your site.

WordPress plugins to try:

- OneSignal to send push notifications.
- WPA SEO Auto Linker, which allows you to build internal links between orphan pages.
- Smush image compressor to speed up image load time.
- Gonzales to optimise page speed.

A portrait of Nisha Ram, a woman with short dark hair, smiling and looking towards the camera. She is wearing a dark sleeveless top. The background is blurred, showing some vertical text and blue lighting.

NISHA RAM

Digital Content Strategist, Deloitte UK

CONTENT STRATEGY & SEO – IT'S A MATCH!



Social listening is great to understand brand risk and sentiment, but also the natural language that they use



- Research for content marketing goes beyond keywords:
 - Understand your target audience's online behaviour
 - Look at your existing insights
 - Use social listening
- Utilise social listening tools for more keyword and topic research as well as understanding user behaviour.
- Create video content and optimise it for search.
- Be strategic with your channels.
- Produce great content through thought leadership.
- Leverage your employees as your greatest ambassadors.
- Consider the value of voice search for B2B marketing.



JOHN WARNER

Marketing and Content Executive, Click Consult

STOP WASTING TIME! 5 STEPS TO AUTOMATE YOUR GOOGLE

“Design your reports to show someone who doesn’t understand what you do, how well you are doing”

There are five steps to automating your analytics reporting:

Gather your tools:

- Google sheets – Google’s answer to Excel.
- Google Analytics ‘add on’ – which will connect your sheet to your analytics account.
- Google Data Studio – Google’s data visualiser.

Start at the beginning:

- Identify what you need to measure and what you want to achieve.

Set up reports:

- Access the report wizards. Choose the metrics and dimensions carefully. Add filters, segments, limit and spreadsheet URL (if necessary).
- Look at both session level and page level metrics.
- Make sure you’re collecting the right data – avoiding vanity metrics – to communicate your results.

Create summaries:

- Use summary sheets, sumifs and other formulae to arrange your data ready for Data Studio (making sure your sheets are uniquely and recognisably named).

Import data to Data Studio:

- Import the data via the ‘Data Source’ option in Data Studio and use the wizard to create easy to understand charts and tables.

A photograph of Victoria Olsina, a woman with dark curly hair, wearing a dark blazer over a colorful patterned top. She is speaking at a conference, gesturing with her hands. The background is a stage with blue and orange lighting. The text 'tor' and 's.' are visible on the left edge of the image.

VICTORIA OLSINA

Search & Acquisition Manager, Barclays

PAGE SPEED POLITICS: BUILDING A BUSINESS CASE TO ACTUALLY GET IT DONE

“Outside the SEO team, page speed is not a priority. Your business stakeholders only care about: traffic; conversions; and profit. These should be your focus when making the business case for SEO”

- Measure your top 20 pages against your competitors', looking at 200 pages a week.
- You can use an API to monitor your site's speed and performance (involve a developer where possible).
- Use Tableau for data visualisation.
- Agree on the metrics that matter first and that make sense to commercial and technical stakeholders.
- Explain the commercial benefits of upgrading page speed in terms of traffic, conversions and income.
- According to Google what you should be measuring is:
 - Lighthouse index
 - Speed index
 - First contentful paint (when the first page content has been rendered)
- Engage a dev team to define resources needed, build a roadmap and timelines.
- Assign a commercial value to page speed improvements.
- Set up a performance team responsible for Page Speed that reports to the senior management on regular basis.
- Set up governance standards for page speed for new pages.
- Be willing to learn new things like JavaScript, Tableau, etc.



BEN IRONS

Digital Director, notonthehighstreet.com

IN A COMPLEX DIGITAL LANDSCAPE, ARE WE IN DANGER OF LOSING SIGHT OF OUR OBJECTIVES AND THE STRATEGIES WE NEED TO DEVELOP IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THESE?

