



## Aftermarketing Quarterly, Summer, '05

The eMarketing Newsletter for the Aftermarket



As always, there are about 7 ways to take yourself off of my mailing list, so if you find this information not valuable or annoying, please unsubscribe. On the other hand if you really, really like it, forward it on to a colleague.

For additional information about this topic or related marketing topics, visit [www.digstrat.com](http://www.digstrat.com). You can even share what you know or ask questions in our forums. You can also email me directly at [dani@digstrat.com](mailto:dani@digstrat.com).

OK, I'm hot. I'm not complaining because back in the winter when it was the very opposite of hot, I swore I wouldn't complain when it got hot. The fan on my computer seems to have a brain of its own and it is humming away at an unusually fast pace. I think the computer is hot.

So why oh why would want to be reading an article about eMarketing in the aftermarket? It gives you an excuse to put your feet up on the desk, sip that iced tea and learn something that can move your company forward in the branding and marketing arena at a very low cost. When your boss sees the increases in requests coming off the 'Net and he knows he didn't have to add bodies to the budget, he will think you have been working very, very hard. That's a good thing.

A couple of weeks ago, I was asked to lead the eMarketing Panel at the Aftermarket eForum in Chicago. Some of the information herein was to be presented there, but due to scheduling and time conflicts, I had to move through it pretty quickly. So, if you attended the eForum and missed out, here's your chance to catch up.

Let's skip right to the goodies, now. Our project for today is foundational. If you haven't already done so, (and you probably haven't) you need to create a spreadsheet. Don't fret, there isn't any math involved. This spreadsheet is the basic tool you are going to use to track two things for the rest of your eMarketing career, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Pay Per Click (PPC).

### Do this.

**First**, write a list of all the key phrases that you can think of for your product mix. Let's use my favorite as an example; Sparkplugs. Your key phrase list would consist of thing like spark plugs, sparkplugs, spark plug, sparkplug, Honda sparkplug, igniter, iridium spark plug, iridium sparkplug, etc. In the

## In Other News...

**SEMA forms second standing committee in its history**, The Business Technology Task Force, headed by SEMA Executive Board Member, Jon Wyly.

**SEMA hires Alise Miner as VP of IT.**

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first column of the spreadsheet, enter all of these key phrases. Note that I have included sparkplug as one word and as two words.

**Next**, Set up an account at Overture.com. This is a part of Yahoo! and is actually now called Yahoo! Search Marketing. You can use your own credit card for this if the boss is out of town, because we aren't going to spend any money with it. We are going to use it to track down some additional key phrases and get the numbers of actual searches per month for each of these key phrases. Once you are in and have established an account, go to keyword tools and start entering your brainstormed key phrases one at a time. The Overture key word tool will tell you how often searches are performed for your key phrases and suggest additional key phrases. Add the additional ones to your spreadsheet. In the second column of your spreadsheet enter the number of times per month that each key phrase is searched for.

**Finally**, Create columns to track your rankings on some of the search engines. There are a number of tools available that you can use or you can actually go to each site and type in the key phrase. I like [www.googlerankings.com](http://www.googlerankings.com), where you can enter up to ten key phrases at a time and check them against, Google, Yahoo and MSN. This does take some time. Each search is about 20 seconds or so. You will need to get your Google API number to do this. Go here to get that puppy, <https://www.google.com/accounts>

You are going to check your rankings on each of the search engines you choose. See the example below:

Key Phrase	Searches/Month	Google	Yahoo	Google	Yahoo
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		1/05	1/05	6/05	6/05
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NGK Spark Plug	3862	3	5	2	5
Performance Plug	4190	0	0	0	0
Honda Sparkplug	5583	0	0	23	0
Champion Spark Plug	5600	2	0	1	1
Oxygen sensor	6325	0	0	0	0
spark plug	10456	16	0	14	10

These are clearly important key phrases for this business as evidenced by the number of searches/month being performed for each. In the example above, you can see that through a combination of great SEO, appropriate Pay Per Click and a bit of luck that we moved up 1 point for “NGK Spark Plugs” over the five month period at Google. We went from non existent to first at Yahoo for “Champion Spark Plug”, climbed two points for “spark plug” at Google and also did very well for the same key phrase at Yahoo.

Again, these charts are the foundation for everything you do. If you want to build traffic to a number of different websites that you own, then you need to build a sheet for each website.

Some 75% of users will find your websites through directories and search engines. That means they are going to type in XM Radio or Running boards, as in our previous example or motor oil or whatever and then click on one of the results that are presented. If you have done your Pay Per Click effectively (look for the PPC article in a future installment or go to [www.digstrat.com](http://www.digstrat.com) and view the PPC Webinar I did for SEMA in June), at least you can be guaranteed of a presence in the paid results. But what about the natural search results?

