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Reaching Customers for Online Services

Sérgio Ramos Pinho

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Orientador na FEUP: Prof. Miguel Mira da Silva

Orientador na empresa: César Duarte

U.PORTO

FEUP FACULDADE DE ENGENHARIA UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO

Faculdade de Engenharia da Universidade do Porto

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"If you're not on page one of search results, you don't exist"

Sergio Balegno, Ascend2

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Reaching Customers for Online Services

Abstract

Technological progress and the growing number of Internet users have influenced the marketing strategies. Digital marketing has come to replace succeed traditional marketing and marketers have new challenges to overcome but also game-changing opportunities. Digital marketing landscape continues to grow by leaps and bounds and new processes are always showing up on the market, becoming faster and more affordable to companies to reach, acquire and retain customers over digital channels.

This project studies one of the nowadays most popular and complex digital marketing techniques to reach an online audience – Search Engine Optimization (SEO). This technique is focused on growing visibility in organic (non-paid) search engine results. To support and guide the application of this technique, this project follows a methodology consisting in the study and development of a digital marketing strategy and further application in an online service.

Furthermore, the digital marketing strategy is based on the combination of the SOSTAC (Situation Analysis, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Actions and Control) and RACE (Reach, Act, Convert and Engage) frameworks.

To finalise, the newfangled Stronstep online service SCRAIM is striving to increase online visibility and boost customer acquisition making it a suitable case study for the development and application of the digital marketing strategy.

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1 Introduction

Digital technology and media are changing at a surprising velocity and have stirred up marketing to its core. Its constantly evolving technologies, and the way people are using them, are transforming not just how information is accessed, but how people interact and communicate on a global scale. This significant change is having a huge impact on the way consumers choose and buy products and services.

People are embracing digital technology to communicate in ways that would have been inconceivable just a few years ago. Consumers can now sort products according to specific attributes such as price, evaluation of other consumers, features, among many other things. Heading even deeper is possible to argue that people are also changing and they expect to be able to customize everything. People want brands they can trust, companies that know them, communications that are personalized and relevant, and offers tailored to their needs and preferences.

The steadily growing number of Internet users, ITU (International Telecommunication Union) predicts that during 2015 the number of global Internet users exceeds 3 billion (ITU 2014), nearly half the world's population, has been reflected in a steep increase in the volume of online content. More video, richer media, faster and faster access by more people in more parts of the world change the fabric of business and mean that digital marketing – and mastering the art thereof – is now a requirement of any enterprise or individual planning to compete in the years ahead (Ryan 2014).

Digital marketing, sometimes also named as Online Marketing, Internet Marketing or Web Marketing, appeared in the late 90s with the promise to deliver the right message to the right audience using digital channels, a game changing over the traditional marketing methods (Hemann and Burbary 2013). Digital Marketing is a broad term that can be described as a set of marketing processes that make use of all available digital channels to promote a product or a service or even to build a digital brand which help to acquire and retain customers while building deeper relationships with them. Digital marketing has come to succeed traditional marketing and the transition from paper and newspaper advertisements to social media like Facebook and pay per click campaigns. A unique aspect of digital marketing is the ability to create virtual communities for consumers who share a common interest.

This growing attractiveness and adoption of digital marketing are also supporting the fact that embracing these new digital methods, organizations have the possibility to track their Return of Investment (ROI) more accurately compared to other traditional marketing channels. Digital marketing channels and methods allow the analysis of marketing campaigns to understand what is working and what is not in real time.

In summary the online value proposition is much more than the sum of features, benefits and prices it also comprises the customer-centric perspective of a complete experience of selecting, buying and using the product or service (Ellis-Chadwick and Chaffey 2012). For these reasons marketers are constantly rethinking the marketing strategies and venues geared toward this new online generation of consumers (K. T. Smith 2012). Internet provides an easy and uniform way for businesses to make their brands and products visible to their customers (Grzywaczewski, et al. 2010). To ensure the visibility of the products and services of a company, companies are embracing digital marketing and investing their resources in search engine marketing (SEM) and search engine optimization (SEO).

1.1 Stronstep

The development of this project presupposes the selection and a demo application of a digital marketing technique in an online service with the aim of reaching customers. The chosen service was originated in Strongstep. Stronstep is a company specialized in software engineering that contributes to the improvement of software quality in the world, through the market best practices implementation and existing methodologies.

