

Analyzing and Selecting a Suitable Media for Online Marketing

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Abstract

During the last years, the letter "E" has increased its importance not only in the world of information and communication technology (ICT), virtual businesses, and internet surfing but also in other sectors. It has become an important component for a considerable number of research fields such as in electronic marketing, electronic business, electronic finances, electronic trade, electronic distance learning, and electronic markets among others. The revolution in ICT has changed not only our lives but also the ways how people do business. Recently, it is noted that an increasing number of touristic operators use internet and other electronic media to achieve their marketing efforts by giving in this way priority to electronic marketing as a new philosophy and phenomena. Online marketing has as an aim to provide value to customers by using information technologies. It offers additions instruments to traditional marketing. Continues changes in online trade have a direct impact not only in instruments but also in the objectives and aims that require new tools and the usage of new strategies in order to be achieved. These factors (tools, objectives, aims and strategies) can be used to distinguish the instruments of online marketing from those of traditional marketing. To achieve this goal, traditional marketers use a variety of marketing variables including: price, advertising, distribution, product to satisfy actual and potential customers. Today, many organizations are spending more time and money to create online presence, creating of websites. In traditional marketing, the customer's role has been very passive, but today we can say that the world wide web uses the hypermedia concept which provides a more active role to the visitor of the web. Hypermedia means a variety of media content that can be accessed through hyperlinks and that can be used to conduct online marketing and to provide competitive advantages to the new economy. Studies suggest that technological advances have created new communication models and marketing channels that cause the greater impacts on marketing practices (e.g. the acceptance of electronic media as a living communication tool). This paper tries to present the concepts of Online Marketing and particular attention is provided to the manner on how to analyze which Kosovar or regional media on the Internet has greater visibility and what needs to be done to get the right attention of potential clients of our business.

Keywords: Marketing; internet; analysis; media; strategy; customers; information; communication.

Introduction

Over the recent years, digital marketing in internet, as a way of gaining attention in the market, has become an essential part of any successful business - no matter how large the business is.

The attraction of attention is a necessary ingredient for an effective advertisement. As a challenge still continues to be the issues on how to reach the maximum attractiveness of the customers, namely target customers. Today, the market to gain the attention of the consumers has become very competitive, as such this attention can be considered as a special monetary value. So, it can be considered that the market attention is a currency in itself.

Some authors define the online marketing as the achievement of marketing objectives by applying digital technologies, so it can efficiently identify, anticipate and satisfy the customer needs (Smith and Chaffey, 2005). Others, define it as the sum of all business activities conducted through the internet in order to find, locate, attract and retain customers (Kotler, 2000). While some others define the online marketing as a joint product of modern communications technology and old principles of marketing that organizations have used (Hall and Lieberman, 2012).

All these definitions can be summarized in a single slogan: "Online marketing is the marketing which uses the Internet as a media manifestation".

These definitions emphasize all the activities through the world wide web which aim at:

- Building communities that have or share common values;
- Provide powerful connections with current and potential customers;
- Attracting new businesses – retaining the current business;
- Building the identity of the brand;
- Ensuring cooperation between organizations and their partners.

Online Marketing is a process that builds and maintains customer relationships through on-line activities to facilitate the exchange of ideas, products, and services that satisfy the goals of both parties. This definition includes five basic components: the process, building and maintaining customer relationships, online, the exchange, meeting the objectives of both parties.

The goal of the marketing is to build and maintain the relationship with customers. However, it is highly important to emphasise that the goal of the online marketing is not only to build relationships with online customers but also to build the off-line relationships. The online marketing program is part of a broader campaign to satisfy customers who use both on-line and off-line services.

From its self definition, online marketing is related with those people who have internet access. Despite all this we can see that the success of an online marketing program depends also on the tools of traditional marketing.