In May of '04, a Search Engine User Attitudes Survey by iProspect indicated:

\*60.5 percent of Google, Yahoo!, MSN and AOL users selected a natural search result over paid search advertisements as the most relevant on a sample query. We can't ignore 60+ percent of users, so how can we work to make sure that we show up as high as possible on the page in the natural search results for our chosen key words? It all starts with measuring, as in the spreadsheet example above. The folks at Lund International says, “If it's worth doing, its worth measuring” (I have that from a very good inside source, who shall remain anonymous).

**Basic Search Engine Optimization**

Search engines vary in the way they use the information on your website to rank your pages in natural search results. Google, for instance, no longer uses Meta Tags (see below) to determine relevance. Most other search engines still do. Let's keep this simple by talking about the 3 most important SEO issues.



### Example of Meta Tag

```
<meta name="keywords"
content="NGK Spark plugs, Splitfire
sparkplugs, Champion spark plug,
Autolite sparkplug, Denso, Iridium,
Platinum, KYB shocks, KYB struts,
AFE filters, K and N filters, Denso
Alternators, Nippondenso Starters,
wire sets, plug wires, ngk wire sets,
ignition wires, racing, performance,
truck plugs, champion truck plugs,
AC, Stock Car, nitrous injection, fuel
injection, technical information,
racing plug chart, electrodes, gold,
palladium, fouling, bridging, pre
ignition, distributorless ignition,
Champion, Denso, Nippondenso,
Splitfire, Autolite, gap, auto parts,
truck parts, light truck">
```

**Page titles.** What does it say in the blue bar at the top of your webpage? The title tag is an important way that search engines determine the relevance of your website to a particular search. The earlier the key words appear in your title bar, the higher your ranking (generally) for that key word. If your title bar says, Welcome to the fantastic website of Wingding Industries, maker of all kinds of tail lights for your car and truck. Then your title tags are optimized for the words “Welcome, to, the, fantastic” and not much else. Use your keyword master spreadsheet to position your important keywords toward the beginning of your title tag. If tail lights is your important keyword, then try “Tail lights for your car and truck made by Wingding Industries”.

**Meta Tags.** Despite the fact that Google no longer uses Meta Tags to determine relevancy to a particular search, almost all of the other search engines do. In your web page code there is an HTML tag called, “Meta Tags”. This is an area of the code where you can list all of your important key words or phrases, thereby increasing the possibility of a higher position when someone searches on those words and phrases. It is recommended that you don’t use a particular key word more than 3 or 4 times as you will be penalized by the search engines for trying to spam them.

**Content.** Content has become increasingly important for a number of reasons. First, it is our belief from monitoring all of the various search engine commentators that key words that appear high on the webpage in text format are utilized by the search engines to determine relevancy of the site for those key words. In other words, if you are a site whose important key words include sparkplugs and oxygen sensors, that those words should be used in the text that appears near the top of your web page.

Secondly, the more content you have about a particular subject, again let’s use sparkplugs as the example, the more relevant the page actually is to the person searching for information about sparkplugs. Your site will gain in popularity among those looking for sparkplug information and will therefore be ranked higher by the search engines when they display results for sparkplug-related searches. This is true for content that in the form of chats, forums and blogs as well.

This brings up the point that the popularity of your website also plays an important part in your search standings. The more popular your website is for a given topic, the higher your listing will appear on the search results page.

One further point about search relevancy. It is a process. If you do a really great job on your page titles and meta tags and provide valuable content for a particular topic, over time, your website will continue to rise in the search results. Success begets success for search results ranking.

Let me mention one further idea. You can’t rank highly for a huge amount of diverse keywords, but you can build web pages targeting a specific topic. If you sell Sparkplugs and Oxygen sensors, you might want to build a set of pages devoted to sparkplugs and a second set of pages devoted to oxygen sensors. You can build these within a single URL or develop separate URL’s for each topic.

Next quarter (I hope it doesn’t take me that long) we will take a look at how to stay top of mind with our customers through an almost free little trick called email Marketing.

**COMMENTS AND CONTRIBS:** If you want to write an article on

**Next Issue:**

**Email Marketing**

emarketing or traditional marketing strategy, and share what you know with over 3,700 folks in the industry, feel free to submit it to [danj@digstrat.com](mailto:danj@digstrat.com). We will consider all appropriate submissions. If you have comments or corrections on anything you have read herein, submit it to the same email address, and thanks.

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Stay Tuned!

Member

