



Working the Web

Ellie Becker and Bernadette Nelson | March 2011

Ga-Ga for Google: 10 Free Marketing Tools from the Search Giant

Google is almost always in the news. Just a few days ago, it announced changes to its search engine algorithm that reinforce its commitment to favoring useful, original content. This is good news for inbound marketers and bad news for content farms – sites that recycle content from around the web in an effort to game the system and come up high in Google rankings for search terms not necessarily related to their actual content and motives.

Google's core mission is returning the most relevant possible organic results to our search queries. Its core business is selling paid search (aka Pay Per Click advertising). In addition to its main offerings, Google provides an array of free tools that can contribute powerfully to your online marketing efforts.

Although Bing and Yahoo! are picking up some share of search by employing niche strategies, Google still has the lion's share. Through strategic acquisitions like YouTube, photo-sharing site Picasa and others, it's protecting its dominance. It pays to poke around Google's website from time to time to see what's new...and it's fun.

We spent some time there this week to round up for you a collection of Google tools – oldies-but-goodies and newbies -- that can really boost your inbound marketing success.

1. Google Analytics – Find out who's visiting your site and where they go – if anywhere - while there. A must for learning how to make your site more productive and to measure marketing results.
2. Google Keyword Tool – Indispensable for SEO. Find out how people really search. Your medical practice may be optimizing for 'pediatric cardiology' when patients are searching on 'children's heart problems'.
3. Alerts – Find out by email when you, your business, clients or competitors are mentioned on the web.
4. Blogger – Go ahead. Start your blog.
5. Picasa and YouTube – Edit and share photos about your business and start your own video channel with these Google acquisitions. A new tool – Picnik – lets you edit photos from a number of other photo sharing sites – including Flickr.
6. Realtime (New!) – See what your key audiences are talking about on a variety of social networks and blogs right now in a live stream.
7. Images – Find the perfect picture or graphic to illustrate your blog posts. Just search for them with the Creative Commons option so you can use them just by giving attribution to the creator.
8. Feedburner – Add an RSS feed to your site or blog using this Google acquisition. This allows your customers and prospects to automatically receive the compelling content you make.

9. Maps – Get a map for your Contact Us page where customers can zoom in from a satellite perspective to a street view!
10. Google Pack – A convenient place to download free software specially selected by Google to enhance your website and online capabilities – from anti-spyware to Adobe Acrobat Reader to Skype and more.

Take a tour of Google today. Keep in mind that the Google culture involves modesty. Click on the 'More' link and then 'Even More' to uncover its hidden gems

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