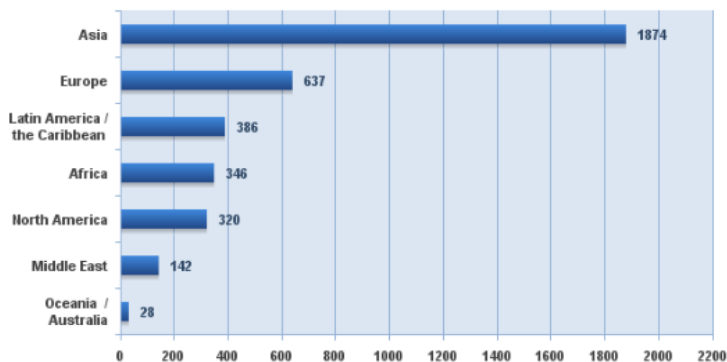
The understanding of the functions, the potentials and the benefits of online marketing would be necessity in the conditions of high competition (Stokes, 2010). Online marketing is an interactive system that allows measurable activities and that can be directed directly to the consumer (Bagwel, 2005). Moreover, the customer can choose the time and place where he wants to collaborate with the systems in the Internet. The marketing is traditionally considered as an organizational function, in other words, a whole set of processes for creating, communicating and distributing value to customers, and managing customer relationships by providing benefits for both parties. However, the question is: Is marketing simply a function within the firm or is it a philosophy or is it a whole set of related activities?

2. Marketing through internet

Traditionally, marketing is considered as a function of organization, in other words, a whole set of processes to create, to communicate and to distribute value to consumers and to manage the relationships with customers by providing benefits for both parties involved in the process (Smith and Chaffey, 2005).

Nowadays, in the age of globalization, internet is playing an essential role in all aspects of human life, including business. Today, it is thought that there are more than 3 billion users of internet in the world. Out of this number, 604 million Internet users come from Europe. On the other hand, the statistics for the region suggest that also in this part of the world there exists a considerable number of people who use internet. E.g. in Kosovo is estimated that the internet is used by over 1.4 million users, approximately 78% of the population (Internet World Stat, 2015). In neighbouring countries, such as in Albania there are over 1.8 million users while in Macedonia about 1.3 million users etc (Internet World Stat, 2015).

Figure 1: Internet users in the World according to geographic regions, in millions, as of 25 March, 2017



Source: Internet World Stats, 2017

As result, online marketing is considered as a co-operating system that enables the development of measurable activities. Such kind of marketing can be directed directly to the customer.

Marketing in the internet represents the achievement of marketing objectives by applying digital technologies, so it can efficiently identify, forecast and satisfy customer needs. This kind of marketing uses the internet as a medium of manifestation in order to find, to locate, or to maintain its consumers. It is a kind of union of contemporary technology of communication with the existing classical marketing principles, trying to build and maintain relationships with consumers through online activities. This kind of marketing offers great opportunities for businesses and removes time and space boundaries and as a result has an effect on international trade. Also with this marketing are removed the economic, political, religious restrictions that are raised from different countries

The advantages of online marketing

Web-based marketing, known as E-Marketing (online marketing), distributes the information regarding the product or service to the global audience at a much lower cost. It also can be said that the communicating with the audience, in contrast to traditional marketing, can not only be solved easily (easy targeting of specific groups), but such communication can be done in two directions.

What makes this type of marketing important is that it can measure how much and where it has distributed the information related to business activity. Therefore, also different decisions can be taken based on up-to-date, realistic and quality results.

Figure 1: Visitors of the site Mjellma.net by countries for the period from 1 to 26 December 2015

Country ?	Sessions ? ↓	% New Sessions ?	New Users ?
	33,755 % of Total: 100.00% (33,755)	40.52% Avg for View: 40.44% (0.20%)	13,678 % of Total: 100.20% (13,651)
1. Kosovo	23,065 (68.33%)	37.98%	8,761 (64.05%)
2. Albania	4,025 (11.92%)	52.65%	2,119 (15.49%)
3. Macedonia (FYROM)	3,959 (11.73%)	36.70%	1,453 (10.62%)
4. Serbia	472 (1.40%)	31.99%	151 (1.10%)
5. Israel	395 (1.17%)	32.41%	128 (0.94%)
6. Germany	293 (0.87%)	68.60%	201 (1.47%)
7. United Kingdom	241 (0.71%)	42.74%	103 (0.75%)
8. United States	180 (0.53%)	82.78%	149 (1.09%)
9. France	140 (0.41%)	46.43%	65 (0.48%)
10. Philippines	140 (0.41%)	30.71%	43 (0.31%)

Source: Statistics are generated based on site visits under the "Google Analytics"

1.2 Forms of Online Marketing

While the traditional forms of marketing are: TV, radio, magazines, newsletters, brochures, catalogues, posters, billboards and other printed forms, online marketing is in the forms of: business websites, video marketing, content marketing, social networking, advertisements across other web sites, email marketing, marketing through recommendation, search engine optimization (SEO)¹, search engine marketing (SEM)², etc.