Established through a spin-off of the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Porto, the company provides services in the areas of process improvement, certification, auditing, consortia and training. Stronstep strategic vision is to "be a worldwide reference in the software quality area working with the best institutions bringing their expertise and international experience, bringing clear added value to the customers, aligning the software processes and business objectives of organizations efficiently and effectively, making their work forces more mature and productive by promoting more agile and competitive organizations" (Strongstep 2015).

Currently, Strongstep is changing its offering strategy by adding a product named SCRAIM that uses the AIM (Accelerated Improvement Method) methodologies. The SCRAIM is a Project Management and Process Management SaaS (Software as a Service), based on advanced methodologies with intelligent decision support mechanisms. SCRAIM main purposes are: centralize all information of one or more projects enabling their access to the entire team at any time and place; manage the team and monitor progress and productivity throughout the project; and add, allocate and / or manage tasks.

1.2 SCRAIM

As described in the previous item, SCRAIM is a tool that enables project management and process management in a single application. Since SCRAIM is delivered using the SaaS method, benefits from all the inherent advantages of this type of service. The software can be accessed from anywhere with no installation required, and offers managers a centralized perspective for all the project information. This information can be related to a single or multiple projects, there's no limit regarding on the amount of data because all the information is stored in the *Cloud*.

In a project management tool perspective this service offers all the features of such tool: allocation of resources to a project, team and task management, budget management, time tracking and much others. Project managers have a detailed and real time perception of each project *status* turning it possible to control every phase of a project and potential problems that may encounter in the future and how to solve them. SCRAIM also provides a set of features to facilitate teams collaboration, such as: wiki, forums, news and notification system.

SCRAIM comprises Management and Engineering best practices methodologies such as SCRUM, CMMI (Capability Maturity Model Integration), ITMark, TSP/PSP (Team Software Process and Personal Software Process) and Six-Sigma, allowing customers to increase the quality of the projects.

SCRAIM adopts a *freemium* price strategy.

1.3 Proposal

The company has developed an innovative service which is still being introduced in the market and therefore ought to implement an acquisition strategy to build awareness of off-site among potential customers.

For this matter Chaffey (2015) suggest an adoption of the RACE ((Plan), Reach, Act, Convert, Engage) marketing strategy framework (Figure 1), which summarise the key online marketing activities for each phase to achieve growth through digital marketing.

Taking into account that the service striving to increase online visibility and boost customer acquisition the phase to consider will be *Reach* and within the use of Search Engine Optimization in order to grow SCRAIM online audience.

So this project involves the study and development of a digital marketing strategy that fits RACE framework and supports the implementation of search engine optimization.

