

Putting SEO and Marketing PR to Work for Your Business

Marketing PR is now best practice in the HR/benefits marketplace.

Marketing PR is the integration of traditional PR and marketing tactics that combine social media and other Internet-based activities – all of which can generate more search engine visibility, media visibility, sales leads and brand support.

With Marketing PR, all marketing and PR initiatives support marketing objectives, such as lead generation and media placements, which result in verifiable ROI. Marketing PR allows HR vendors to incorporate their marketing strategies, Internet technology, public relations and sales goals into activities that generate more leads without increasing their marketing budgets.

Marketing press releases, blogs and webinars—all common tools of Marketing PR—have supplemented, and in some cases replaced, traditional marketing tactics such as print advertising, in the HR/benefits marketplace.

“In the last year, we have seen a dramatic shift in marketing spending from traditional marketing to online initiatives”, says Mark Willaman, founder of HRmarketer.com, the largest marketing and media visibility service in the human resource industry. “This trend is not surprising when you consider that 72 percent of Americans use a search engine to find news, and 84 percent use a search engine to find information, products and services. If your company’s marketing and PR activities are not geared toward maximizing your online presence, you are missing sales opportunities.”

PR 2.0 and Marketing 2.0 – which refer to interactive online communication through blogs, RSS feeds and podcasts – have become buzzwords for the HR/benefits industry. Most HR suppliers are aware of the change in marketing best practices, but they have yet to adapt to these new trends because they are not exactly sure how to start. HRmarketer has been helping suppliers get accustomed to these search engine optimization (SEO) and Marketing PR trends, as well as helping the suppliers integrate these tactics with their marketing and PR activities.

Case Study in Marketing PR effectiveness: Axiome Sourcing

Axiome Sourcing aids companies in reducing costs, enforcing policies and minimizing risks associated with sourcing and managing global contingent labor and third-party services. With their new webinar, Axiome’s goal was to get people to sign up in exchange for the accompanying white paper, which would increase website traffic and generate new leads. Axiome achieved great results with just one marketing press release.

With HRmarketer’s help Axiome’s first search-optimized marketing press release generated 52 new leads and increased website traffic by 32 percent. Axiome’s marketing press release drove people to the webinar because they wanted to receive the white paper. Of the 52 leads generated by the marketing press release, 25 were qualified buyers.

Since then, Axiome has continued working with HRmarketer to distribute marketing press releases that have achieved even better results.



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Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

It is important to note that your company's Web presence increases your chances of being found by a prospect. However, it is even more imperative to realize that not having any online presence will eliminate prospects because your website is most likely the primary introduction they will have to your business. More than half of consumers do not trust a company, product or service that does not have a website. The majority of consumers begin their search for companies, products or services by looking at websites. In the HR/benefits marketplace, a company's online visibility has quickly gained considerable significance in the minds of prospects, and that online presence is valued throughout every step of the sales process. Thus, companies who have Internet visibility will reach prospects more often.

Unfortunately even if you have a website, most companies' marketing and PR activities are not integrated with and/or do not support their SEO efforts. A company's online visibility is a two-part process consisting of (1) search-optimizing their website and (2) incorporating Marketing PR techniques in their ongoing marketing and PR activities. In addition to achieving higher, better search engine rankings and greater online visibility, companies who adhere to this strategy will also realize increased website traffic and more sales leads.

Search-Optimizing A Website: The Basics

There are some basic things every company should do to search-optimize their website. While these alone do not guarantee high organic search results rankings, they are **pre-requisites for your Marketing PR – which will result in better SEO, increased website traffic and more sales leads.** These include:

1. **Page URL's:** Instead of having generic names for your Web pages (e.g. "services.html") use names that reinforce your keywords and clearly explain what the page content includes (e.g., "background_screening_services.html").
2. **Page Titles and META Tags:** Search engines use title tags to gather information about your website. A lot of websites have the same title for every page. This is a mistake. Each page on your

Major Determinants of Site Ranking

1. Page URL's (e.g., "background_screening_services.html" versus "services.html")
2. Page Titles and META tags
3. Page and site Content
4. Internal Site Links
5. Links to Your Site from Other Sites (Marketing PR)



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website should have a unique title that reflects the page content. Title tags should be about 5 to 10 words in length and include your company's name and keyword phrases that relate to the respective page. Description tags provide a summary of the page in fewer than 200 characters while keyword tags include 7 to 10 relevant keywords and phrases.

