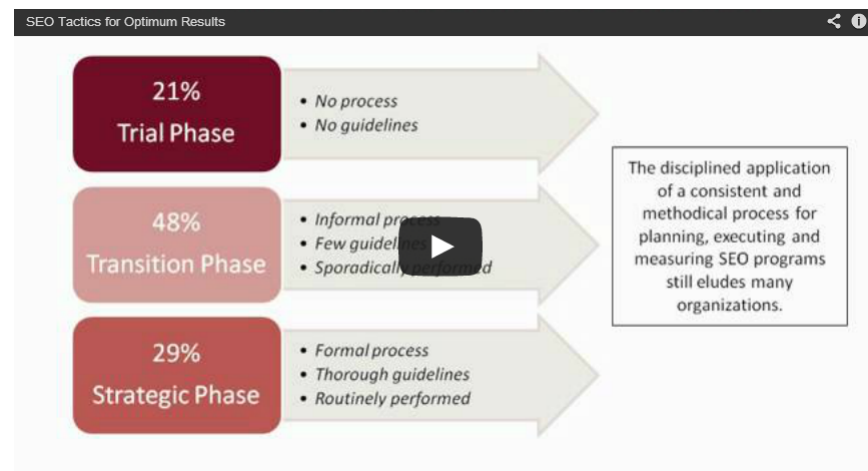




Watch a video recording of this webinar to see Kaci Bower, Jen Doyle and Jesse Laffen guide you through the presentation and answer questions from the audience.



<http://bit.ly/120nMJq>



SEO Tactics for Optimum Results

Sponsored by:



Speakers



- **Kaci Bower**, Senior Research Analyst, MarketingSherpa
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- **Jen Doyle**, Senior Research Manager, MarketingSherpa
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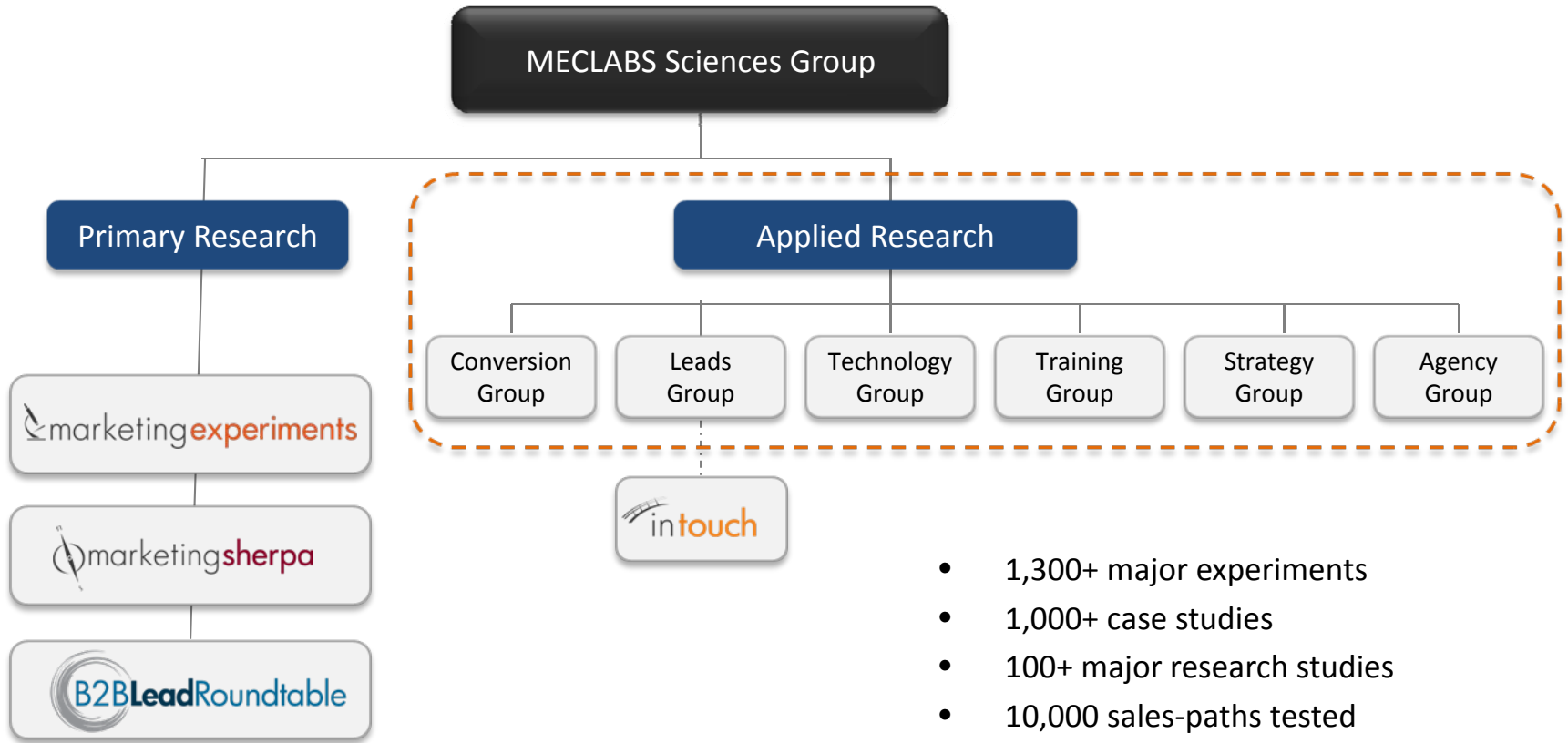
- **Jesse Laffen**, Manager of Consulting, Slingshot SEO
@jlaffen

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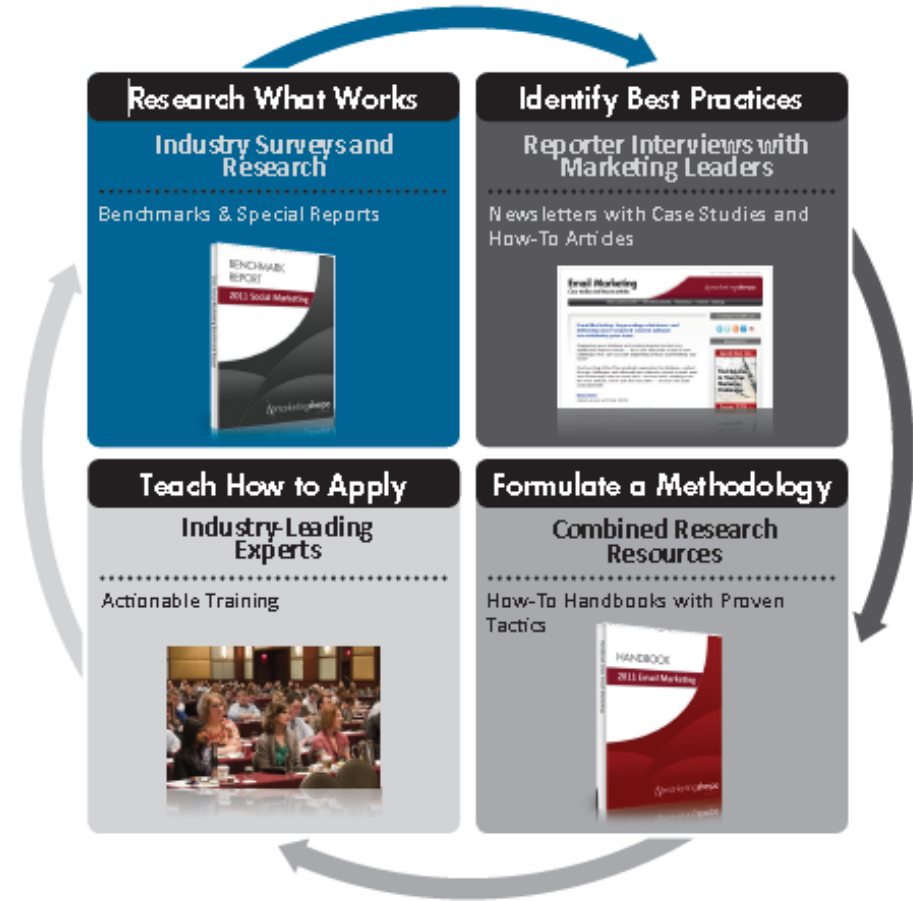
MECLABS - A science lab with a consultancy



- 1,300+ major experiments
- 1,000+ case studies
- 100+ major research studies
- 10,000 sales-paths tested
- 500,000 “decision-makers” surveyed
- 100+ summit/trainings/webinars/clinics

MarketingSherpa is a research and publishing organization serving the marketing community

- MarketingSherpa's annual research cycle provides knowledge for continuous marketing improvement



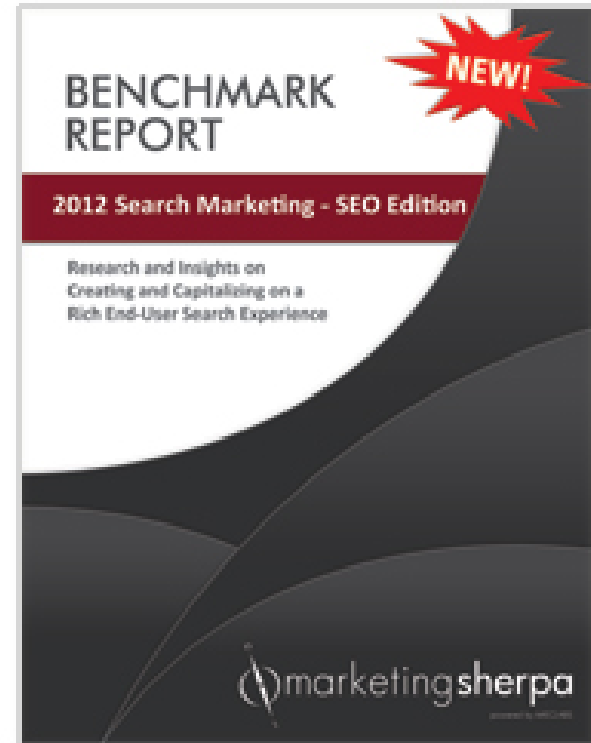
Today, we're going to discuss:

- 1** | Top challenges and objectives for search marketers
- 2** | Most important lead sources
- 3** | Using data and processes to inform SEO tactical decisions
- 4** | ABC
- 5** | ABC

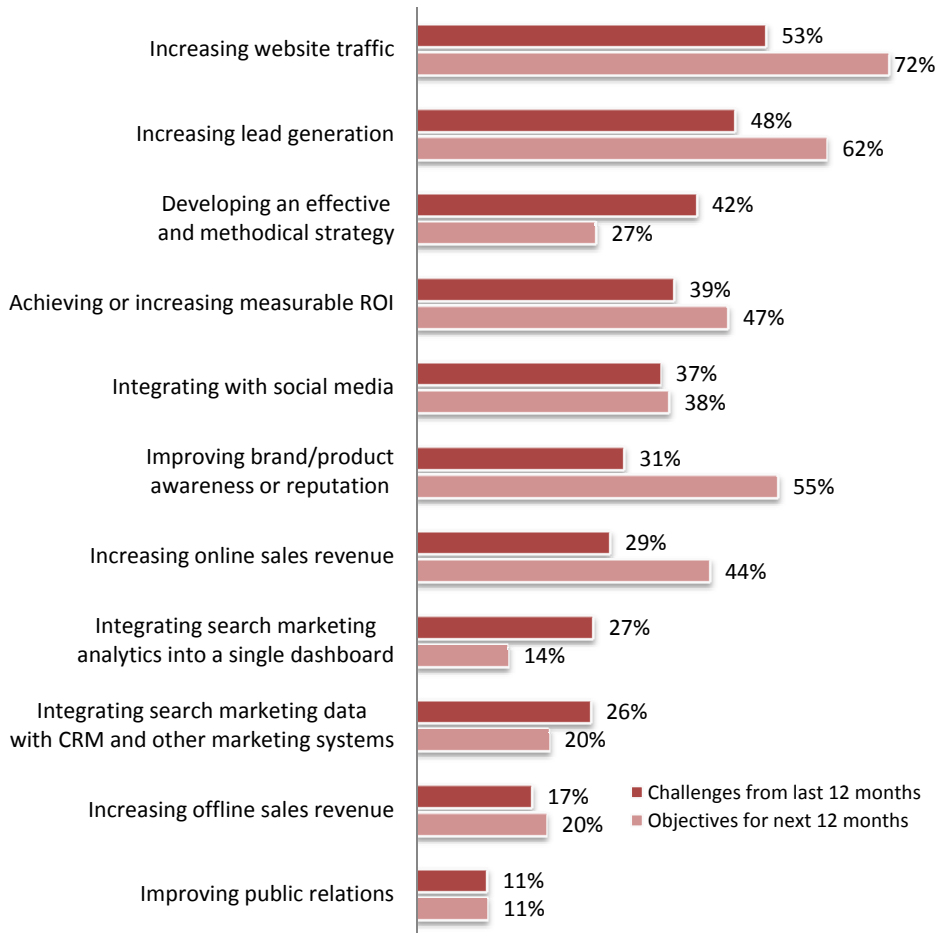
Research Background

1,530 Search marketers were surveyed on:

- Challenges and goals for search programs
- Lead sources growing in importance
- Popularity, effectiveness and difficulty per SEO tactic



Key finding: Traffic and leads still top objectives



- SEO program objectives frequently addressed the previous year's challenges head-on
- More traffic and leads were last year's top challenges – and this year's top objectives
- Developing a strategy for SEO is a top challenge, but bottom objective



Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

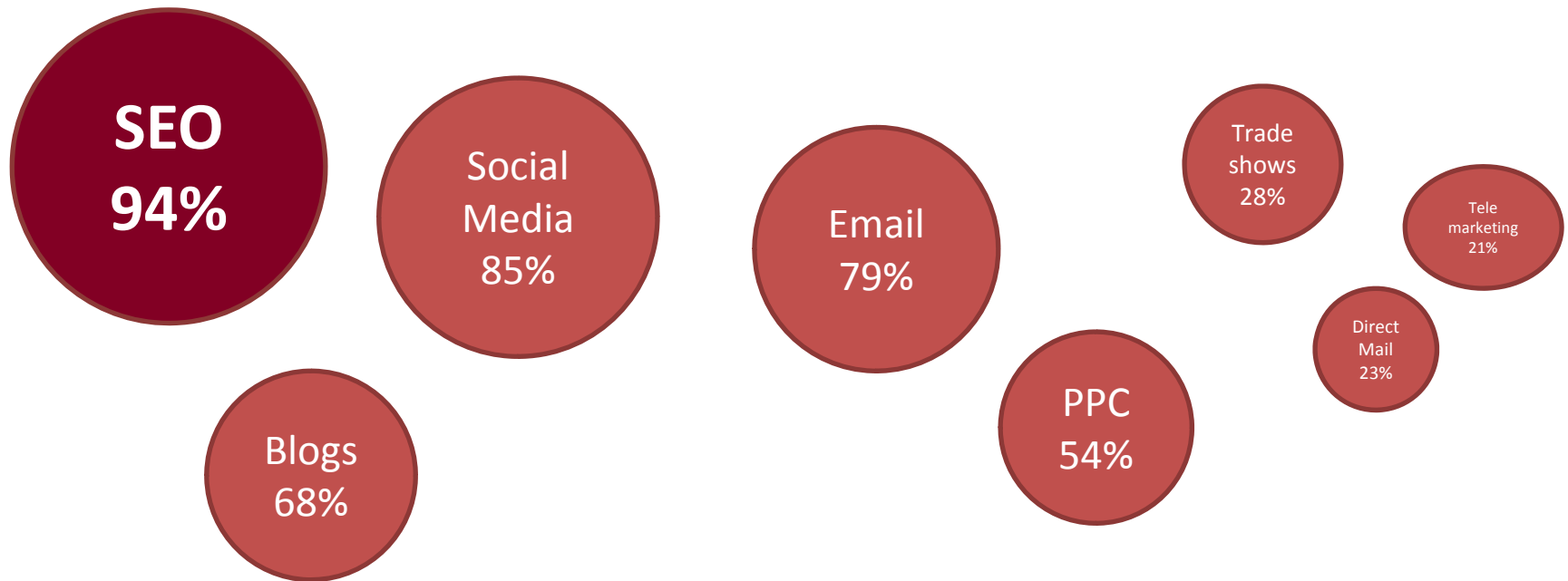


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Key finding: SEO is most valuable lead source

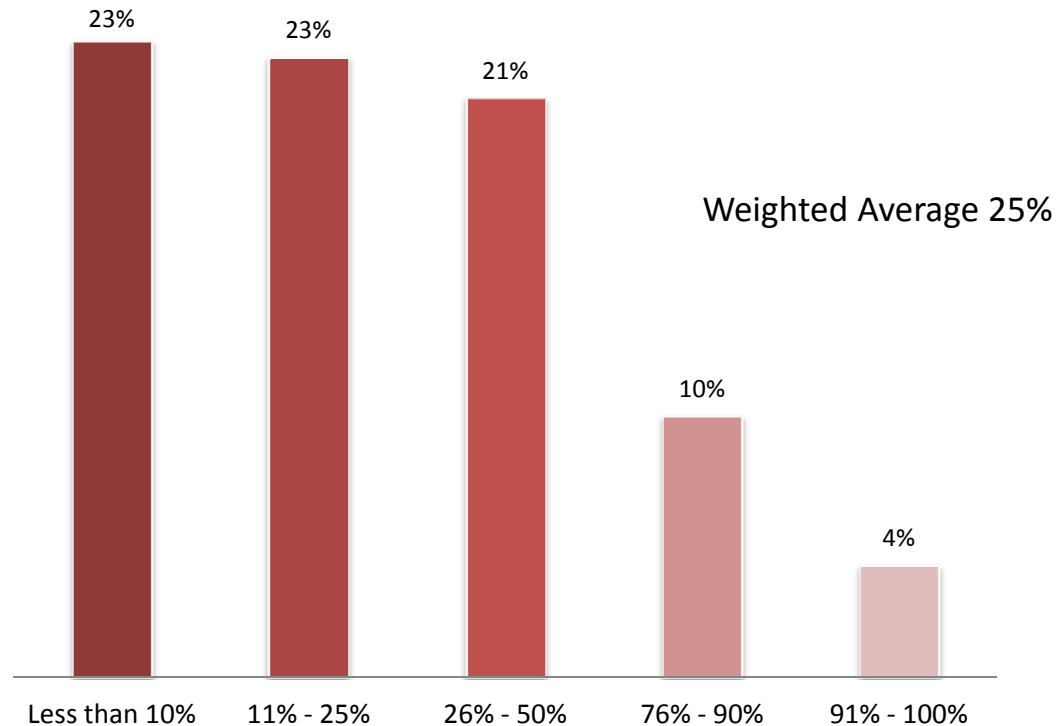
Which sources of leads have become more important to you over the last 12 months?




Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

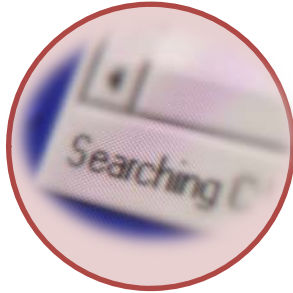
Key finding: Organic search creates 25% of leads

What percentage of your organization's total lead volume is generated from organic search?



 marketingsherpa Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Key finding: SEO budgets to increase



SEO

57% will raise
budgets
(#2 line item)



Social Media


60% will raise
budgets
(#1 line item)



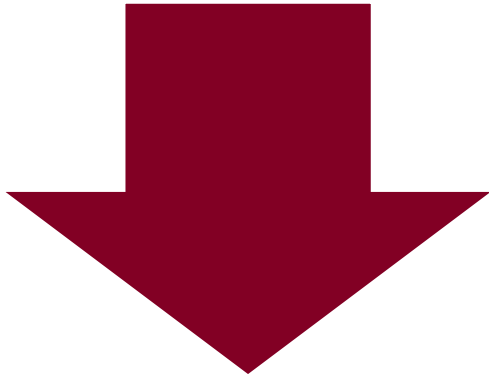
Content Marketing

41% will raise
budgets
(#4 line item)

Q. How will budgets for the following marketing line items change in the next 12 months?

 marketing**sherpa** Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Marketers depend on SEO.
And SEO depends on marketers.



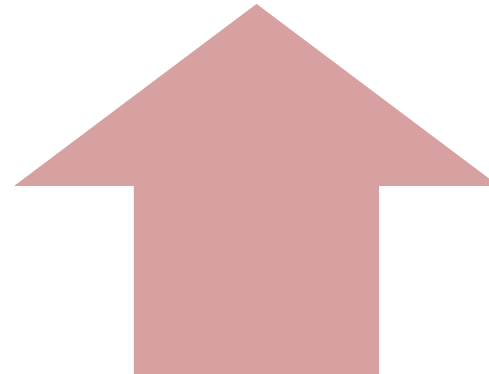
Marketers depend on SEO

Traffic
Leads
Rankings
Listings

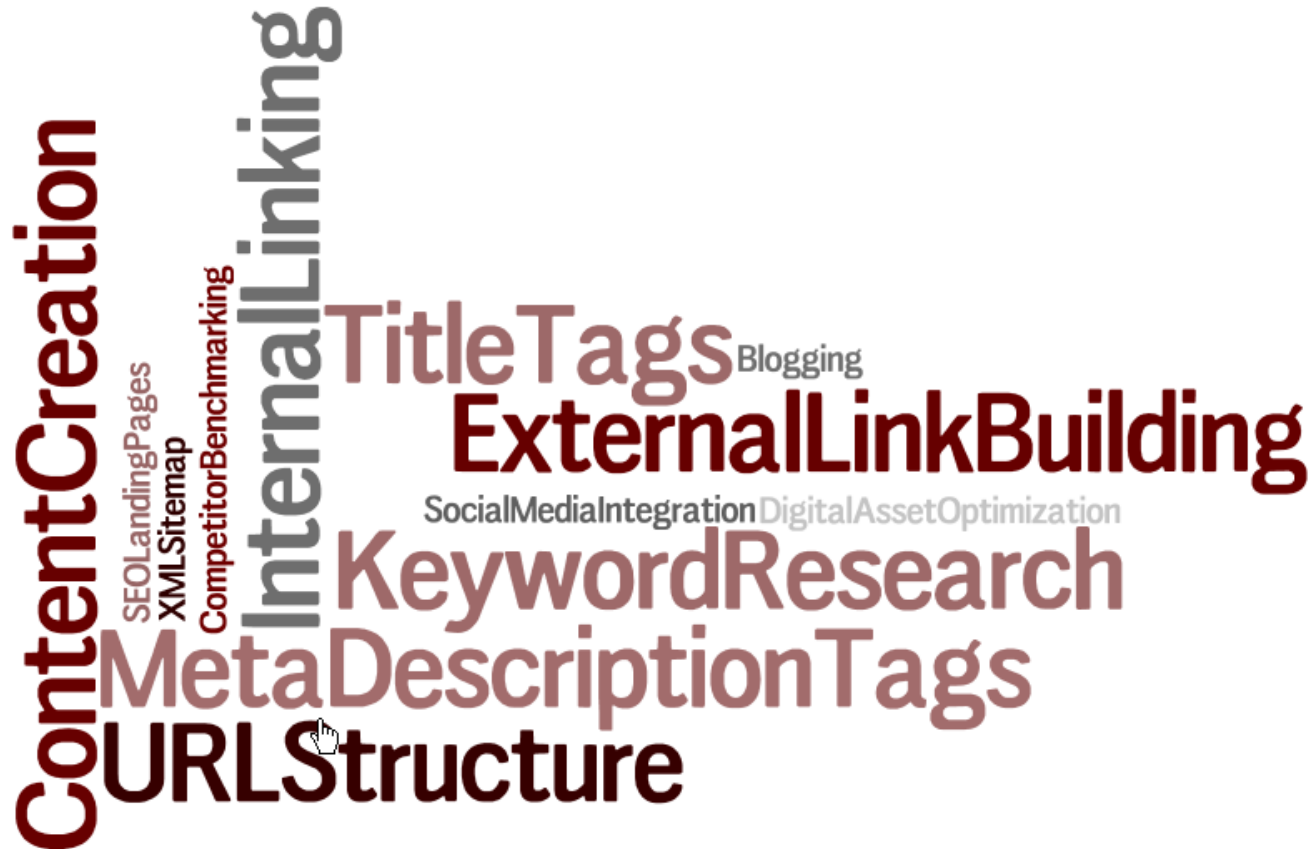


SEO depends on marketers

Customer research and insight
Relevant content
Optimized content



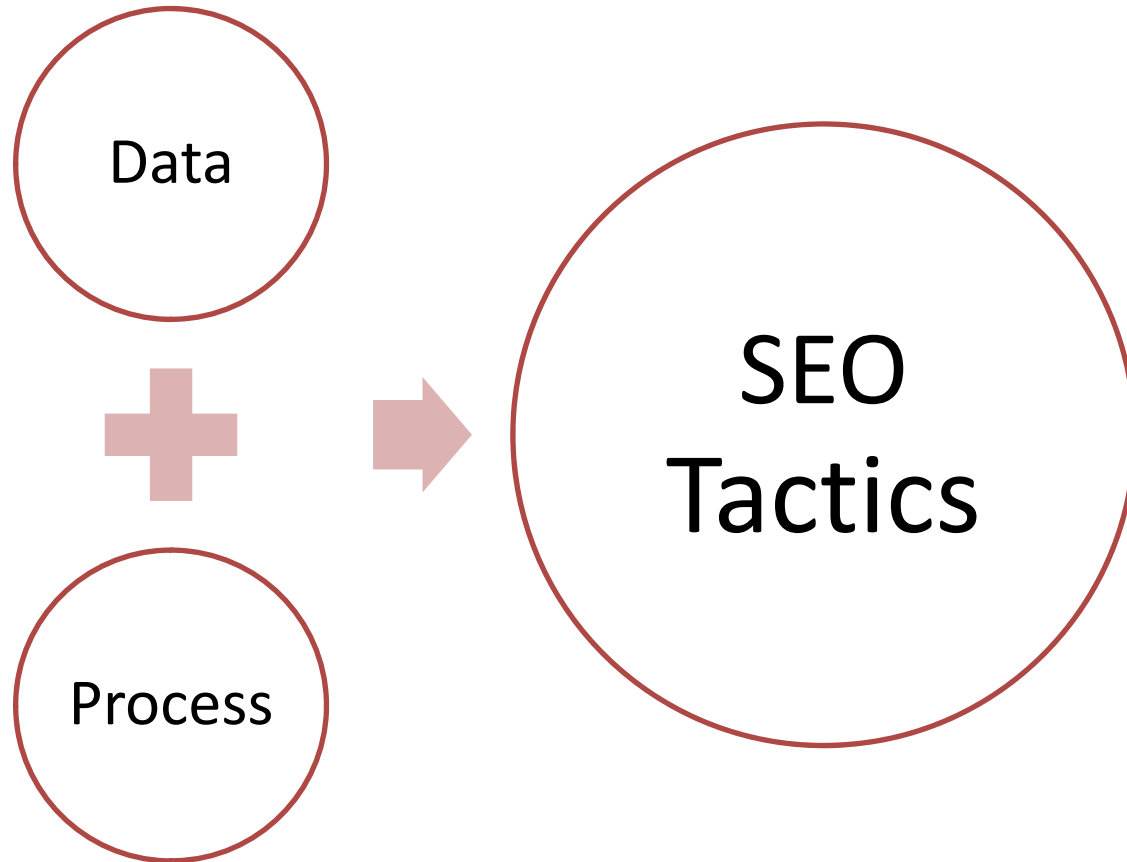
Too many SEO choices can create confusion