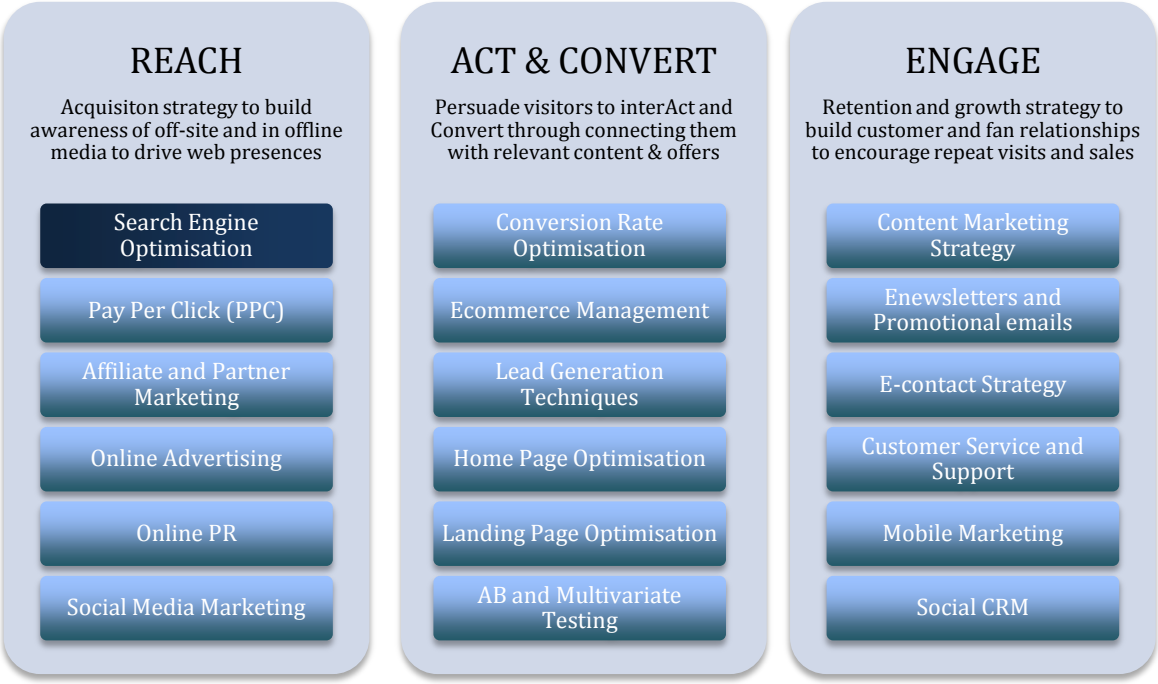


Figure 1 - RACE Planning Framework

1.4 Outline

This dissertation is written in chapters as follows:

Chapter 1 – Introduction

This chapter describes the entire context of the project; background, the company and the service that will be involved directly with the project, and the outline.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

This chapter includes the theory that supports the development of the research project by introducing and relating the digital marketing and search engine optimization concepts. In addition clarifies search engine optimization by getting into details and provides some guidance related to the application of this process.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

This chapter shows the approach to the selected methodology as well as the detailed overview of the digital marketing strategy and frameworks that this project will follow.

Chapter 4 – Proposal

This chapter corresponds to the implementation proposal of the digital marketing strategy developed in the chapter *Methodology* to the service and site SCRAIM.

Chapter 5 – Evaluation

This chapter is intended as a brief review of the methods and techniques applied as well as the awareness of them.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion

This chapter consists of conclusion and future development as a result of the development of this project.

2 Literature Review

The first stage of this research project consists of the collection and processing of all relevant information for the project development.

The main purpose of this research is the use of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) as part of a digital marketing and Internet marketing strategy toward an increasing online visibility of the Strongstep service, SCRAIM. So the following information will provide the foundations for the future development of the research project in digital marketing and SEO.

2.1 Digital Marketing

As stated before the rules of marketing are changing and digital technology has offered new channels to link the entities that provide services and the consumers. Unquestionably people are going online and due this profuse usage of digital media, digital marketing is an effective manner for communicating with this thread (K. T. Smith 2012). According to Stones and Woodcock (2014), most corporations must now "market in a digital world". The "always on" consumer (and business consumer too) is able, and increasingly likely, to search, enquire, interact, complain, buy and pay through mobile devices. Thereby digital marketing is the practice of promoting products and services using digital distribution channels via computers, mobile phones, smart phones, or other digital devices (K. T. Smith 2012).

2.2 Internet Marketing

First, before moving on to some of the techniques and processes that this project aims to study and apply, it is necessary to fit them with digital marketing.

Digital marketing is a broad term that brings together multiple activities over numerous digital channels to promote a product or a service or build a brand using marketing processes. However the changing trends, which make up digital marketing, over the years (Figure 2) led to some confusion in the suitable terms to each activity and channel. Much of the today's industry often uses the terms digital marketing, e-marketing or internet marketing to describe similar activities.