Business Websites: every serious business that seeks to have a stable market should have its own websites in its domain. The site domain is the registered name of the site that enables the customer to access the business site and to gain various information. Business websites must be up-to-date with information and provide two-way communication. At least they should contain a contact form with site visitors.

Internet Video Marketing: presents the internet marketing process for the promotion of services, products and other relevant information for the business through video materials launched on sites or on certain internet channels, such as Youtube, Vimeo etc.

Content marketing: is a process of digital marketing through the creation of different special content such as: articles, billboards, electronic books, network guides, info-graphics, etc., so that the business can get the attention of as many consumers as possible.

Recommendative Marketing: it is a kind of marketing that is used when the business offers different rewards to clients who recommend to their friends the product or service of the business. For example, as a reward can be the extensions of the use of a free antivirus. If this product is recommended and used by 5 friends, the business rewards the customers with a 1 year free use license. For 10 friends 2 years, for 15 friends 3 years and so on.

Email Marketing: is a direct form of network marketing by sending direct messages to one or more customers via email.

Marketing on social networks: means trying to attract the attention of the visitors through the launching of the information in social networks for different products, service, brands, companies etc. The most sophisticated social networks are: Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, LinkedIn, Google Plus, Instagram, My Space, Pinterest, Snap Chat, Viber, Skype etc.

¹The number for Kosovo may be higher since Kosovo was just recently been added to the list of states by Facebook.

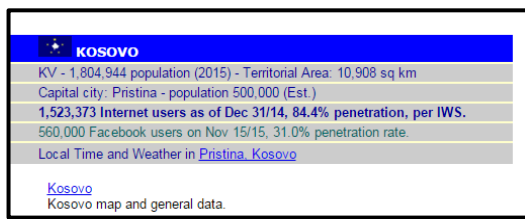
² The Website of Indeksonline.net, visited on December 28th, 2015

According to the statistics portal Statista, the most popular social networks in the world as of November 2015, are (Statista,2015):

Facebook (USA) with 1.55 billion users;
WhatsApp (USA) with 900 million users;
Qzone (China) with 653 million users;
Instagram (USA) with 400 million users;
Twitter (USA) with 316 million users;
Skype (USA) with 300 million users;
Viber (USA) with 249 million users.

Again, according to the Internet World Stats website, Facebook accounts for about 560 thousand users in the Republic of Kosovo¹, over 1 million users in Albania and over 960 thousand users in Macedonia (Internet World Stats, 2015).

Figure 2: General Data for the Republic of Kosovo, 2014-2015



KOSOVO
KV - 1,804,944 population (2015) - Territorial Area: 10,908 sq km
Capital city: Pristina - population 500,000 (Est.)
1,523,373 Internet users as of Dec 31/14, 84.4% penetration, per IWS.
560,000 Facebook users on Nov 15/15, 31.0% penetration rate.
Local Time and Weather in Pristina, Kosovo
Kosovo Kosovo map and general data.

Source: Internet World Stats, 2015

SEM Marketing (Search Engine Marketing) is a service offered by search engines such as Google, Bing, Yahoo, etc. to promote and to increase the visibility of the business websites. As an example is when the user writes the name of the business in the search engine, e.g. Google, and immediately the search engine finds the website of the business. Then the advertisement of the site, next to the information when requesting a certain key word regarding the similarity of business, country, product etc.

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is the technique and strategy for improving the visibility of the business site on the search engines. Usually it is accomplished by analyzing and adjusting the keywords that are in the head of the page, which are not visible for the users. Also, in order to improve the visibility often this form of network marketing is combined with marketing through content creation.

