

WHITE PAPER

**The best of both worlds:**

## **Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Public Relations (PR)**

**Hamburg, 5 September 2013** – Many companies are currently wondering how to manage communication within the vast quantity of present-day target media. While previously there only used to be print (consumer and trade press) and electronic media (TV and radio), the World Wide Web's triumph has led to a hitherto unimaginable degree of complexity.

Media websites and e-newsletters, thematic portals, forums, blogs and social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest have to be operated strategically. Especially social media in their ever-changing versions have unsettled companies on a large scale. Mid-size businesses in the capital goods industry without end-consumer contact feel particularly challenged and do not know how to react to these new developments, if at all. This uncertainty is linked to a crucial question that has finally struck home in almost all companies: "What is required for us to be ranked amongst the first hits via Google & Co., and who can help us to be on top?"

The second part of the question is relatively easy to answer. To achieve this there are specialised agencies equipped with the appropriate skills and technology. But it is not quite that simple since technology alone is not the answer to the whole issue. Content plays a vital role as well. This is where PR professionals have far broader skills than IT specialists. Since Google has changed its rules in favour of high-quality content, it has become even more important to pay this matter due attention.

### **But what does Search Engine Optimization, short SEO, stand for anyway?**

The most important thing for search engines, such as Google (with a market share of more than 90 percent), Bing and Yahoo, is to recognise a website's or web shop's relevance. A top hit depends on the keywords any web page is supposed to contain. So if a reliable website reviews a product or a company, it has a positive impact on that company's position and ranking on the World Wide Web. By backlinks, which means references to one's own website on other webpages, the search engine recognises major importance. The more reliable webpages link to yours, the better.

But it takes reputable content to get you onto high-standard websites. There are still plenty of platforms where it is easy to place articles and generate coverage. However, these platforms are often of little value or significance – sometimes coverage there might even get lost in the depth of the World Wide Web. If Google recognises that an article has been lodged in many of these kinds of portals and that this feature always shows the same content (duplicated content), it will be signalled as dubious information. And this now is something that could be "punished" by Google.

The positive effect of this, on the other hand, is that well-written articles featured in high-quality online magazines or wide-reaching online media outlets – such as online editions of Handelsblatt, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Die Zeit, BILD, or also placements on special-interest portals, counselor communities, or most important industry webpages – will significantly improve one's search engine ranking.

Even if you happen not to be among those top-tier media outlets with their company news, there is no need to despair. For example, a company from the car component industry is supposed to be placed in all relevant trade media outlets with its different versions, including print, online and e-newsletters. This is suitable communication – as opposed to being in online portals where anyone can publish anything and which have nothing to do with the associated industry.

So we have come full circle: SEO-specialised agencies have excellent tools that can help a customer to get a high-ranking search engine result. PR professionals happen to know exactly how to generate the valuable content that target media will be interested in and thus increase the chances of being published by them. This requires an elaborate strategy, attractive story angles and highly skilled editors. A PR agency also creates media lists that are highly appropriate for the customer's needs. It's not just about media outlets. It is also important to engage the right editor for a certain topic and only to contact this journalist. If this principle is ignored it can lead to resentments within the editorial office, which ultimately have a negative impact on the public relations produced there. PR agencies have the necessary tools and contacts to compile appropriate distribution lists. Thorough agencies also analyse a media outlet's topic schedules, so they know in which issue a certain subject will be featured. A key to success is also to keep in touch with important editors directly and individually.

In choosing their agency partners regarding communications, companies or organisations should think about how to combine contemporary online marketing, including SEO, and classical public relations. On the agency side, two companies recently took the logical step: Industrie-Contact (IC AG), one of Hamburg's leading PR and communications agencies, and seosupport GmbH, a top-notch company for search-engine optimization and online marketing from Berlin, have teamed up and agreed on a cooperation. That's why both companies can now offer a service to their customers that meets all current and contemporary requirements.

Industrie-Contact (IC AG), based in Hamburg, serves companies (B2C and B2B) in Germany and abroad. Its key competence is to plan and realise customised communication solutions for global players as well as small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Client service is provided by specifically skilled and trained staff and IC's management. Additionally IC is part of the Public Relations Global Network – PRGN is a network with nearly 50 partners on all continents.

seosupport GmbH, based in Berlin, has been owner-operated since its inception in 2006 and specialises in search-engine optimization and online marketing. With experts in all main areas related to online-based e-commerce, this well-known company is equipped perfectly for all tasks in this field.

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