3. **Page and Site Content:** Integrate your keyword phrases into the visible text copy for each Web page. The more relevant content the better (more chances of search engines and buyers finding your site) which is why we like glossary's, eNewsletter archives, blogs, white papers, case studies, etc.
4. **Internal Links:** Link your keywords to other relevant pages on your own site.
5. **Links to Your Site from Other Sites:** This is the only item on this list that you have less than 100% control over. You can waste a lot of time attempting link exchanges, but in our experience, the most productive way of getting other sites to link to yours is through an aggressive Marketing PR campaign. We discuss this in the following section.

Incorporating Marketing PR into Your Ongoing Tactical Marketing Plan

Most HR suppliers do not know how to use online search visibility to generate demand. In fact, HR/benefits suppliers under-spend on SEO and Marketing PR. SEO and SEM (search engine marketing) are vital to vendors who want to reach HR/benefits buyers because those buyers are using search engines when they search for vendors. So, it is not enough to just have your company website search optimized one time and then never touch it again.

You need to match your company's Internet presence with your buyers' searches, you can do this using Marketing PR and SEM. SEM entails placing links to your company's website in certain locations where a prospect is most likely to search for a vendor, such as on the first page of a SERP (search engine results page) on Google or Yahoo! A proven way to elevate your site's "organic" listing on a search engine is through Marketing PR and SEM. Organic



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(meaning natural or free) SEO listings are more noticed and clicked on than paid listings. A search optimized press release, like those sent through HRmarketer.com, will result in significantly more online exposure of your release, drive more traffic to your website and ultimately boost your site's organic listings in major search engines (SEO).

Marketing Press Releases

While most traditional PR resources are usually not being allocated to promote marketing goals in the HR/benefits marketplace, the fact is that a nominal investment in a Marketing PR tactic, such as marketing press releases, can create a remarkable outcome. Marketing press releases that are distributed over the Internet will allow prospects to find you when they perform a keyword search.

Marketing PR uses marketing press releases to increase lead generation and also to enhance and maintain search engine visibility. In order for your release to be most effective, it should contain keywords with embedded hyperlinks that will take the reader to your website. Unlike traditional press releases, search optimized marketing press releases do not have to be picked up by a reporter in order for them to effectively drive leads and support Internet visibility.

A search optimized marketing press release employs a headline that targets prospects and body copy that includes embedded hyperlinks that link to your website. Using a wire service that allows for these hyperlinks, such as HRmarketer's Direct2Net service, will make your marketing press release more effective. Releases sent through HRmarketer also get distributed to thousands of media outlets including HR and employee benefit web portals and media outlets (eNewsletters, blogs, etc.), many of which "pick up" the release – giving you added online visibility and more links back to your site. Over time, this increases your online visibility, drives traffic to your website, generates sales leads and enhances your SEO. It's a snowball effect and it works well.

HRmarketer's media relations and support service can help you create both traditional and marketing press releases. With this service, HRmarketer will aid

Marketing PR uses marketing press releases to increase lead generation and also to enhance and maintain search engine visibility. HRmarketer can help you increase your online visibility, drive traffic to your website and generate sales leads with the following services:

- SEO
- Direct2Net
- Press release distribution
- Media relations and support



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you in structuring newsworthy subject lines and will provide you with unlimited training and support. In addition, HRmarketer can provide you with a number of media outlets such as HR and benefits periodicals, magazines and other publications. Our service will also give you information about each media outlet, including press contacts, editorial calendars, byline article opportunities, target audience demographics and more.

Blogs

Blogs have become increasingly visible in the online world—currently 49 percent of HR professionals read them. This means that just over half of HR professionals are behind this trend. Search optimized blogs are of escalating importance for HR vendors because they serve as an information source as well as an effective Marketing PR tool. For example, a buyer searching for a vendor can read other buyer and vendor blogs and rely on that information when making a decision. While not essential to success, blogging can offer a competitive advantage for your company.