Example of Keywords from the index page portal portal, located in the code within the pages²:

```
<metaname="keywords" content="news, kosovo, albania, world, economy, politics, indeksonline, index, indexonline, index online">
```

Source: Web Site of indeksonline.net, 2015

Advertising on the site is known as a form of internet marketing which happens when on the web site, usually in the website of portals, is placed a banner with graphical, textual or combined content, in order to promote business's product, services, etc. Usually, the websites where this type of network marketing is applied are of regional or local character and have a large number of visitors.

Such web sites in Kosovo are: rtklive.com, telegrafi.com, time.net, infopress.com, gazetaexpress.com, indeksonline.net, zëri.info, kosovasot.info, kosovapress.com etc.

Figure 3: Advertising in the forms of banners in the web site of the Newspaper "Express"

¹According to SimilarWeb.com [last accessed on 28 December 2015

² According Alexa.com [last accessed 28 December 2015]



Source: Newspapers “Express”, 2015

The Analyze of Online Activities of a Business

Before it is decided regarding the business marketing, it is needed to conduct a series of analyzes that can be done by using manuals extracted one by one as well as automated or by using any paid service in order to conduct this analysis.

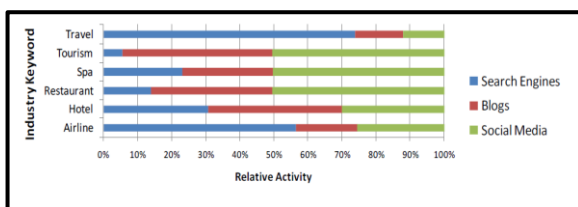
For example, if the business is a trade centre with branches throughout Kosovo, firstly is needed to be analyzed which internet site has conversations and writing activities for this area (e.g. trade centres), then are analyzed the web sites of electronic media such as portals, newspapers' and televisions' sites that have a large number of visits related with what ads they contain in this period, how they are ranked based on the number of visits and online traffic, from which places the site is most visited. Then we analyze the web sites of competitors, their traffic regarding online visits, the promotion of those websites, etc.

2.1. Determining the place where most of the activity for business products and services is happening

Initially, the analysis regarding the place where it is most appropriate to promote a product, service or business in the Internet, begins with the question: Where is the business network or industry most active in network activity? Where is talked more about these jobs? Are search engines? Are the blogs? Social media? (Misini, 2012).

The analysis on this topic is carried out by gathering information in Internet. Additional information can be gathered from the web sites that provide various statistics related to business topics. There are even web applications that process information into graphs. Such an application is the HubSpot.com

Figure 4: Information chart for some keywords and conversation activity digital media



Source: HubSpot, 2015

2.2. The measurement of detailed activity and of competition

Among the other analyzes that need to be carried out in detail is also the analysis of the internet activities of the competitors. One of the steps to do this analyze is to look at the rankings and the traffic of the competitors' websites in the region or in the local market. This analysis can be done by using any of the free services offered by sites such as: *alexa.com*, *compete.com*, *similarweb.com*, *feedcompare.com*.

Figure 5: The analysis of the online traffic of the websites of some Trading Centres in Kosovo

Sorted by:	Last report date	Showing:	Marketing Grade	Traffic Rank	Indexed Pages	Linking Domains	mozRank	
	albigroup.com Updated 12/28/2015	43	5,967,099	76	9	4.2	⚠ ⚙	
	minimax-ks.com Updated 12/28/2015	34	9,810,503	53	7	5.4	⚠ ⚙	
	etc-ks.com Updated 12/28/2015	35	3,786,219	67	7	3.8	⚠ ⚙	
	abi-center.com Updated 12/28/2015	10	6,094,404	10	3	3.5	⚠ ⚙	
	euro-food.org Updated 12/28/2015	30	13,836,663	22	4	2.6	⚠ ⚙	

3. The formulation of the network marketing strategy

The formulation of the network marketing strategy regarding on which internet channel the business is going to operate, is carried out in several steps (Hall and Lieberman, 2013):

- Setting the goal
- Identifying the target
- Studying the current clients
- Identifying the competitors
- Setting the strategy
- Tracking the results

Setting the Goal

Network marketing can do a lot work for the business. But firstly we must clearly define the goal. Usually we choose one or two goals, e.g.