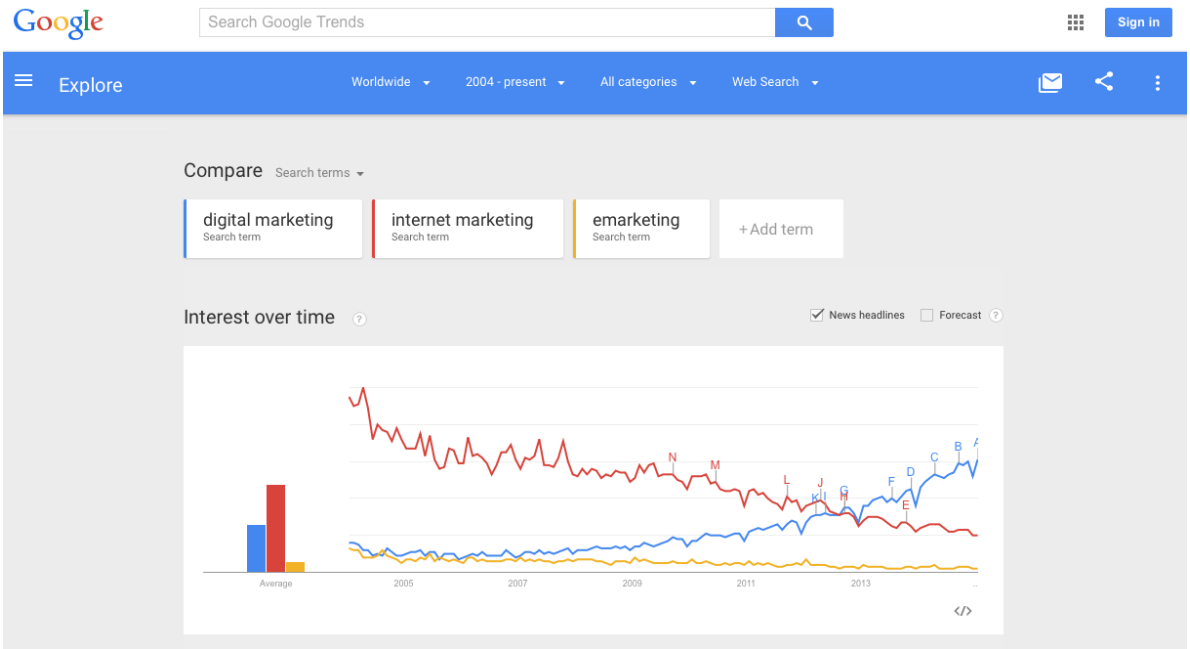


Figure 2 - Google Trends

According to Smith and Chaffey (2012), e-marketing and digital marketing have similar definitions and for this reason terms are often interchangeable. Although both terms have a wider scope when compared to Internet marketing, since it refers to digital media such as e-mail, web and social media, but also includes management of digital customer data and customer relationship management systems (CRM).

Towards an easier understanding, the activities and channels associated to each term are grouped in the following subsections: Internet marketing, Digital Advertising, SMS, Radio, Billboards and TV. Internet marketing is in fact the most important component since the majority of digital marketing activities fall within the boundaries of Internet marketing. In Figure 3 are represented the major channels associated with Internet Marketing.

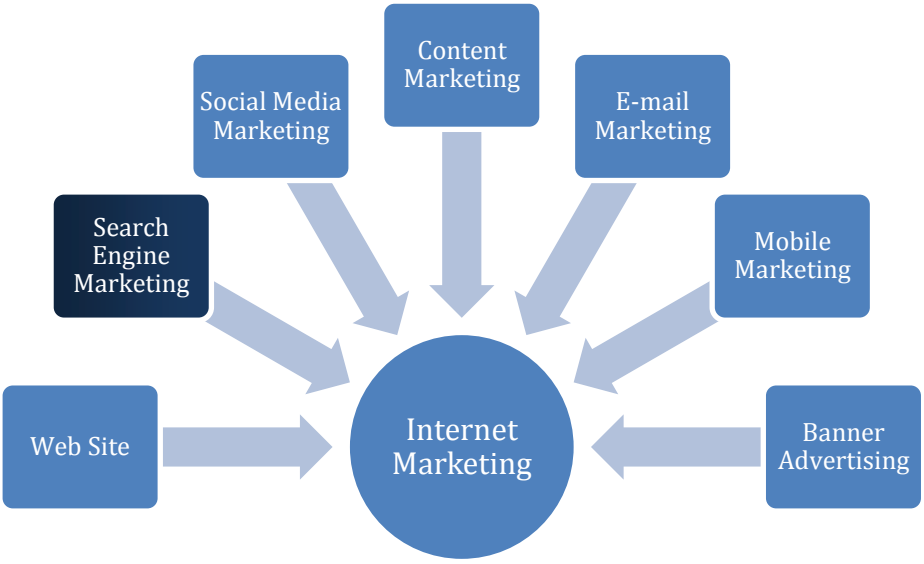


Figure 3 - Internet Marketing Channels

For this project the focus will be Search Engine Marketing (SEM), which involves increasing and maintaining a website's rank on Search Engine Results Pages (SERPs) in order to be easily found by searchers (Clarke and Clarke III 2014).

2.3 Search Engine Marketing

In recent studies search engines are the primary drive of website traffic (Brightedge 2014) making search engine marketing one of the most powerful channel for customer acquisition. According to Chaffey and Smith (2012), the web is a pull marketing environment in which companies pull customers to their brand websites through search engine optimization and social media. In pull marketing, companies are seeking to capture the interest of customers who are already seeking information, advice, a product or a service. Accordingly search engine marketing consists of many techniques that can be used to increase a product and brand visibility.