Sometimes I think we're all guilty of being busy fools. We all want to be innovative but ultimately need to achieve results to drive our businesses forward

- Concentrate on the data you can actually use to make a difference to your campaigns. Where can we get it from and use it in our everyday campaigns to drive better performance.
- We don't spend enough time:
 - Reviewing previous performance and learning from mistakes
 - Evaluating the right customer targeting – use the data at our disposal and really critique and evaluate where we should be focusing our time.
 - Selecting the testing we want to do, properly creating hypothesis and considering if the end results change our view or the decisions we'd be taking as a result
 - Discussing what action to take instead of getting on with it
- How to build a framework for success:
 - Don't forget the basics, such clearly defining goals
 - Measure what's relevant
 - Ensure you're using your time well
 - Listen to the customer
 - The best strategies are the most simple



SHYAM DATTANI

Director Searchmetrics UK / FR, Searchmetrics

USER CENTRIC SEARCH – A DATA-DRIVEN STRATEGY WITH NO EXPIRATION DATE

“Think about the user, be the user, and figure out what they need to see in how and where they need to see it. Place the user at the heart of everything you do”

- There are two basic goals with SEO: earning high value traffic; and to provide a relevant user experience on your site.
- It's powerful to visit and review your own site as a customer's point of view.
- Amazon is successful because you can click and buy in about five seconds.
- 178,000,000 search results yields ten useful links and it's likely that only the top five will get traffic.
- Google wants to give people what they want, so your focus needs to be on users.
- Content is relevant when it provides answers to as many questions as possible. Be the content-salesman”
- How can we be user-centric?
 - Give users what they want
 - Identify weak points in your funnel
 - Identify how & where users are searching
 - Serve the content that meets 1 & 2
 - Copy what Google's already deems high quality and do it better

A photograph of Nick Wilsdon, a man with dark hair and a beard, smiling and speaking at a conference. He is wearing a blue and white striped shirt. In the background, a blue banner with the word "SEARCH" is visible.

NICK WILSDON

Search Product Owner, Vodafone

UNDERSTANDING ALEXA SKILLS: HOW TO ADD AMAZON'S MARKET-LEADING DEVICE INTO YOUR CURRENT AND FUTURE MARKETING STRATEGY

“A voice device strategy needs to compliment your other platforms and activity to add convenience and reduce friction for customers”

- The growth of voice-enabled speakers is comparable to that of early years of smartphone adoption.
- Amazon Alexa owns 70% of the US voice search market – and 75% of US households will have smart speakers by 2020.
- The top three uses are: asking a question; listening to streaming music; checking the weather.
- The language of Alexa: wake word (eg “hello Alexa”); starting phrase (eg “What’s”, “ask”); skill invocation name (eg a brand name), utterance eg natural, real word language (eg keywords that you’d use in traditional SEO).
- ‘Ask’ is the most popular starting term found in 28% of voice searches.
- Voice will resolve data management and access issues.
- Strategy points:
 - Voice search falls under the umbrella of above-the-line marketing – to drive interest
 - Align with featured snippets
 - Embrace podcasting audio opportunities
 - Improve customer experience by answering queries
 - Take inspiration from Ocado and Just Eat
 - Register your brand terms across voice platforms
 - Encourage customer/in-house developers to develop a basic skill



BERIAN REED

Freelance SEO Consultant

SEO - A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAM

“SEO is not a silo - SEO touches many parts of your business, from content design, marketing development, and data analytics. That message should be portrayed every day throughout your business”

- Broadly, a SEO team needs to focus on three core areas:
 - Content
 - Link building/digital PR
 - Technical SEO
- However, broader skills are required: stakeholder management; communication; and project management.
- Google's core messages to SEOs:
 - Make pages primarily for users, not for search engines
 - Don't deceive your users
 - Avoid tricks intended to improve search engine rankings
- Think about what makes your website unique, valuable, or engaging.
- Advantages of working with SEO agencies:
 - Access to latest technologies
 - Fluid talent pool
 - Ability to scale up / down
 - Global reach
- Tips for working with an agency:
 - Agree the SEO team at pitch stage
 - Align the agency with your SEO goals
 - Treat your agency as an extension of your team
- Align brand activity with SEO using: PR; online reputation management; and brand values.
- Invest in power SEO tools, such as SEMrush to track performance and spot opportunities.



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