

Online Marketing Strategies- Tailored for Solar Cooking

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Abstract:

It is important for the solar cooking industry to increase awareness about the benefits of solar cooking. The more people know about and use solar cookers, the faster the solar cooking industry will grow. This paper aims to give guidance on how to best utilize modern online marketing to raise awareness about solar cooking. The paper will introduce models and digital tools that commercial actors, NGO's and Non Profits in the solar cooking industry can use to increase the awareness of solar cooking.

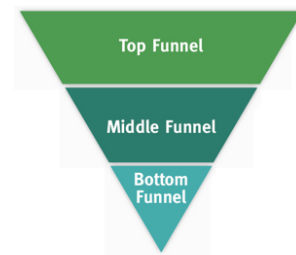
Keywords: digital marketing, marketing funnel, search engine, keyword optimization, social media, content marketing.

Marketing funnel

You may have heard the term marketing funnel before. This term is used to explain the linear path a lead will take before converting into a customer. Today, in the digital age of mobile, internet and social media the marketing funnel has changed. The path from attracting leads and converting them into customers is now a multi-faceted process that can start and stop in various parts of the funnel.

The stages in the marketing funnel can be divided into three sections:

1. Top of the funnel - Represents the first interactions your leads have with your brand.
2. Middle of the funnel - Leads are moving forward from a first interaction towards a sale.
3. Bottom of the funnel - The final touch before leads makes a purchase.



Understanding the breakdown of the journey a lead takes from the first interaction before the leads makes a purchase, will make it easier for solar cooking actors to identify the correct marketing strategy and guide leads through the different stages in the marketing funnel.

Top of the Funnel

The top of the funnel is all about the first interaction a lead will have with your brand. Here the aim is to make sure that leads find your brand and that the leads enter the marketing funnel. The author will in this section give some tips on how solar cooking actors can optimize this part of the marketing funnel and attract more leads. The author will focus on optimizing keywords towards search engines like google and yahoo, and the social media platform Facebook.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO):

SEO stands for search engine optimization and is the process of getting free organic traffic to your webpage from search engines like Google, Bing and Yahoo. These search engines show and rank all the content on the internet and considers what is most relevant to the user who search. If you have optimized your website to the search keywords "solar oven" or "solar cooking Haiti", there is a higher probability that your site will be shown when a person searches for the keyword "solar oven" or "solar cooking Haiti". When choosing which keywords you want to optimize your website around, it is important to choose the keywords that are most relevant for your business.

You can test your website and see how you score on different keywords for free at <http://smallseotools.com/keyword-position/>

Keyword planner

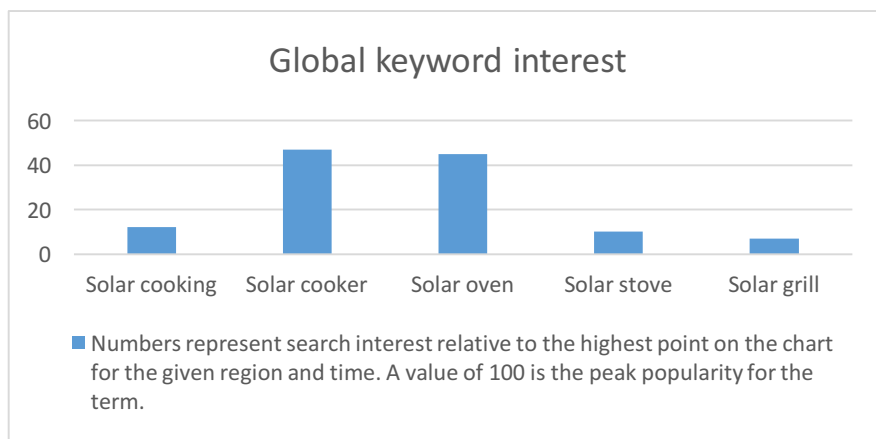
Keyword Planner is a free tool where you can understand how a list of keywords might perform globally or regionally. If you take the search term “solar cooker”, does 50,000 people on average search for this term every month globally, where 43% of these searches are in the US and 33% in India. Another example is the term “solar oven” where 33,000 people search for this keyword on average every month, where the US have 76% of these searches. It is important to understand that it is more difficult to compete for a popular keyword than less popular keywords. The clue is to find the correct keyword that fits your company.

You can plan your keywords at <https://adwords.google.com/KeywordPlanner>

Google trends

Google trends is a free public site that shows how often a particular search-term is entered into google. Google trends show you when and where the search term was most popular. This information can help you understand what people are searching for on google and can guide you when deciding marketing strategy and keywords for your website.

The author has chosen to investigate the “solar cooking keyword”; solar cooking, solar cooker, solar oven, solar stove and solar grill. From the table below you can see that there are global differences between the interest of these keywords.



From the above diagram you can see that the global interest for the keywords “solar cooker” and “solar oven” are higher than the global interest for the keywords “solar cooking” “solar stove” and “solar grill”.

With google trends it is also possible to look at how the interest for different keywords perform in different regions. The author has chosen to compare the interest of the “solar cooking keywords” between United States and India. The author chose these two countries because they have the highest “solar cooking keyword” search volumes. The below table shows the breakdown of the keywords interest over the last five years for these two countries.