Therefore two of the most effective strategies for generating high ROI are: PSA (Paid Search Advertising) and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) (Grzywaczewski, et al. 2010). In the first strategy, marketers bid on combination of keywords (or keyphrases), develop ads to appear based on search queries, and pay the search engines whenever a user clicks an ad. This strategy is also known as Pay Per Click (PPC). The other SEM approach is search engine optimization or SEO. The cost of a PPC campaign can be considerably higher than an SEO

due to the constant acquisition and bidding on keywords and keyphrases. In Figure 4 it is possible to see the PPC and SEO in SERPs.

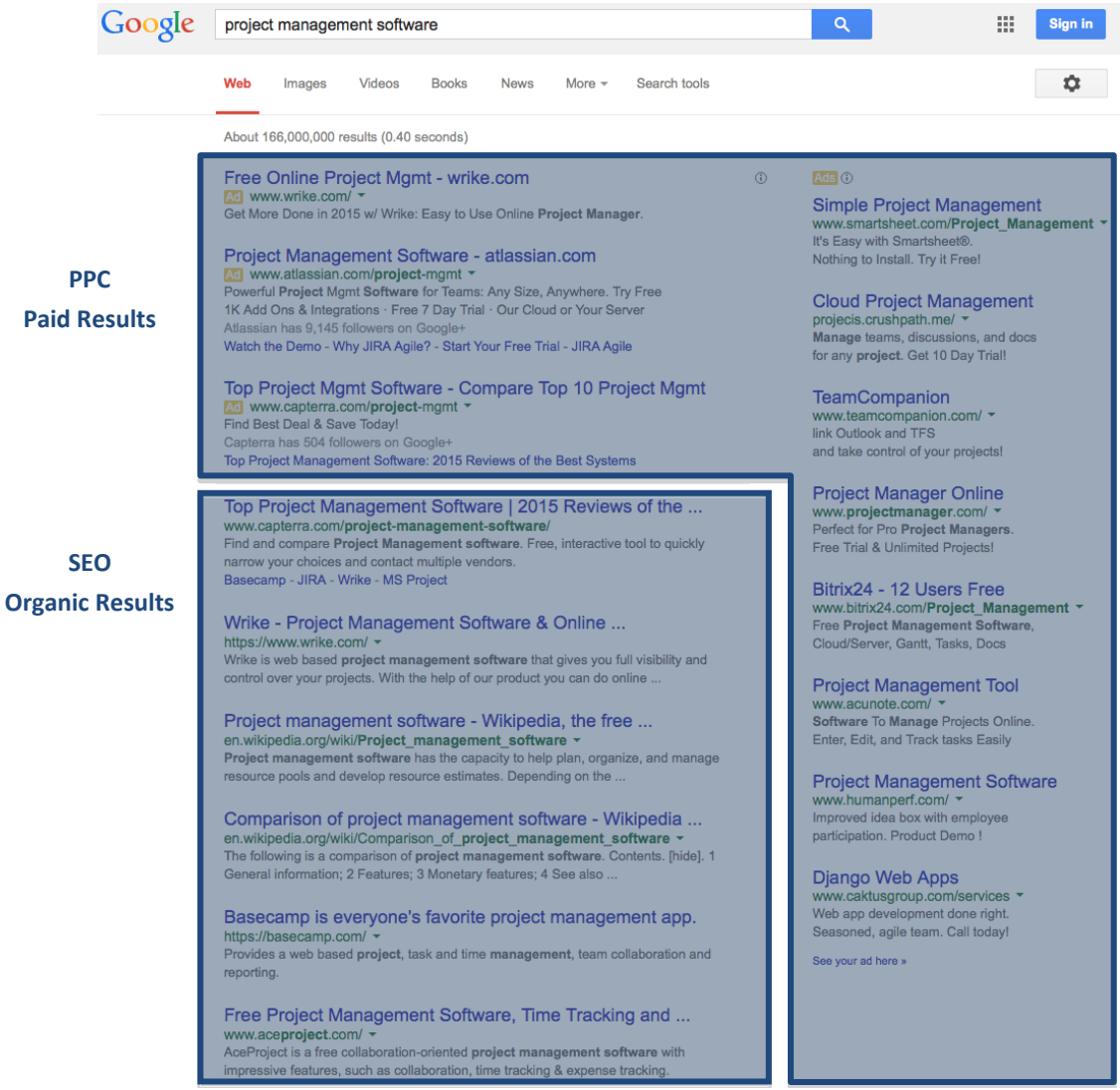


Figure 4 - SERP Locations for PPC and SEO

2.4 Search Engine Optimization

Most professional communication practitioners and researchers can point to some content on the web that they have authored, such as on their employers' or clients' websites, or on sites they maintain for professional, personal, or community interests.