We want to attract more visitors to our web site.

We would like to collect more email addresses from clients to send to them news and daily/weekly offers.

Once the goal is set, the process continues with the other steps that help to achieve this goal.

Identifying the target customers

In this step, is formulated the type of customers the business wants to have. What do they like? What are their problems? How do they make the orders? Have they previously bought from the competitors? In the process of identifying the target customers are also considered their gender, age, location, hobbies etc. All of this information helps to determine the best way on how to reach out the targeted customers.

Studying the current clients

This step can be done by directly asking the questions, e.g.: How did they find the business web site? Or, do they know that on the business web site they can get the latest information. In addition, the customers can be invited to complete a questionnaire that we have already published on the web site from where we will learn about their desires, requests, suggestions, etc.

Identifying the competitors

It is highly important to identify what are the competitors promoting competition and how are they gaining the attention of the customers attention. This information can greatly help the business to create a unique approach on how to gain the customer attention.

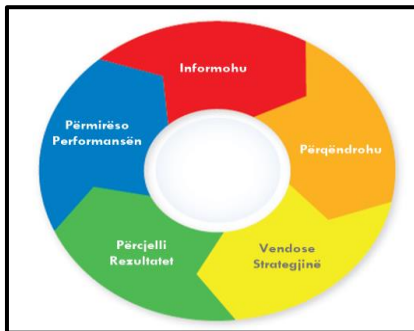
Setting the Strategy

In order to dramatically improve the result of a marketing strategy it is necessary to do the previously mentioned analyzes and to design a plan. Usually we choose one or two tactics that will work within our marketing budget and which have a meaning for our audience. Then it is necessary to dedicate the rest of the efforts to effectively manage this strategy. Many experts of internet marketing use the approach known as "test and edit" to get the highest results.

Tracking the results

Network marketing (online marketing) makes it easy to measure and track results. This measurement is carried out by closely following the responses, reactions, customer visits in our business. Through monitoring, measuring and analyzing the data in the network related to our customers we can make decisions such as: in which programs is needed to increase the investments, which programs do not function well, which form of network marketing works better, where to focus the information and newsletters for the business, product or service.

Figure 6: The circle of marketing strategy formulation in the network



Source: Hall and Lieberman, 2013

The statistical analysis of regional and local portals

It is understood that before deciding to advertise our product, service or business on any regional or local portal on the internet, the people from the web portal marketing department along with the price list, may also request statistical information on site visits on daily or monthly basis. However the statistics sent from the portals, may be swollen. So we decide to conduct the analysis regarding which web portals have more visits and from which countries.

The analyzes related to these online portals can be done using the services provided by many specialized websites for this purpose. The questions that are of interest for us at this stage of the analysis are:

Who are the top 10 portals or web sites that have the most visits in the markets where the product is placed or where our service is provided;

From which countries are mostly the visits;

What are the visit statistics for the last 3 or 6 month period.

Demography (gender, age, education, location) etc.

One of the sites that can help in the analysis for this purpose and which offer free information, is the Alexa.com site. Regarding a local example, ten pages with are mostly visited in Albania, according to the Alexa.com site, are:






Table 1: The 10 most visited sites in the Region

Gazetaexpress.com	Lajmi.net
Facebook.com	Koha.net
Google.com	Google.al
Youtube.com	Merrjep.com

Source: Alexa.com, 2015

In this page, Kosovo is still not listed as a state, so the potential customers that we may consider are from Albania and Serbia, since ISPs offering internet services in Kosovo, these internet connection are mostly through Albania and some through Serbia.

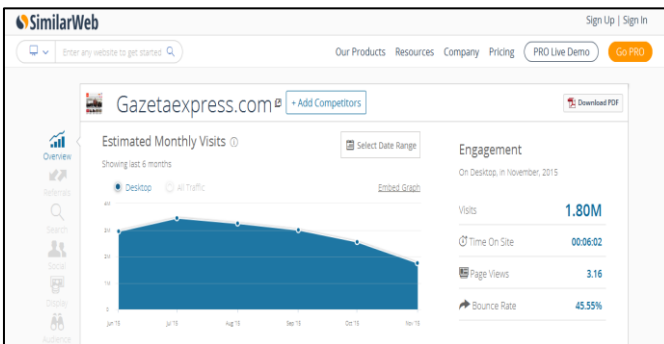
Figure 7: From which countries come the site visitors of Gazetaexpress.com and rankings in those countries