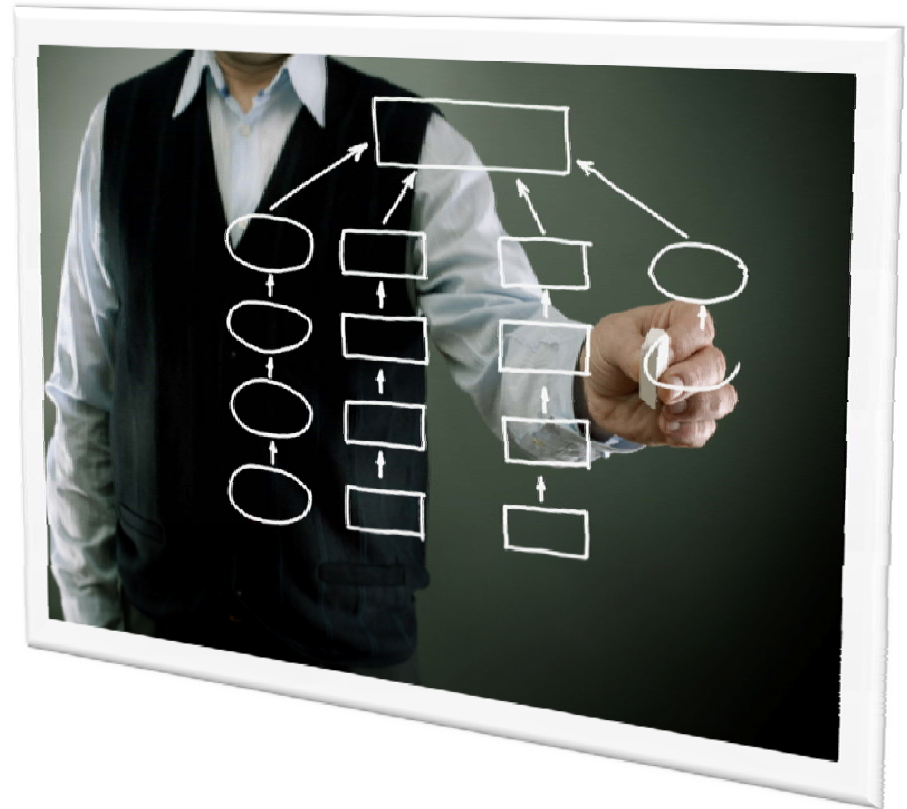
How do you decide
which SEO tactics
hold the most
promise for you?

Try a simple equation.



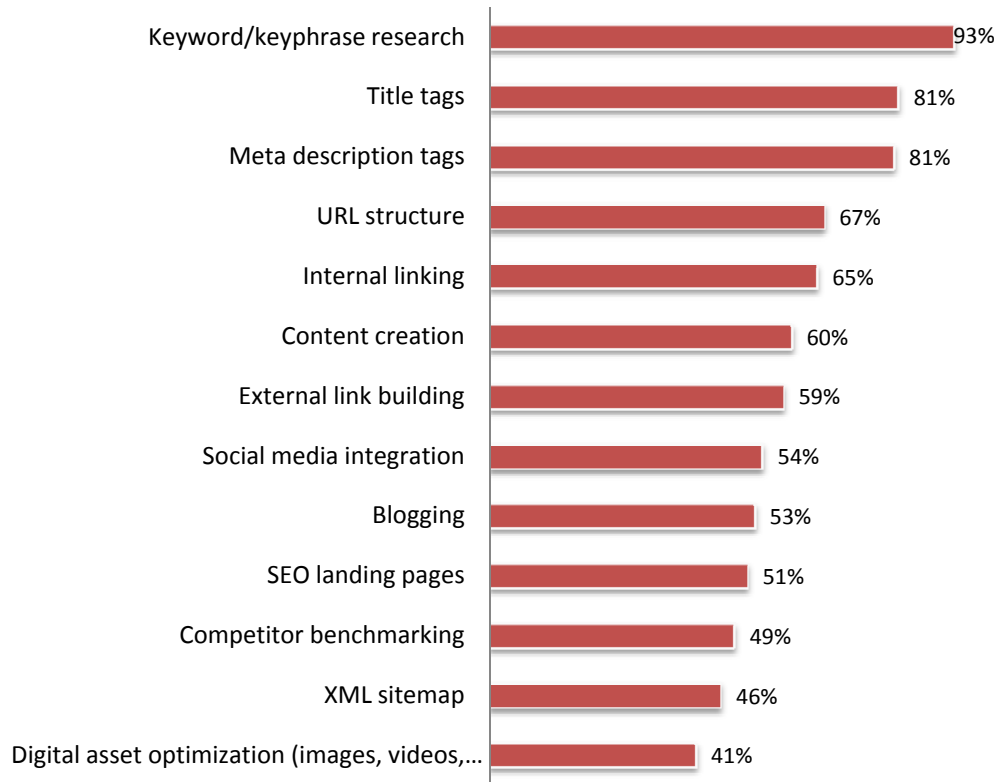
Benefits of looking at data first

- Harnesses the wisdom of crowds
- Challenges biases and preferences
- Heightens quantitative analysis
- Draws out past successes and challenges to inform present practices and future decisions




Most popular SEO tactics

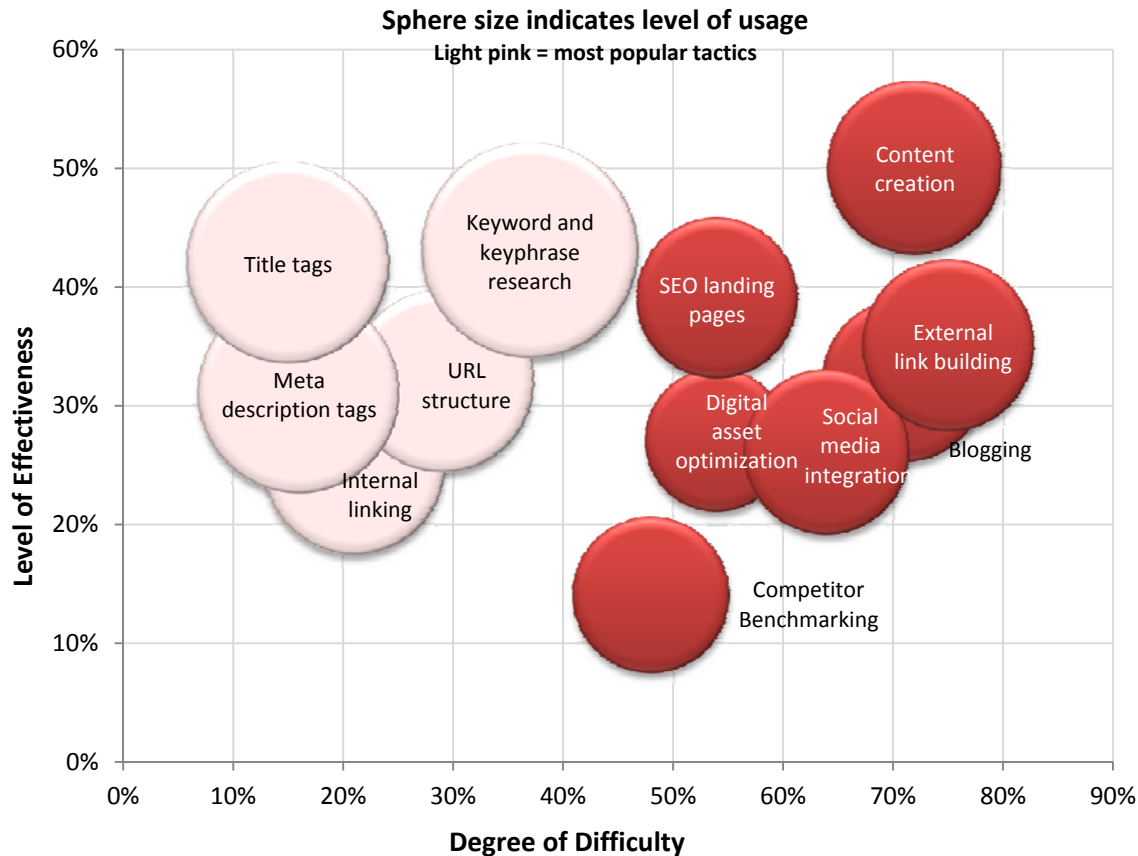
Q. Which of the following SEO tactics has your organization used?



- Keyword research is foundational to many of the most used tactics:
 - title tags
 - meta descriptions
 - URL structure
 - internal linking
- Keyword research is not heavily applied towards optimizing other digital assets

 marketingsherpa Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Impact of difficulty and effectiveness



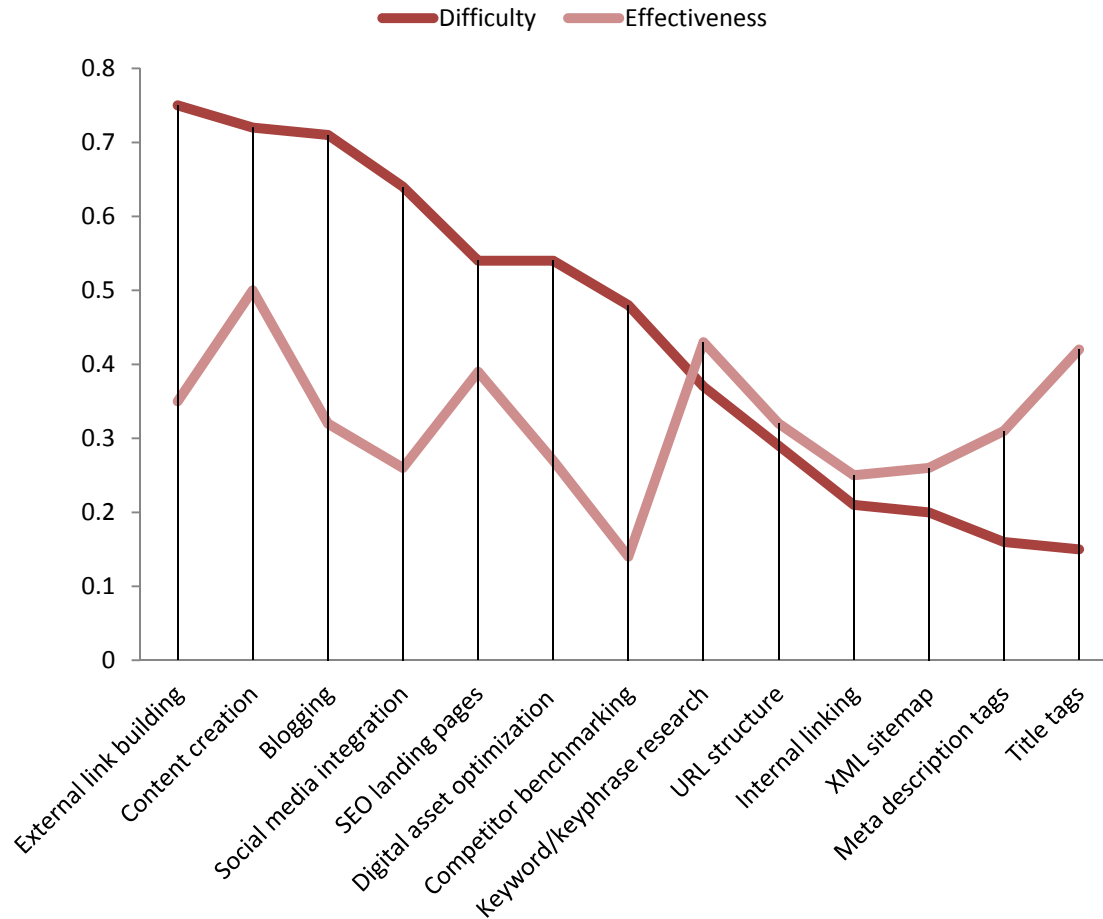
Key point:

Most popular SEO tactics are the least difficult to execute in terms of time, effort and expense. But they are not the most effective necessarily.



Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Deciding between ease or effectiveness



Key point:

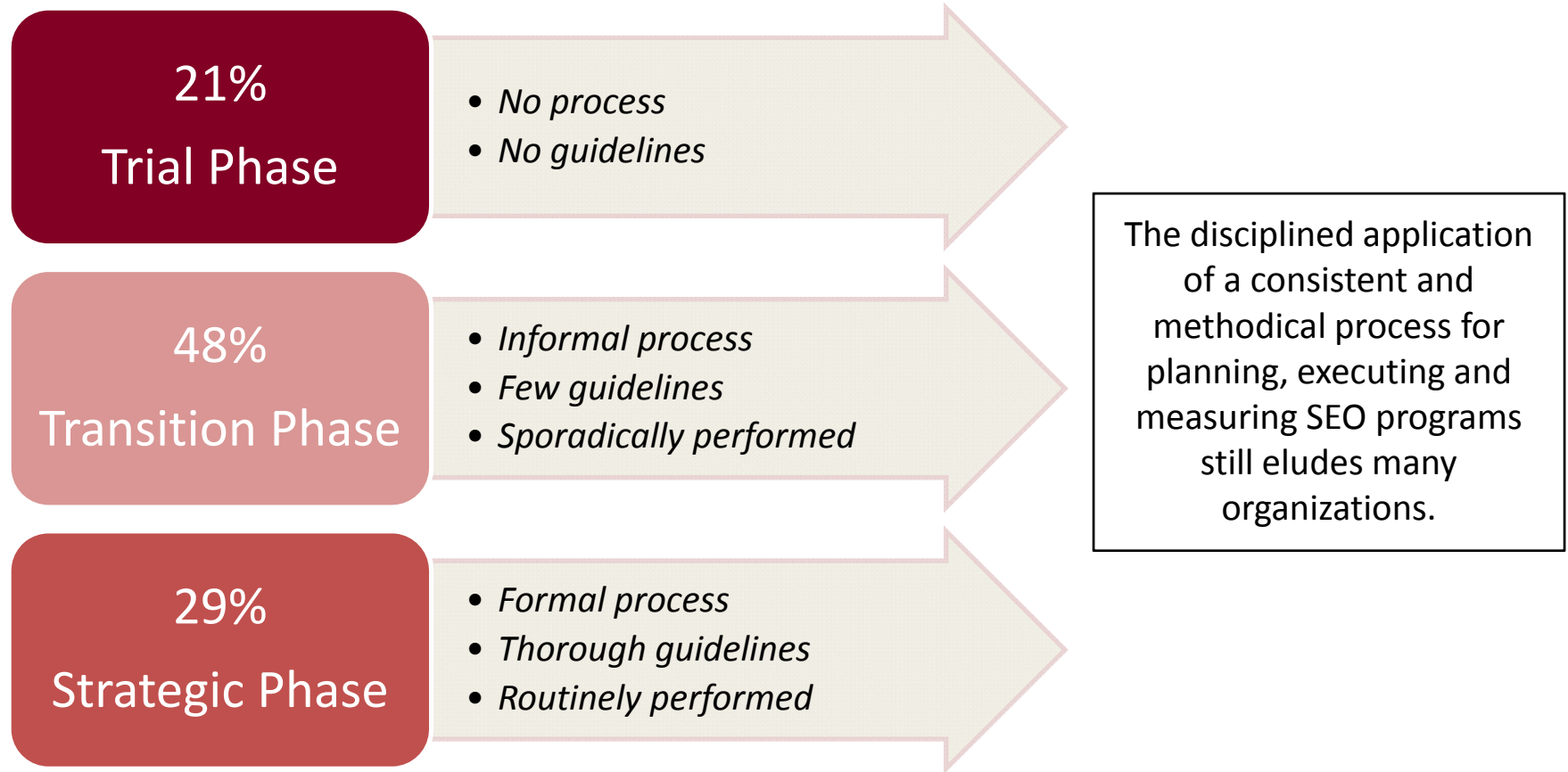
Tradeoffs are a way of life. This is why you need a process to help you make those tactical decisions.

Benefits of a process



- Protects you from jumping straight into action without developing a plan of attack
- Arms you with a competitive advantage
- Uses data as a context for making and prioritizing decisions

Organizations with a methodical SEO process



Hear the difference? Specificity.

Please describe the process your organization uses to plan your SEO strategy.

Right now it is hit and miss, nothing formal.

-- Trial Phase marketer

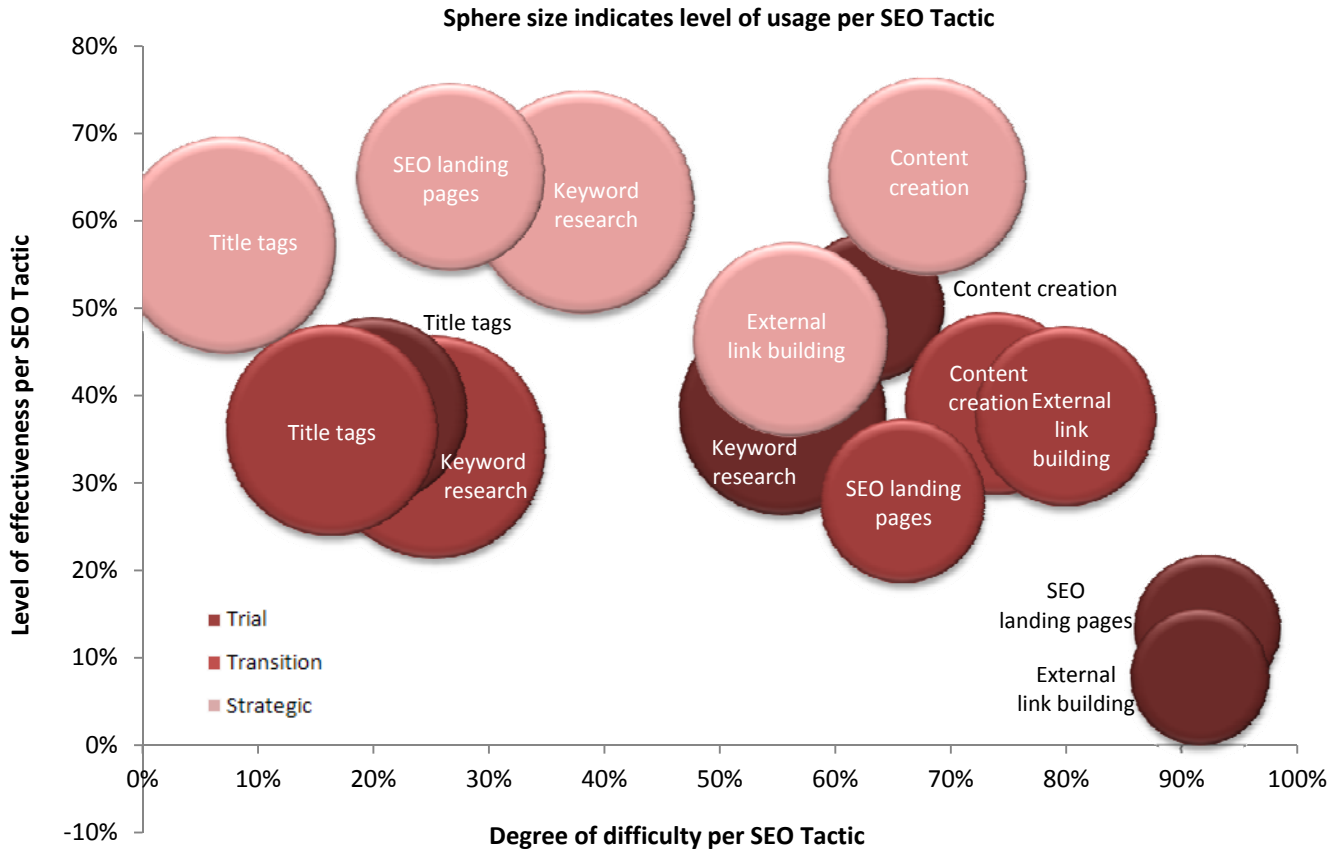
Watching trends and tweaking as seems necessary. Doing some testing.

