WEB-Marketing Strategy for SMEs

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Abstract: Based on the current trend of WEB-marketing strategy the article presents a Romanian SME case study. During the case study are detailed all the steps taken by the SMEs in the process of assuring an online presence (development and establishment of the SME’s online portal). The literature review shows that without WEB-marketing techniques the company and its services remains unknown. The portal development makes use of web 3.0 tools, such as bootstrap technology, open source software and paradigm and cloud services - Qlik Sense business intelligence (BI). The BI interface offer wide capabilities of data extracting, manipulation and complex analyzes

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1. WEB 3.0 Revolution

With the web 3.0 revolution appeared new technologies, tools and models of web-marketing, adapted to the globalization trend. Some of technologies available at convenient costs or free of charge refer to semantic web and databases, bootstrap technologies, cloud technologies and open source paradigm. We are moving with quick steps towards Web 4.0, dominated by intelligent personal agents in the years of 2020-2030 [www1].

Nowadays no company could afford to avoid an online presence. Even SMEs that target a small area of market, they realize that have to launch their business online, in order to win the struggle of high competition. The online offer is also very rich. That is why e-marketing is not an option, but a must.

“The relationship between e-marketing strategy and internationalization process success is moderated by e-marketing tactics - website design and firm’s orientation towards technologies” [Skudiene, 2015]

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E-marketing is an expanding and dynamic field that needs a skilled workforce. E-marketing education is going through a transitional period at different levels [Shaltoni, 2016].

In order to conduct their business online any SME assumes 4 essential pillars of e-marketing internationalization strategy:

1) access of accurate, current, and utile information and the ability to process and fructify it,
2) organizational culture towards globalization mindset,
3) business networking and communication based on Blue Ocean Strategy [Tonis, 2016],
4) sustainable open innovation [Tonis, 2016].

Based on these pillars one SME can set up e-marketing strategies with coherent e-marketing tactics to add significant value in the successful internationalization process.

Given the continuously growing importance of digital marketing it had been illustrated how companies characterized by complex selling processes can harness Web analytics to demonstrate how digital marketing activities benefit their businesses [Järvinen, 2015].

2. Case Study - Elements of WEB-marketing Strategy for a Romanian SMEs

It has been demonstrated how important for Romanian SMEs is to be connected in a digital ecosystem as Network Business Environment (NBE) [Tonis a, 2015]. Thus, a portal for Romanian SMEs, available online at: http://smesonline.eu, is proposed. Below are presented the steps taken for the development and establishment of the portal.

2.1. Platform Name

It has been done a complex analysis with Google Keyword Planner regarding the keywords: “IMMonline”, “mediu virtual de afaceri”, “digitalizeaza afacerea”, “dezvoltare durabila”, “inovare”, “smesonline” having Romania as target. For these keywords, the competition is low. This analysis returned 658 keywords and the average monthly searches, the competition and suggested BID, which reveals that Romanians uses a lot of English words in their internet search, such as “start up”, “entrepreneur”, “lean startup”. For these words the competition is medium. In their online search Romanian uses frequently the keywords “afaceri”-2900 avg. monthly searches, “afacere” and “afacerea ta online”. This means that the site has to have an English version, too and that in the metadata site keywords it has to be used both Romanian and English word with low, or medium competition, as search engines to be able to return the site on the first page resulted.

An interesting conclusion is that the suggested BID is higher for other keywords, such as: “dezvoltare durabila”, “start up business”, “startups”, “entrepreneur”, that means that the site will receive more impressions using these words, but the price is also higher. In the SEO campaign of the site it is recommended to use these words, in order to increase the traffic on the site, even is more expensive.

A similar research had been done with phrases such as: “IMM Online”, “IMM digital”, “IMM Virtual”, “IMM inovativ”, “IMM sustenabil”, “sme online” and “smes online”.

From all above keywords, only “immonline”, “immvirtual”, “sme online” and “smes online” have the average monthly searches value equal to 10. The others are not used in the Romanian internet search. The competition is low for "immvirtual" and “sme online” is low, but “immonline” has no competition. It has been chosen “IMMOOnline”, because the platform is dedicated to Romanian
SMEs that collaborate online within a NBE and it seems to be a niche market, having no competition.

2.2. Web Hosting Provider

There are a lot of Romanian web hosting providers among which: web365.ro, hostvision.ro, romarg.ro, gazduire.com.ro, m247.ro, hostingweb.ro, xservers.ro.

There are other international web hosting providers, such as: eHost.com, iPage, web.com, bluehost, justhost.com, inmotion, 1&1, ideahost, hostgator, GoDaddy.

Comparing their provided services, it has been chosen "xservers.ro". Their offer is: 3 GB SSD storage, unlimited domains number, unlimited databases, cPanel 11 Free, hosting with free dedicated IP, free R1Soft professional backup, unlimited internet traffic, free hardware firewall, and unlimited e-mail.

Checking the online domain availability was an important step of this process, because not all the providers have available the domain “smesonline.eu”.