As a simple experiment, they might try to find that content using only a general web search engine. If, as is likely, they can compose a carefully worded search query by recalling very specific features of the content, such as its title, a distinctive key phrase, the name of the website or of the organization that owns it, and so forth, they stand a reasonable chance of success, with their content appearing on the first page of the search results. On the other hand, if they ask someone else to find the content, someone who does not already know it very well—and that, after all, is typically the condition under which we seek out web content—the chances of success likely dwindle. The content may well be found, eventually, perhaps after attempting various search queries and scrolling through many pages of search results (Killoran 2013). Its visibility depends on the webpage or website's rank on search engine

results page (SERPs). In a 2005 study (Enquiro 2005) revealed the importance of the SERPs and how this is related to the odds of being seen by a searcher (Figure 5).

This tendency for clicking on top corner of the page was given the name of Google's Golden Triangle. However, over the last years Google has been introducing new elements to its search results page and search pattern have been changing (Figure 6), though first page results continue to be prevalent for the customer decision. Quinton and Khan (2009), argue that it is vital for the company's name and web site to rank highly in search engines otherwise potential customers may not be able to find them.

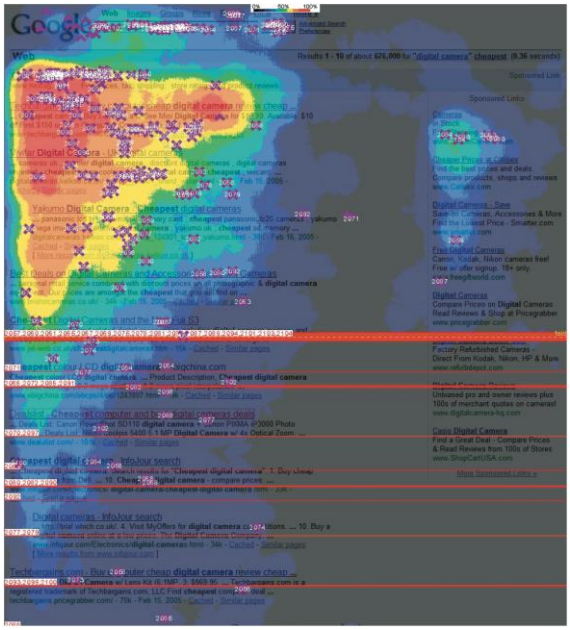


Figure 5 - Google's Golden Triangle

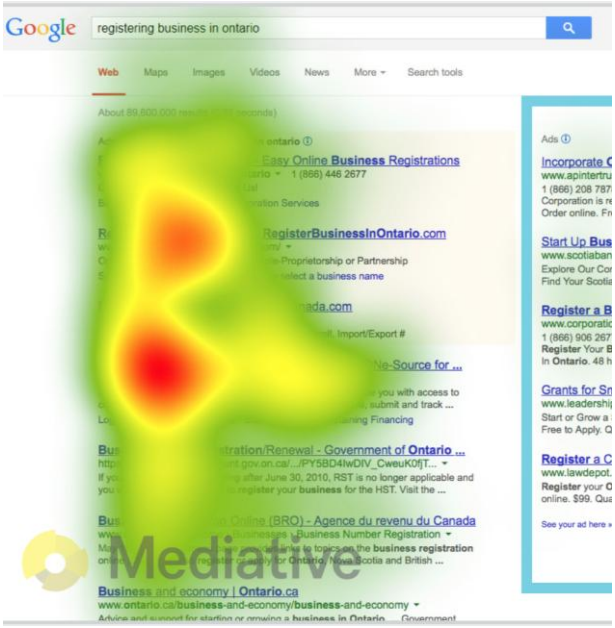


Figure 6 - 2014 Google's Search Pattern

Potential customers make both analytical and heuristic searches. Analytical searches rely on search engines and are planned around a specific focus whilst heuristic searches are less formalized and rely on hyperlinks (Marchionini 1995). The majority of new customers and some existing customers use search engines such as Google to find websites even if the web site address is known. However, according to both Rowley (2000) and Ylokoski (2005) heuristic searching, is more common in typical customer searches as people follow links that arouse their interest and browse top ranking pages. In this sense the SEO can be the solution for the increasing online visibility of a website or a service like SCRAIM.