-- Transition Phase marketer

We have a spreadsheet for our website with all of the specific pages listed. We have fields for meta tags, keywords, and an overall page description. We also list how we want the images tagged with alt text. We sat down and prioritized our keywords, and we now are working to increase our traffic about four keywords at a time.

-- Strategic Phase marketer

Impact of a process on effectiveness levels



Strategic organizations...

- Utilize these tactics to a greater degree
- Have less difficulty executing tactics, in terms of time, effort and expense
- Experience better outcomes with all tactics



Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

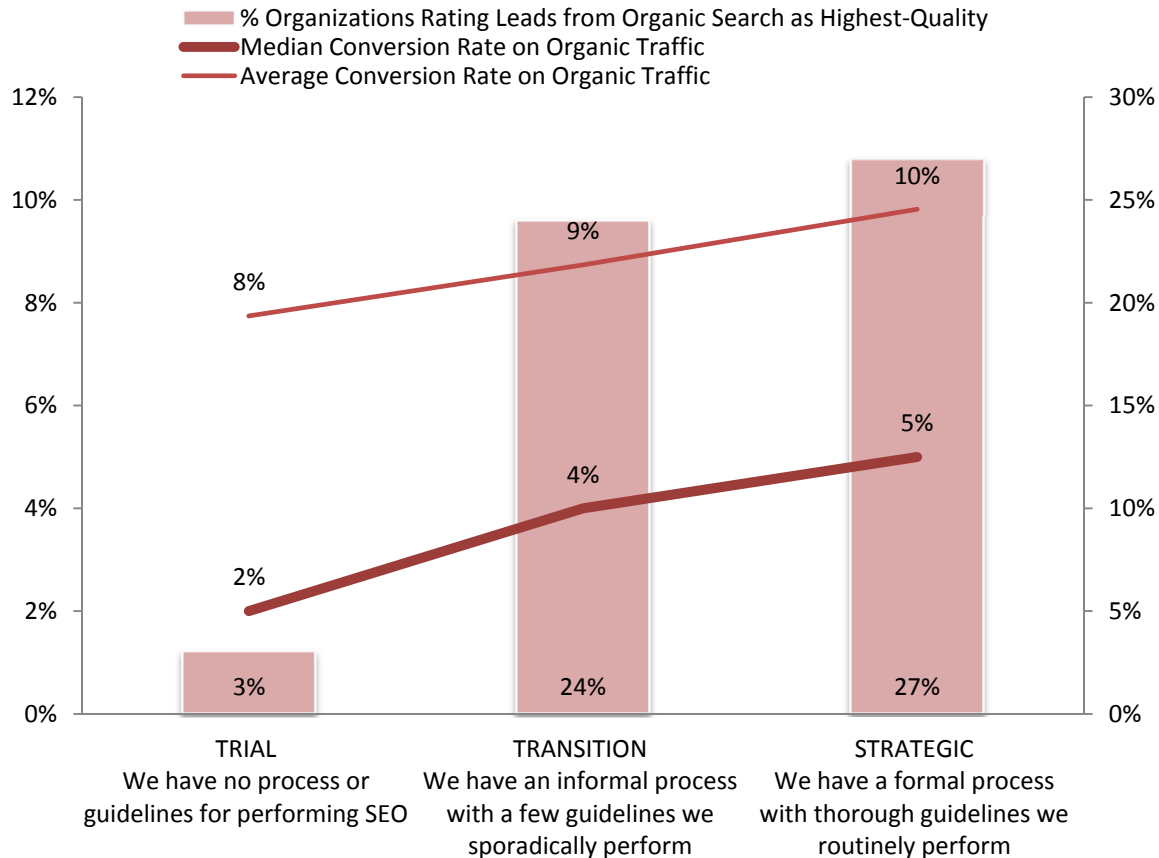
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Impact of a process on traffic and conversions



Key points:

Companies with a formal process and guidelines for SEO convert 1.5x more traffic into leads than those without.

These leads are 9x more likely to be of the highest quality.



Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

A systematic approach to SEO ensures results.

Case Study: Background



Experiment ID: *Makana Solutions*

Location: MarketingSherpa Case Study Library

Test Protocol Number: #CS31765

Research Notes:

Problem: Makana provides subscription-based software that helps organizations perform sales compensation planning. But few prospects knew the SaaS solution was available and weren't actively searching for it.

Goal: Become a top destination for advice about sales compensation planning.

Approach: Execute 5 steps to revamp website and improve SEO effectiveness.

Step 1: Content creation

Aim:

- Help prospects answer questions about their sales compensation planning challenges

Methods:

- Created and offered content based on best practices for sales compensation planning
 - Sample sales compensation plans
 - Educational webinars



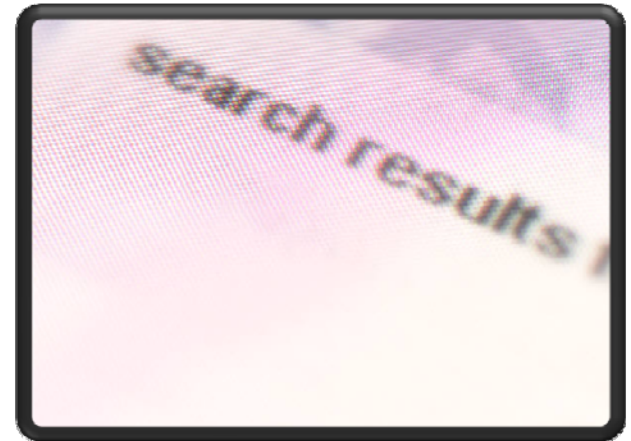
Step 2: Keyword research

Aim:

- Optimize website around high-value search terms

Methods:

- Researched broad and longer-tail key terms that reflected targeted searches or specific industry verticals
- Identified a list of 600 keywords
- Optimized specific web pages around two or three relevant terms per page.



Step 3: Link building

Aim:

- Boost inbound links to improve search rankings

Methods:

- Identified sites with a high Google PageRank from which they could get a link
 - Online directories
 - Information sites about sales compensation planning
 - News sites to target for their press release distribution list



Step 4: Follow-up on web leads

Aim:

- Convert trial members to subscribers

Methods:

- Required visitors to register to receive educational material
- Marketed the free software trial to these leads
- Kept trial account live until sales rep made contact with the prospects



Step 5: Continual monitoring

Aim:

- Highlight the best performing tactics in order to repeat them



Methods:

- Monitored keyword, inbound links, and outbound campaign results

"Repeatability is the key. As a young company, we have to keep growing our traffic and leads."

Alan Gehring
Marketing Director
Makana Solutions

Results



First page ranking for key industry search terms

Key performance metrics after 3 months of adopting strategy	Change
Website traffic	+ 200%
Lead generation rate	+ 200%
Lead conversion rate	+ 100%
Paid search as % of total traffic	- 60%



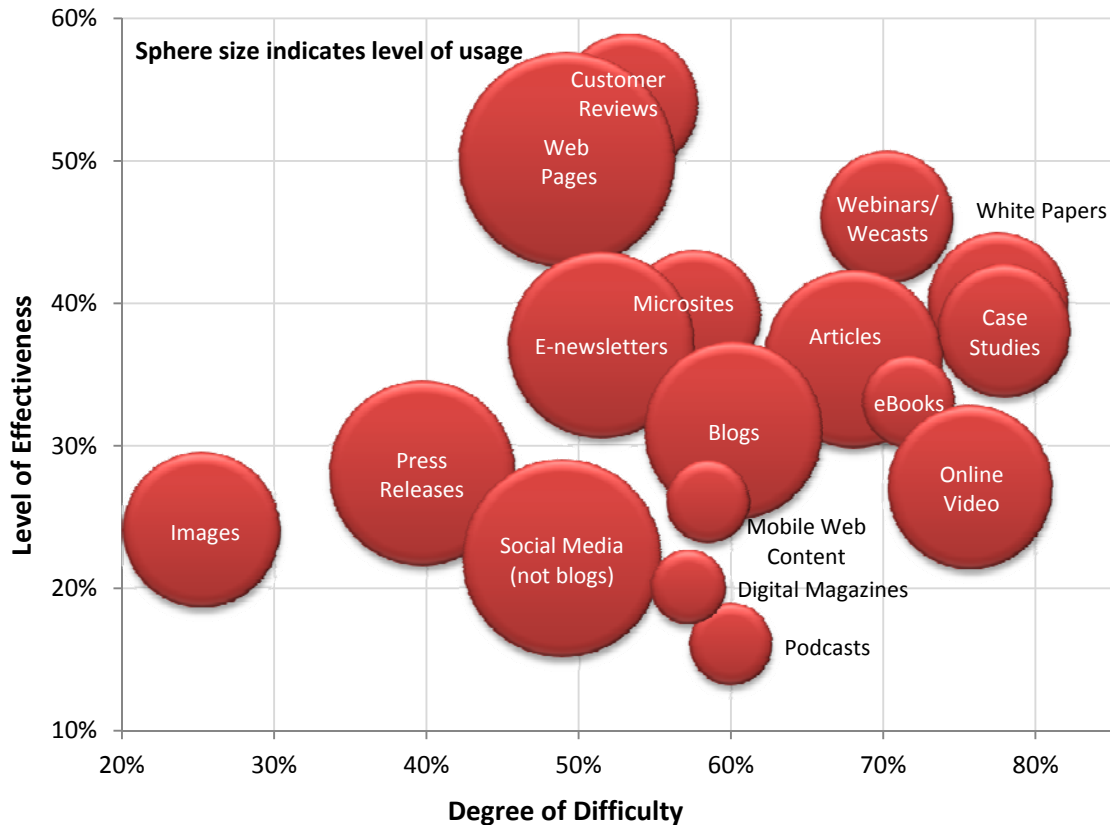
"We're very happy with our success, but I'll be honest and say we haven't even touched the potential. The potential is tremendous to be even more successful with the realm of content we can develop for various verticals. The possibilities just go on and on."