2.3. Platform Content Diagram

On the “Home” page, the portal offer access to information on founding a startup, such as documents needed, business plan, marketing plan, procurement process and the Young Entrepreneur Guide.

On the portal, there are links to sites that offer entrepreneurs the possibility to meet other entrepreneurs and specialists who can provide advice from his own experience, such as: UP GLOBAL’S, THE LEAN STARTUP, LEAN STARTUP IN BUCHAREST, GOOGLE LEAN STARTUP ROMANIA.

On the first page there are, also, links to sites where everybody can look for an online job, such as: Elance, Top 10 Sites Like Elance, How to get a job on sites like Elance?.

The actual entrepreneurs have to take into account the sustainable development. In this regard, they were recommended trustful partners, such as Greenpedia and Ceres. Other important information for entrepreneurs is available at: IMM Romania (containing data published by the CNIPMMR – NGO-National Council of Private Romanian SMEs), Agency for SMEs implementation projects and Projects Development Centre UNION.

For accessing structural founds the SMEs can read the calls on the site www.fonduri-structurale.ro

On the “Services” page(services), the portal presents different services dedicated to SMEs that might be provided, such as follows.

1) Online marketing services
   - mail marketing using MailChimp;
   - optimizing web-sites for search engines: choosing appropriate keywords for indexing, site indexing in the main search engines, SEO campaign, designing the site-map;
   - designing pages for social media in the main channels, such as: Facebook, LinkedIn, ResearchGate, Twitter, etc;
   - web pages visibility analysis and site traffic analysis using Google Analytics;
   - designing, publishing and interpreting only survey data using Survey Monky, Lime Survey or Google Forms.

2) Software integration
ELTA (Extract, Load, Transform and Analyze) services using XML (DOM / SAX), CSV, etc;
- custom object relational mapping (ORM) or hibernate (JBOSS);
- reports development using BIRT, Microsoft, Crystal reports, Qlick View reports, etc;
- scripting developments on Windows (VB script, DOS SHELL) and on Linux: Perl, Python, Bash.

3) Web and mobile application development
- web design using HTML5, CSS3;
- PHP/ MariaDB (Drupal, Joomla, Wordpress)
- Android applications
- Design and optimization for SQL databases
- designing SQL databases;
- optimization on databases regarding queries, indexes, clusters.

On the page “Financing”, financing, there are presented information structural and European funds, which might be accessed by SMEs.

On the portal, there are links to sites that offer entrepreneurs the possibility to meet other entrepreneurs and specialists who can provide advice from own experience, such as: UP GLOBAL’S, THE LEAN STARTUP, LEAN STARTUP IN BUCHAREST, GOOGLE LEAN STARTUP ROMANIA.

The portal offer information regarding software with free licenses such as Open Source Software: Free reporting, Eclipse BIRT Report Designer BI, Palo (OLAP database) BI, BI, GnuCash - Financial Accounting, Linux – OS, Apache - Web Server, PHP - Script Server, MySql - management system database, Open Office: Office program. This software are widely used in developed countries such as Germany, even in state administration institutions. Using these solutions SMEs can decrease the cost of business.

The database regarding SMEs activities is published on the page “Cloud database”. The data is processed and displayed through Qlik Cloud Sense online services.

The SMEs can request for services on the information presented on the “Contact” page.

2.4. Platform Design Technology

In a first stage, the site was developed using PHP – CSS technology. In the second stage, after a thorough study on web technologies available, it has been chosen Bootstrap 3 technology (Figure 1) due to the furnished advantages [Gimmer, 2015]:

- the speed of development, because of different blocks of code already written;
- responsiveness for mobile devices, due to fluid grid layout that dynamically adjusts to the proper screen resolution;
- consistency, that refers of the results which are uniform across platforms so output remains the same whether using Firefox, Chrome or Internet Explorer;
- facile customization, that refers of the fact that developers have just choose the features that are needed for the project;
- support offered by a well developed support community.
2.5. Logo and Motto

There were designing different logos containing “IMMOnline” collocation, meaning Online SME. There has been used especially green color, thinking about youth, rebirth and green environment, maintained by SMEs sustainable open innovation. Some examples of logos are presented in Figure 2. Some of the logos were found appropriate and they are found in the dynamic banner of the site. The best of all logos was considered the second in the first row, thinking of two SMEs that collaborate in a NBE.

Figure 2: Different Logos for Romanian SMEs Portal

There have been proposed several variants of motto, i.e.:
- Together we are stronger!
- Join us for a better future through sustainable open innovation!
- Let’s innovate bright!
- Sustainable open innovation is SMEs future!
- Innovate with us!
- Innovate for next generation!
- Digitalize your business!
- Digitalize your business and innovate bright!

Among the options proposed, the last one was considered suitable as supports the idea of innovation within a NBE, and had been chosen as motto.

2.6. Content on the Web

Publishing content, organized in the first step, is associated with the site optimize techniques for search engines, On-Page SEO [Tonis b, 2015].