Country	Percent of Visitors	Rank in Country
 Albania	48.9%	1
 Germany	12.0%	398
 Switzerland	9.9%	69
 Denmark	5.8%	1,755
 Italy	4.3%	1,368

Source: Alaxa.com

A similar site that offers some free analysis is also SimilarWeb.com. Also this site confirms that the GazetaExpress.com is the most visited webpage in Albania. Above is presented an interesting graphic for visits in the last 6 months, how long visitors stay on the site, and what is the number of visits. For the period 15 October - 15 November 2015, this portal has been visited by 1.8 million visitors.

Figure 9: Some statistics on visits of Gazetaexpress.com



Source: Similarweb.com

Table 2: The position of some Kosovo portals according to visits and rankings in Albania and in the World

Position	Website / portal	Visits as of 1 November 2015, in millions	Country Rank (in Albania) ²	Global Rank
1	Gazetaexpress.com	1.8	1	1,140
2	Koha.net	0.84	7	4,821

¹ Chadwick, Simon, *The Research Industry Grows Up – and Out*, Marketing News, p. 9, 1998

² This article is the result of the research project called: "Rationality and progress in science. A proposal for analogical rationality, from the epistemology of Evandro Agazzi" developed in the doctorate in Philosophy from the Pontificia Bolivariana University. This project is supported by the research directorate of the San Buenaventura University in Cali (Colombia). Cost Center number 34516035. Thanks to professor German Warrior Pine PhD who advised this doctoral research project.

3	Telegrafi.com	1.6	14	20,893
4	Botasot.info	0.6	29	14,594
5	Indeksonline.net	0.36	80	67,377

Source: SimilarWeb.com

5. Recommendations

- The study has a strong practical orientation, building a profile of electronic services present on economic operators' websites to enhance customer satisfaction. So it is important to know what electronic services should a website contain from a consumer perspective in order to provide the best results.
- Despite the strategic importance of the Internet and website as a means of attracting and retaining consumers, understanding the needs of consumers in this area remains subject to study. However, these knowledge are valid mainly for operators, which have limited resources to undertake search or marketing campaigns.
- The field of electronic services can be considered as one of the fastest growing new search fields. There is still no common consensus as to how various electronic services affect perceptions or consumer behavior by different industries¹.
- The informational aspect of the website makes consumers get the right and timely information at any time, which is an important quality criterion.
- The success of e-marketing depends on electronic services. Despite the strategic importance of the Internet and website as a means of attracting and retaining consumers, understanding the needs of consumers in this area remains subject to study.
- The intensity and pressure of competition both inside and outside the country has increased considerably, therefore different companies should not rely solely on their assets but should be differentiated through electronic services to provide competitive advantages.

6. Conclusion

From all that was said on this paper we conclude that we need to increase the interest in advertising our activities through the internet. With this kind of marketing we make the right choice. The field of electronic services can be considered as one of the fastest growing new search fields. There is still no common consensus as to how different electronic services affect consumer perception or behavior in different industries. Internet enables us to advertise quickly worldwide, to anyone who is interested in our products or services. Online advertising is the best way to make our activity recognized, a new and extensive information tool that has been successfully applied for many years in all other countries of the world. Fortunately the same is happening now with Kosovo.

To advertise our online activity means to identify faster and more, meaning to be more successful than others, meaning to rank higher than others in the main search engines, meaning to have a bigger number of visitors, summing it all in one single sentence: the gateway that enables us to gain massive publicity.

Stop expensive advertising on TV and Radio, now we have the opportunity to pay cheaper and achieve a faster success. The Internet is increasingly becoming the main street of any business and business in the world.

Companies in Kosovo must definitely become part of this broader community, to be included in the new era of virtualization and contemporary technology. Now it is no longer difficult to open a business and advertise it with as little expense and make it as profitable as possible. Through technology, we can buy, sell, trade and compete with other firms. The newest form for a safer and more successful business is undoubtedly today Electronic Marketing.

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