– Alan Gehring, Marketing Director, Makana Solutions

Want to make better tactical SEO decisions?
Incorporate data into your process.

Example of using data in process decisions

Chart: Mix of content products used as part of total search marketing strategy



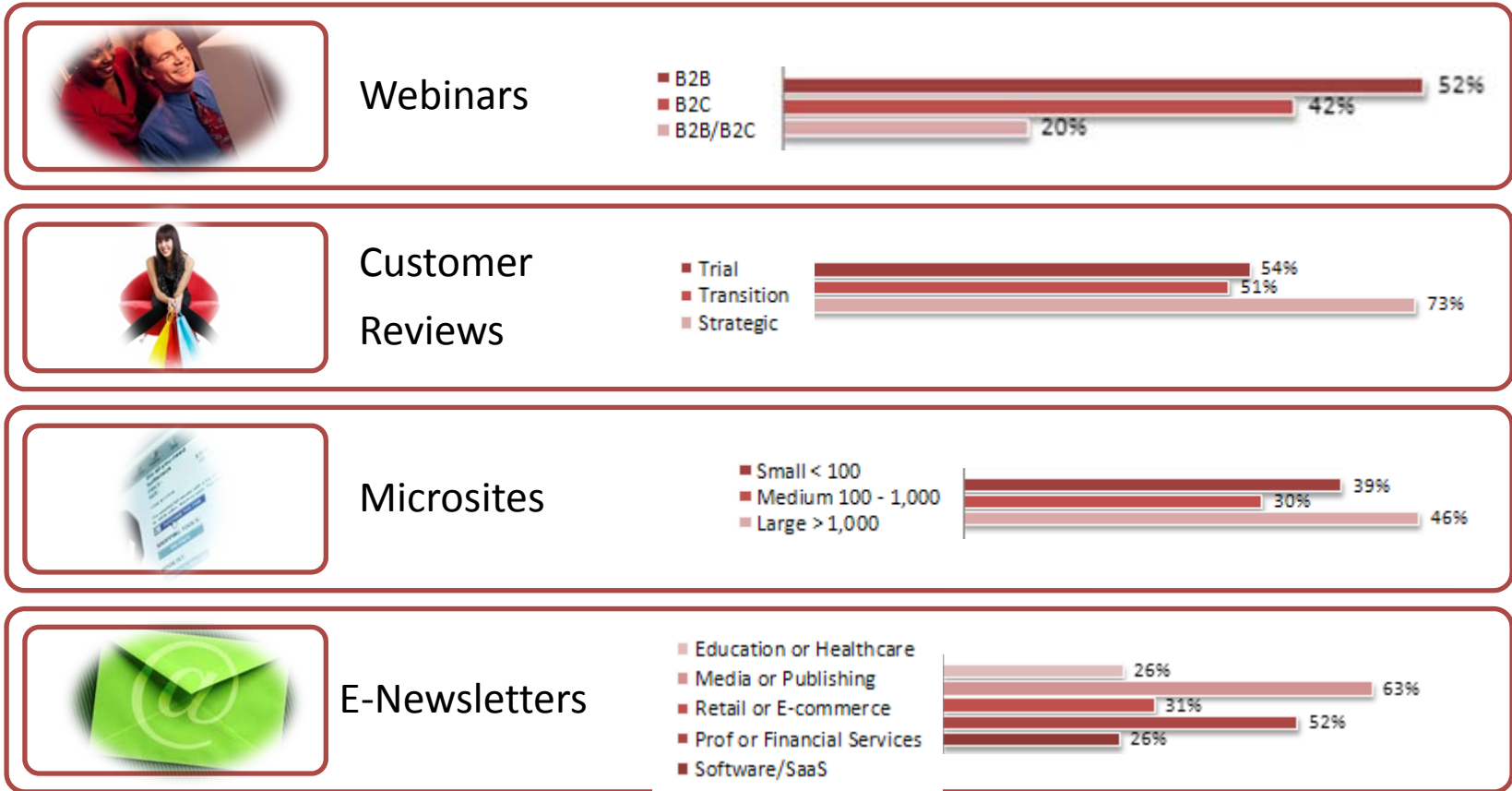
Knowing that content creation is the most effective tactic still wouldn't tell you which content products are the most effective and the most difficult to develop.

You need more data to make the right decision.



Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Go even more granular



Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Key Takeaways

When choosing your SEO tactics, distinguish between –

- What is a good use of your money from what is the best use
- What is a good use of your time from what is the best use
- What is a good use of your energy from what is the best use



Implementing Smart SEO Tactics



- Founded in 2006
- Over 140 active clients
- 98% success rate for over 2,000 competitive keywords

Inc.
500

TOP 100
ADVERTISING
& MARKETING

DIGITAL RELEVANCE FOR **DESERVING BRANDS**

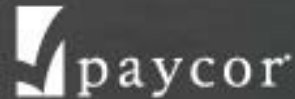
Angie's list

ExactTarget.

webtrends



FedEx.



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Q. *How do marketers determine which SEO tactics will serve them best?*

A. *Do the best possible thing for your audience that a search engine can understand.*

C L A S S

Content / Link Profile / Architecture / Social / Strategy

C L A S S CONTENT



GUEST BLOG POSTS



ARTICLES



INFOGRAPHICS



TWEETS



VIDEOS



ON-PAGE CONTENT



PRESS RELEASES



PR

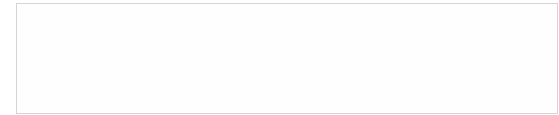
Communicate What You Do

“Since 1967, our company has been committed to quality products and great service.”

“Our company sells email marketing software ad retargeting strategies that allow you to reach out to new and current customers with exceptional delivery rates and ROI.”