On-page SEO refers to a better site optimization for search engines and to the techniques used for this purpose. This approach is often known by web developers and can be improved without a big effort, if it meets certain strict rules by which search engines work. On-page SEO can gain about 25% of the score of 100 points.

To optimize the web pages can take into account several factors, as follows: URL, page title, metadata description, headings, images.

An audit powered by Web CEO Ltd. www.webceo.com regarding the www.smesonline.eu shows that the On-page SEO was in high proportion well implemented, as it may be observed in the Figure 3.
2.7. Workflow Management System using QlikView Cloud Solutions

The workflow data source was uploaded on QlikView Cloud Solutions and there have been designed some reports as SMEs be able to access the information. One example of report designed in the cloud is presented in Figure 4. The SMEs have to create an account and log into the cloud as to access the information shared. Case studies that tested and confirmed the consistency and the importance of the application are presented in [Tonis, 2016].

The SMEs have to take advantage of applying the data mining techniques in the phase that it corresponds to satisfy the necessity of enrich the data and add value according to better information about the client [Gerrikagoitia, 2015].

Figure 4. Report Regarding SMEs Turnover, CA, grouped on JUDET, CAEN, AN
An example of synthetic dynamic report that can be visualized in QlikView Cloud is presented in Figure 5.

![Figure 5. Synthetic Dynamic Report Regarding SMEs Turnover, CA, grouped on county, JUDET](image)

2.8. Technical Procedures to Index the Platform in the Principal Search Engines

Indexing the platform in the principal search engines is closed linked to Off-page SEO [Tonis b, 2015].

**Off-page SEO** refers to a picture on the web site, which is determined by the "opinion of other sites" and can be done through links between sites, called inbound.


In their activity, the search engines and the users look up for the site-map. In this regard, we have used a free tool and created the site-map available at [http://www.smesonline.eu/sitemap.xml](http://www.smesonline.eu/sitemap.xml).

For the search engines “robot.txt” files are very important, because hide those parts of the site that is preferable not to be accessed by search engine crawlers. We have created a robot.txt file available at [http://www.smesonline.eu/robots.txt](http://www.smesonline.eu/robots.txt).

Another method to develop this approach is to include the site in many web directories. A list of free web Romanian directories can be found at [http://www.dirpedia.ro/directoare-generale.html](http://www.dirpedia.ro/directoare-generale.html). Other web directory can be chosen from the list [http://freewebsubmission.com/](http://freewebsubmission.com/).

The site was indexed in director-web.ro, DMOZ, Scrub The Web, Websquash, Jayde Online, Rediff.com, Entireweb.com, AxxaSearch, Active Search Results, ExactSeek, Geona, Amidalla. DMOZ is the largest, most comprehensive human-edited directory of the Web, being an Open Directory Project (ODP).

The portal will use free enrolment with mutual back links.
The CEO Ltd. audit regarding the competitor link profile shows that Moz page authority for SMEs portal is equal to a very important competitor LinkedIn page, although the competitor is on the market since 2014 compared to SMEs portal which entered the market this year. There are other important competitors on the market, but with continuous improvement of content and real communication with the visitors could improve the statement of the site, as to be able to catch with the competitors (Fig. 6).

2.9. Configuring the Social Media Channels [Tonis b, 2015]

Assigning Social Media Channels to the portal has the aim to be contact with SMEs and to increase the traffic on the platform.

Using this portal, the SMEs can even benefit of Social Media as a marketing strategy to get online visibility.

It had been created a LinkedIn account, available at https://www.linkedin.com/company/imm-online-mediu-virtual-de-afaceri, and a Facebook account, available at https://www.facebook.com/ SMEs-Online-Network-Business-Environment-1606855336299190/, as social media channels.

It has been created a project on Research Gate, available online at: https://www.researchgate.net/project/SMEs-Online-Network-Business-Environment_572cb5a33d7f4b976555de61.

The considered social media channels allow SMEs to promote mouth-to-mouth recommendations and interactions with other SMEs. In Facebook network, if one SMEs associates "like" to a brand, the other SMEs innopreneurs friends can see this information as the News Feed and on the right side of the screen. An innopreneur trust in a product/ service/idea, if his friends tested it and tells him that is trustful.

SMEs can increase their online visibility using social tools offered by social media. They can also increase the popularity, page rank and therefore online visibility receiving as many links from YouTube.
Conclusion
The article has the aim to present and spread information regarding the SMEs Portal, the friendly business intelligence, Qlik Sense BI, interface associated that provides unlimited possibilities of data extracting, manipulation and complex analyzes, without extensive IT&C knowledge for SMEs innopreneurs, such as What-If, clustering, classification, filtering support SMEs innopreneurs [Tonis, 2016] decision process. It also presents all the steps of designing and implementing the portal.

The SMEs dedicated portal, developed with bootstrap technology, available online at http://www.smesonline.eu/, answers to modern SMEs information request, no matter if uses classical desktop PCs or modern mobile devices.

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