Blogs are written in a journalistic style, their subjects range anywhere from detailed accounts of individuals' personal lives to business musings from CEOs. When updated regularly and with new material, search-optimized blogs can serve as an effective marketing tool for your company. They also provide readers with important information about your firm or the HR/benefit industry as a whole. An example of an effective blog is the [HRmarketer.com Blog](#).

With the help of HRmarketer, you can craft a blog for your company and leverage it to create a competitive advantage. The [HRmarketer.com Blog](#) provides a number of tips for creating and maintaining a useful search-optimized blog and directs you to other helpful blogs.

Other Marketing PR Tactics

HRmarketer provides information and support for other Marketing PR tactics such as webinars, podcasts and RSS feeds. HRmarketer's HR webinar service can help you promote webinars successfully by posting your webcast on a highly visible directory that is accessed by other HR buyers. In addition, HRmarketer will provide you with information about how to effectively use a



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webinar, such as how to create it, promote it and extend its shelf-life.

HRmarketer and the [HRmarketer.com Blog](#) will help you understand and use RSS feeds and podcasts, as well as provide other tips and tools for effectively using Marketing PR.

With the rise of Marketing PR in the HR/benefits marketplace, it is not enough for HR vendors to notice this trend—they must become accustomed to it and use it to leverage a competitive advantage for their companies. With services that provide information, advice and support for HR vendors adapting to the Marketing PR trend, HRmarketer can help you and your company stay ahead of the curve.



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Terms you should know

Blog — a contraction of Web log; a website where entries are made in journal style and displayed in a reverse chronological order. Blogs often provide commentary or news on a particular subject, such as food, politics, or local news; some function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs.

Marketing PR — the integration of traditional PR and marketing tactics, in combination with social media and other Internet-based activities, which generates more search engine visibility, media visibility, sales leads and brand support.

Podcast — a multimedia file that is distributed by subscription (paid or unpaid) over the Internet using syndication feeds, for playback on mobile devices and computers. Like "radio" it can mean both the content and the method of broadcast.

RSS — Really Simple Syndication; RSS is a family of web feed formats used to publish frequently updated pages, such as blogs or news feeds. Consumers of RSS content use special browsers called aggregators to watch for new content in dozens or even hundreds of web feeds.

SEM — search engine marketing; a set of marketing methods to increase the visibility of a website in search engine results pages (SERPs). Other than SEO (defined below), the other two methods of SEM are: (1) Pay per click advertising which uses sponsored search engine listings to drive traffic to a web site. The advertiser bids for search terms, and the search engine ranks ads based on a competitive auction as well as other factors. (2) Paid inclusion can provide a guarantee that the website is included in the search engine's natural listings. As of 2006 Google, does not offer this service.

SEO — search engine optimization; improving the number and/or quality of visitors to a web site from "natural" (aka "organic" or "algorithmic" search engine) listings. In effect, SEO is marketing by appealing to machine algorithms to increase search engine relevance and web traffic.

Webinar — a web conference; a group meeting or live presentation over the Internet. In a web conference, each participant sits at their own computer, and is connected to other participants via the Internet. The most basic feature of a web conference is screen sharing, whereby conference participants see whatever is on the presenter's screen.

About HRmarketer.com

HRmarketer.com is a service of Fisher Vista LLC, a marketing and information services firm focusing exclusively on the human capital industry. The company services over 300 human resource and employee benefit service providers, helping them generate publicity, web site traffic, sales leads and improved SEO. HRmarketer brings you the latest information on industry leaders, the tools they use and how they use them. HRmarketer is the # 1 Internet marketing and media visibility service for companies selling to human resource departments and/or targeting employee benefit brokers and consultants. Founded in 2000, HRmarketer is used by recruitment and staffing, payroll, employee benefit, training and development, outsourcing and other human resource suppliers, as well as PR and marketing agencies. HRmarketer combines a database of marketing and PR opportunities with press release distribution, campaign management, business intelligence and advisory services. Learn more by visiting www.HRmarketer.com.