United States

| Keyword | Interest over time* |
|---------------|---------------------|
| Solar cooking | 6 |
| Solar cooker | 21 |
| Solar oven | 40 |
| Solar stove | 6 |
| Solar grill | 5 |

India

| Keyword | Interest over time* |
|---------------|---------------------|
| Solar cooking | 10 |
| Solar cooker | 100 |
| Solar oven | 7 |
| Solar stove | 7 |
| Solar grill | 0 |

*Numbers represent search interest relative to the highest point on the chart for the given region and over the last five years. A value of 100 is the peak popularity for the term. A value of 50 means that the term is half as popular. Likewise a score of 0 means the term was less than 1% as popular as the peak.

From the above table you can see that “solar oven” is the most popular keyword in the US followed by solar cooker. You can also see that the keyword “solar cooker” has a high search interest the last five years in India, while the keyword “solar grill” has low search interest over time.

This data will give you insight to what keywords that are most relevant in different regions. This insight can help you to take the correct decisions when optimizing your marketing funnel.

Google Adwords

Google Adwords is a service from Google where you pay to get traffic to your website. If a lead searches for “solar oven” in google, the first page on google contains between 6-10 organic search results that are based on SEO and 3-6 paid adwords results. If you have poor SEO on your website for a specific keyword, you can still be shown by google if you pay for Google Adwords. One great feature with Adwords is that businesses can set a budget for advertising and only pay when people click the ads.

Google adwords is a free application that you can install to your website.

Facebook

Facebook is the most popular social media platform in the world and a great place to reach new leads. On Facebook you can post text, photos and videos, and users can like, comment and share posts. The social aspect of Facebook enables companies to communicate directly with leads.

There are two major ways to reach new leads through Facebook

1. *Post for free on your company's, NGO's or Non-Profits Facebook page.* You may think that all your Facebook followers will see your posts, but the truth is that only 2-5% of your followers will see your posts in their news feed. To make sure that more of your followers see your post you would need to “boost” the posts. “Boosting” is a feature that you need to pay for and you can “boost” your Facebook posts to your Facebook followers and/or their friends.
2. *Pay for Facebook ads to reach new leads on Facebook.* With Facebook you can create post and target them towards a wide range of audiences. Facebook has a lot of

information about their users, and this enables Facebook to target their advertisement. A unique Facebook feature is the possibility to target ads based on interests. When it comes to interest you can target your advertising towards thousands of different interests from “gardening”, “reading” and even the interest “solar cooker”.

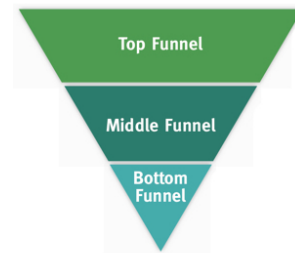
Summary top of the funnel

The author has mentioned that the top of the funnel is the first interaction a lead will have with your brand and that the aim is to make sure that the right leads find your brand and enter the marketing funnel. SEO, keyword planning, google trends and adwords are all areas that can be explored to make sure that your leads will find you online.

The author has also talked about the social media platform Facebook as a place where leads can get their first interaction with your brand. Facebook enables you as an advertiser to posts rich media like videos and photos, and communicate directly with your leads. Facebook has also a powerful targeting function that enables you to target adverts based on interests.

Middle of the funnel

The middle of the funnel is further down the marketing funnel and comes after the top of the funnel. In the middle of the funnel the leads know about your brand and you now need to produce good content convince leads before they purchase.



Content

Content is communicated messages, stories or information that can come through text, photos or videos. The aim of content is to engage and is a vital part of all online marketing activities.

Search engines like Google and Yahoo scan your website every day. The more relevant content you have on your site, and the more leads interact with your website content, the better SEO score you will get. If you aim to “own” the search term “solar cooking Haiti” you should have content with the specific keywords “solar cooking Haiti” on your web site. Having the keywords in the header and first paragraph are typical tips that will give your site a better SEO score.

Blogger

Having a blogger to talk about your brand and link to your website is a great way to reach new leads and increase your SEO score. A blogger is a person or small group that own and regularly update a website with content. Most bloggers use text, images and videos to communicate their message. There are about 150 million different blogs in the world and blogging will continue to evolve in its role as one of the most important content creation, publication, and distribution strategies for businesses and individuals online.

The solar cooking company One Earth Designs have had two successful interactions with bloggers the last year. Ballistic BBQ, a YouTube BBQ blogger, made a video that now have 24000 online views and Wranglerstar, an off grid living blogger, has made a video with 99000 views. In comparison with PR and media coverage will blog content never disappear and the amount of views will always increase. However, a disadvantage is that bloggers can be quite expensive, so make sure to be selective and use bloggers that speak directly to your targeted customers.

Summary

The aim of this paper was to give guidance on how to best utilize modern online marketing to raise awareness about solar cooking. The author has introduced models and tools that commercial actors, NGO's and Non Profits in the solar cooking industry can use to increase the awareness of solar cooking. The world is getting more and more digital and it is important that the solar cooking community are aware of this and are ready to tackle this change.