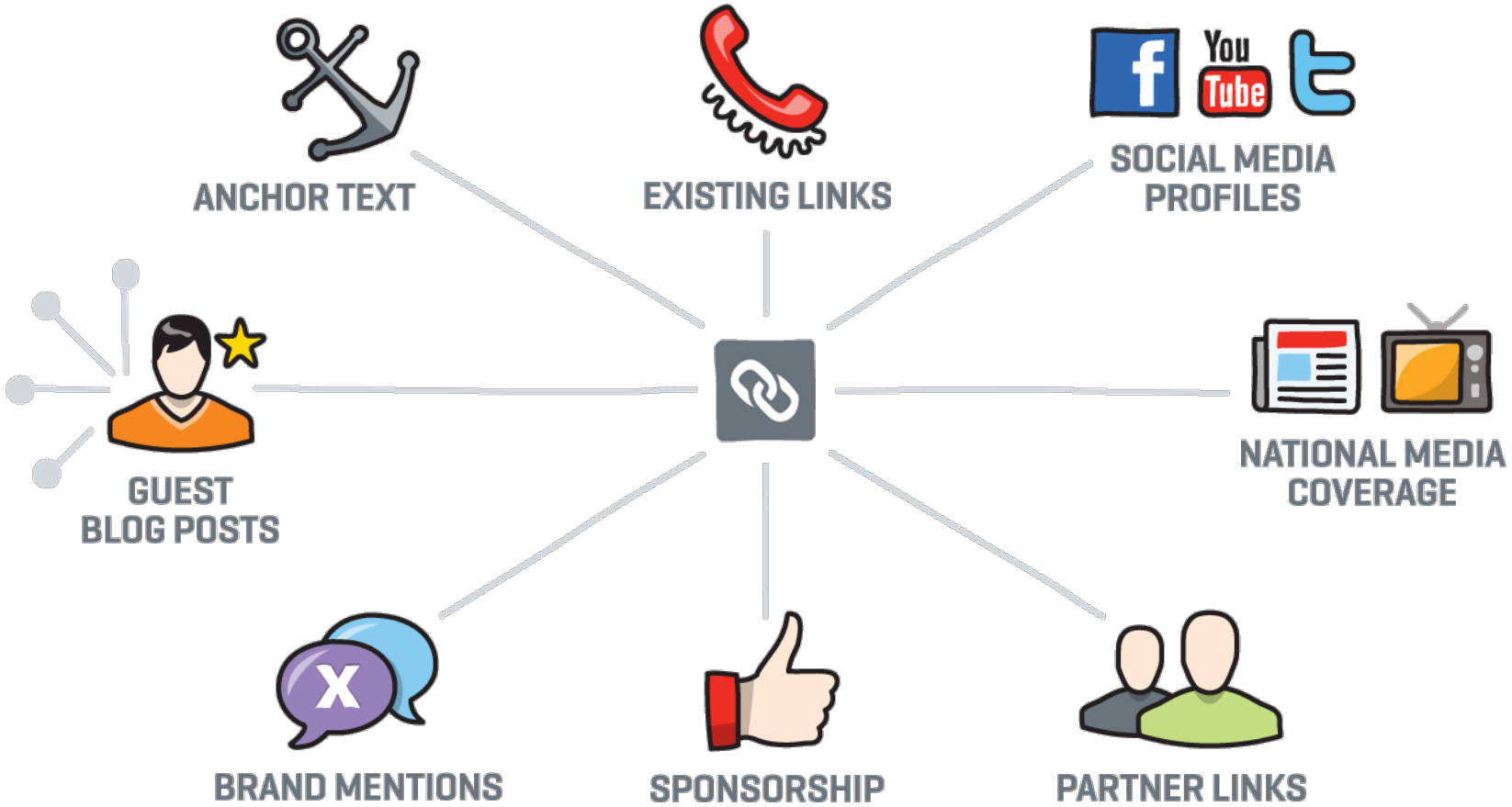


Link Profile



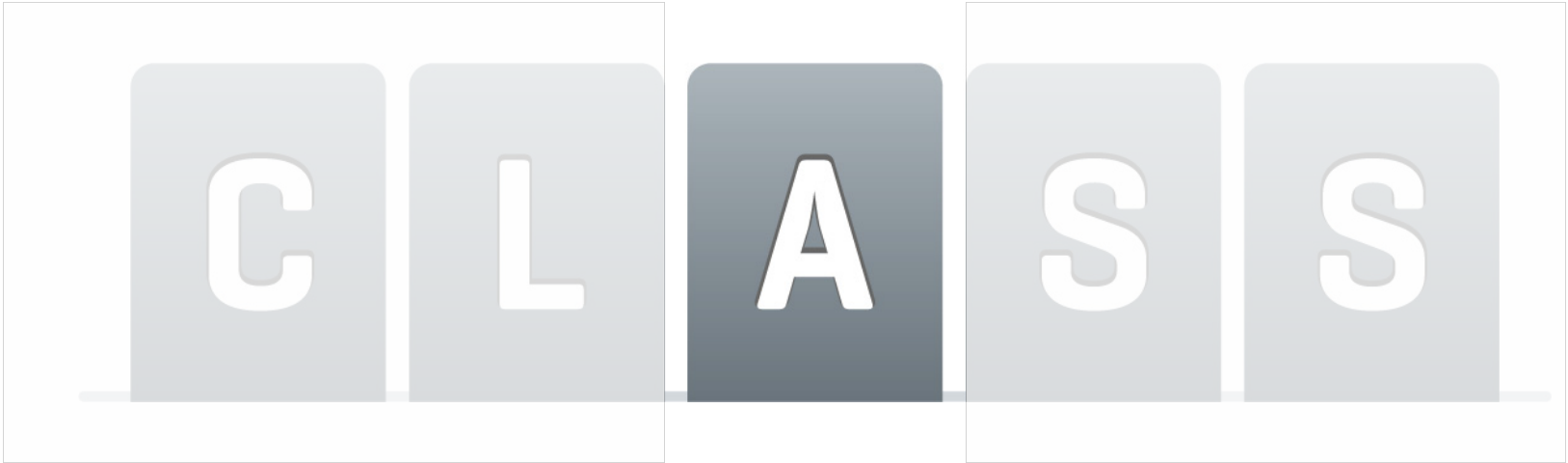
C L A S S

LINK PROFILE

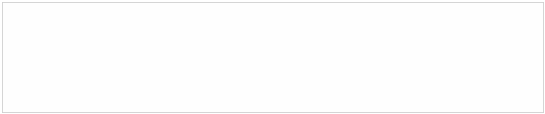


Links : SEO

References: Resume



Architecture



CLASS ARCHITECTURE

- Redirects
- Title Tags
- PageSpeed
 - Load times
- Sitemaps
- Meta data
- Image text



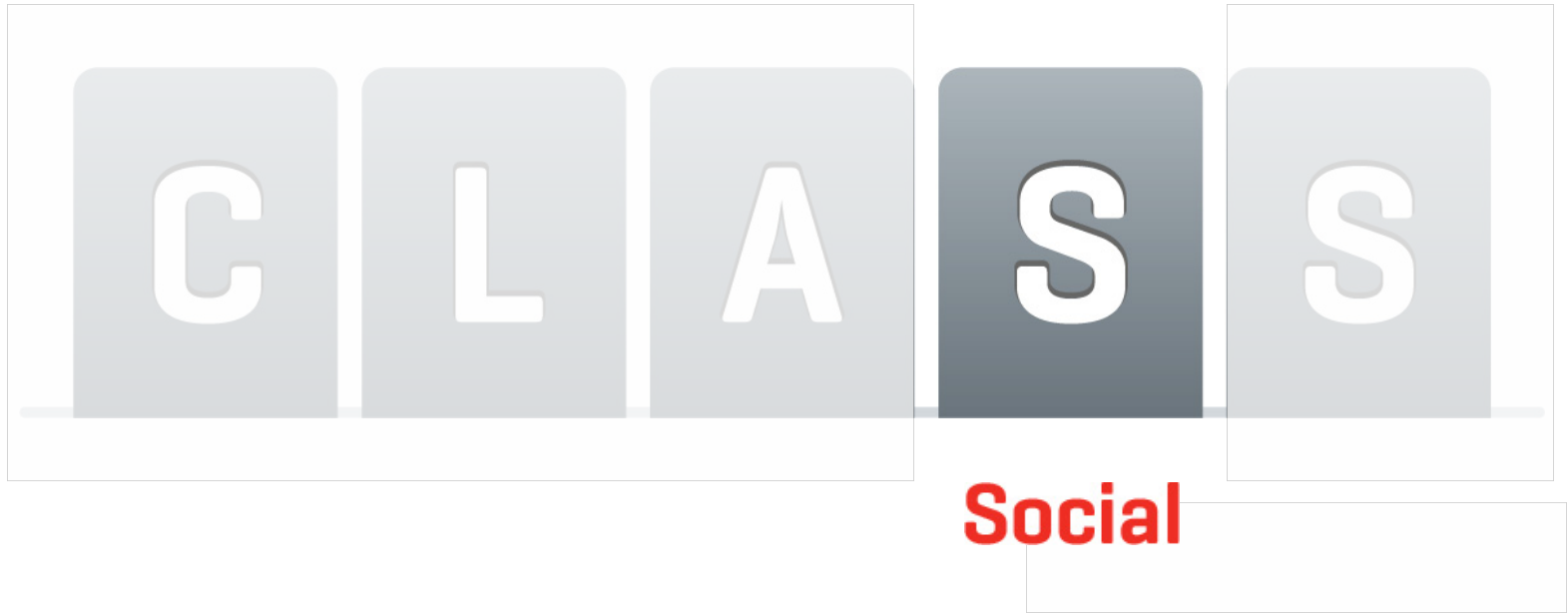
CLASS

ARCHITECTURE

Title Tags	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓
URLs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Canonical Homepage	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Meta Data	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
Images	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Page Speed	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗
Score:	5	2	3	4	4	2	1

A search engine can only read what you serve it,
but its resources are limited.





C L A S S

SOCIAL



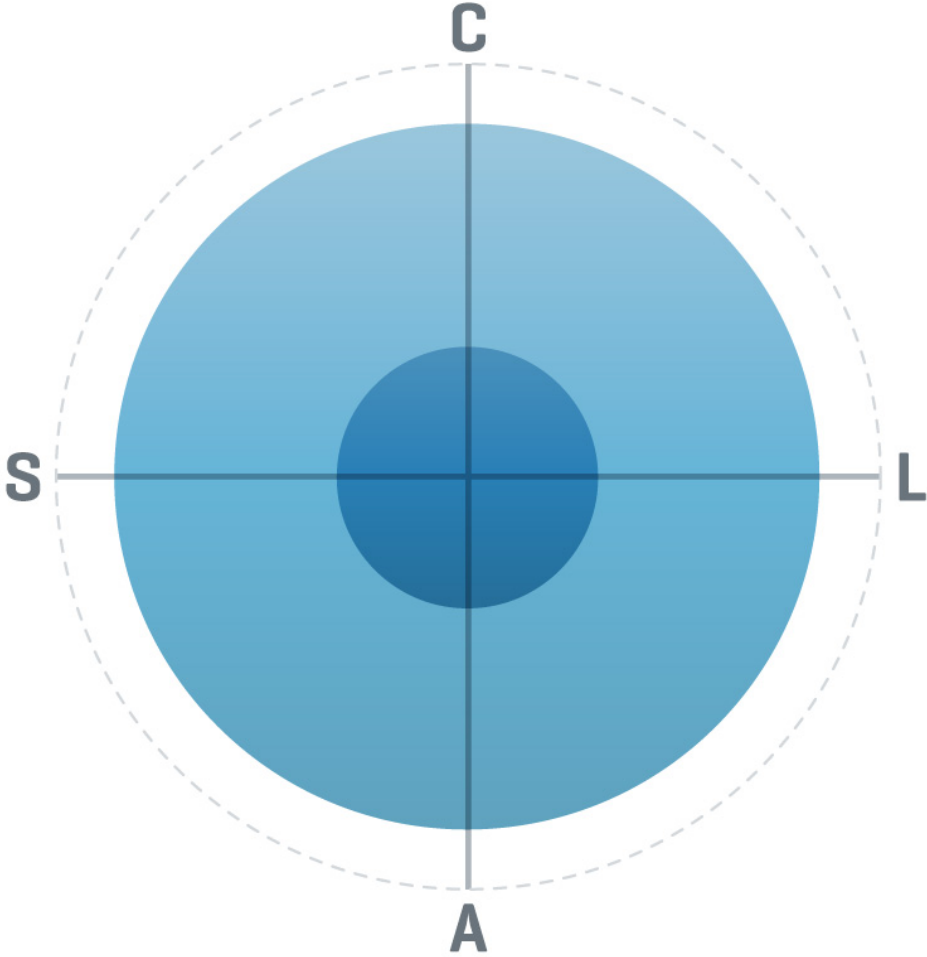
**MAKE STRATEGIC
DECISIONS.**

C L A S S

Strategy

C L A S S

STRATEGY



Summary

- Traffic and leads are the biggest challenges and goals for search marketers
- Leads from SEO are the most important
- A systematic process for planning, executing and evaluating SEO programs is lacking in many organizations
- To maximize your investment of time, money and effort going into your SEO tactics, use both data and a process.

Promo Slide

Your Turn



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