Strategies, Tactics and Trends for
ORGANIC SEARCH & SOCIAL MEDIA
Survey Summary Report

Research Series Conducted in Partnership with Leading Providers of Marketing Technology and Digital Marketing Agency Services.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

3. Organic Search & Social Media
4. Primary Objectives
5. Strategic Success
6. Critical Challenges
7. How the Budget is Changing
8. Objectives Versus Challenges
9. Most Effective Tactics
10. Deployment Resources Used
11. Most Beneficial Results
12. Metrics Tracked
13. Ascend2 Research Partner Programs

Methodology

Ascend2 benchmarks the performance of marketing strategies, tactics and the technology that drives them with a standardized online questionnaire and a proprietary 3-Minute Survey format.

This survey was fielded to a panel of marketing influencers and marketing research subscribers.
There is no question that social shares linked to quality content on your website or blog will improve organic search rankings as well as traffic. SEO benefits from social media, and vice versa.

But what strategies and tactics will accomplish the desired result?

To help you answer this question, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded the Organic Search & Social Media Survey. We thank the 278 marketing influencers who responded to this survey during the week of week of February 17, 2019.

This Survey Summary Report, titled Organic Search & Social Media, represents the opinions of all the market segments responding to the survey. Specific market segments from the survey are reported on separately and exclusively by our participating Research Partners.

This research has been produced for your use. Put it to work in your own marketing strategy. Clip the charts and write about them in your blog or post them on social media. Please share this research credited as published.
Increasing the traffic to a website or blog, and improving the awareness of or preference for a brand, are the primary objectives for a majority (59% and 54% respectively) of marketing influencers to achieve with an organic search and social media strategy.

What are the PRIMARY OBJECTIVES for an organic search and social media strategy to achieve?

- Increasing traffic to website and/or blog: 59%
- Improving brand awareness/preference: 54%
- Improving prospect/customer engagement: 47%
- Increasing leads generated/converted: 46%
- Improving search & social metrics tracked: 29%
- Improving mobile-friendliness: 18%
- Improving the automation of processes: 12%
Nearly half (49%) of marketing influencers describe the success of their organic search and social media strategy as very successful, or best-in-class when compared to competitors, at achieving the primary objectives.
There are many challenges to the success of an organic search and social media strategy. Increasing leads generated or converted, and improving prospect or customer engagement, are near the top of the list for 46% and 44% of marketing influencers respectively.

### What are the most CRITICAL CHALLENGES to the success of an organic search and social media strategy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing traffic to website and/or blog</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing leads generated/converted</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving prospect/customer engagement</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving brand awareness/preference</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving search &amp; social metrics tracked</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving the automation of processes</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving mobile-friendliness</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Organic Search & Social Media Survey
Conducted by Ascend2 and our Research Partners
Published March 2019
HOW THE BUDGET IS CHANGING

A total of 90% of marketing influencers say they are increasing the budget to deploy an organic search and social media strategy to some extent, with 67% describing the increase as moderate, while a total of only 10% are decreasing the budget to some extent.

Which best describes how the total BUDGET IS CHANGING to deploy an organic search and social media strategy?

- Total budget will increase significantly: 23%
- Total budget will increase moderately: 67%
- Total budget will decrease moderately: 8%
- Total budget will decrease significantly: 2%
A thoughtful analysis of the primary objectives in comparison to how critical they are as challenges to success will improve the odds of developing a successful organic search and social media strategy.

Comparing primary objectives and critical challenges.

- **Increasing traffic to website and/or blog**: 59% (Primary Objectives) vs. 47% (Critical Challenges)
- **Improving brand awareness/preference**: 54% (Primary Objectives) vs. 42% (Critical Challenges)
- **Improving prospect/customer engagement**: 47% (Primary Objectives) vs. 44% (Critical Challenges)
- **Increasing leads generated/converted**: 46% (Primary Objectives) vs. 46% (Critical Challenges)
- **Improving search & social metrics tracked**: 29% (Primary Objectives) vs. 37% (Critical Challenges)
- **Improving mobile-friendliness**: 18% (Primary Objectives) vs. 19% (Critical Challenges)
- **Improving the automation of processes**: 12% (Primary Objectives) vs. 25% (Critical Challenges)

Organic Search & Social Media Survey
Conducted by Ascend2 and our Research Partners
Published March 2019
Search engine optimization and quality content creation are most effective tactics used in an organic search and social media strategy according to half (50%) of marketing influencers surveyed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tactic</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Search engine optimization</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality content creation</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media posting/marketing</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyword research/management</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content marketing</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile/local search optimization</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog posting/guest blogging</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More than two-thirds (69%) of marketing influencers prefer to have outsourced and in-house resources collaborate on the deployment of organic search and social media tactics, versus 17% and 14% respectively that prefer to use outsourced or in-house resources exclusively.

Organic Search & Social Media Survey
Conducted by Ascend2 and our Research Partners
Published March 2019
While skewed toward the use of organic search for a total of 40% of marketing influencers, nearly half (45%) say an equal mix of organic search and social media tactics provide the most beneficial results.
For 54% of marketing influencers, most effective metrics tracked in an organic search and social media strategy are the number of visits or unique visitors to the targeted web property, and the traffic sources or conversions from the targeted web properties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visits/unique visitors</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic sources/conversions</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content downloaded/shared</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyword rankings</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bounce rate/engagement</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domain or page authority</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backlink quality and quantity</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Organic Search & Social Media Survey
Conducted by Ascend2 and our Research Partners
Published March 2019
RESEARCH PARTNER PROGRAMS

Our Research Partner Programs rapidly deliver content of interest to your marketing influencers, and a guaranteed number of leads, in just two simple steps:

1. Choose **marketing topics** of interest to your audience.
   - Or create a survey topic of your own (limited availability)

2. Choose an exclusive segment for each of the topics.
   - Success Benchmarks
   - Leadership Benchmarks
   - B2B Benchmarks
   - B2C Benchmarks
   - Enterprise Benchmarks
   - SMB Benchmarks
   - Agency Benchmarks
   - And more!

Learn more about Research-Based Marketing at [Ascend2.com](http://Ascend2.com).
Following are just a few of the leading marketing solution providers that have partnered with us on research-based marketing programs.

This Survey Summary Report is part of a series conducted in partnership with our participating Research Partners.

You may adapt, copy, distribute and transmit this work. However, you must attribute the work as produced by Ascend2 and its Research Partners, but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work.

When you share this content, please provide a link back to http://ascend2.com