Wikipedia (2015) defines SEO as "the process of improving the visibility of a website or web page in the search engines by "natural" or unpaid ("organic") search results". Grzywaczewski et al. (2010), describes SEO as "the optimization of a web site to improve its performance within organic listings on a search engine" and Clark (2014) refers to SEO as a "driver of new marketing approaches".

Search engine optimization is done mostly for the Google search engine, since it has an overall searching volume share of 62.74% (NetApplications 2015). To optimize a web site position, it is essential to understand the basis on which SERPs are generated and ordered. A search engine, such as Google, implements four basic mechanisms (Chaffey and Smith 2012) and (Davis 2006):

- **Discovery** or **Crawling**, meaning finding relevant pages for indexing. This is accomplished using software that travels down web links, which is sometimes called a robots (bots) are also know as spiders.
- **Storage of links** or **Indexing**, pages summaries, and related information. Google calls the systems used for this purpose its index servers.
- **Ranking** or **Scoring**, used to order stored pages by how important they are. Google uses a complex mechanism (more than 200 factors or signals) called PageRank to accomplish this task. This algorithm is often changed affecting SERPs.
- **Return of results**, used to organize the display of search results, based on ranking, in a response to a specific user search query.

There are more than 200 factors or signals that affects positively and negatively a website ranking position. Google offers a starter guide for SEO best practices, making easier for search engines to crawl, index and understand website content (Google 2015). Chaffey and Smith (2012) suggest some of the most important ranking factors:

Site submission

Google offers a free tool for site submission (www.google.com/addurl.html) where it is possible to supply the web site home page URL and Google will then automatically index all the linked pages.

Keyphrase analysis

Keyphrase as the name implies is a search term that is made up of multiple keywords, or a specific combination of keywords, that a user would enter into a search engine. The success of search engine optimization is achieving keyphrase relevance making keyphrase analysis and selection the core to success in SEM (Chaffey, Lake and Friedlein 2014). Some of the stages for analysis are:

- **Demand analysis** by identifying the popularity of each term, its relevance to the products or services qualified by the "intent of the searcher" indicated by the phrase and the competition on it.
- **Performance analysis** assesses how the company is currently performing relative to the keyphrase.
- **Gap analysis** identifies for each phrase and product where the biggest potential for improvement is, so it is possible to target resources accordingly.
- **Set goals and select keyphrases** in order to identify the different types of keyphrases the company wants to be visible. It is quite important the strategic keyphrases which are critical to success.

Improving search engine ranking through SEO

As previously stated, today's Google use over 200 'signals' to assess the relevance of a page for a specific query. Clarke (2014) considers that this process can involve three major optimization factors as part of a comprehensive Internet marketing strategy: on-page, off-page and sitewide.

- **On-page** quality content it is the foundation to support all other SEO effort. High quality, relevant content with semantically comprehensive wording is the way to improve SEO. Still on-page, optimization of the Web page is also relevant. Optimization deals with aspects on the Web page itself such as the page title and file name, i.e., the number of times the phrase appears on the page.
- **Off-page** optimization involves generation of relevant social signals and high-authority "backlinks" to the targeted Web page.

- **Sitewide** (linking and navigation structure) optimization includes techniques to influence rankings of the entire site, not just one specific page.

Another important component of SEO is getting a handle on web site metrics and measuring traffic. From a SEO perspective, it is essential to establish a plan for measuring traffic so that is possible to find out objectively which SEO measures have succeeded (Davis 2006).

Some of the technical concepts of SEO are represented in ANNEX A: Mind Map.

3 Methodology

Search engine optimization is one of the most complex digital marketing techniques for reaching new audiences. For this reason is essential to have a strategic approach to keyword analysis and understand the consumer intents. As a digital marketing method, SEO considers how search engines work, what people search for, the actual search terms or keywords typed into search engines and which search engines are preferred by their targeted audience.

Porter (2001) claims that "the key question is not whether to deploy Internet technology - companies have no choice if they want to stay competitive - but how to deploy it". For this matter and before becoming effective in the implementation of SEO it is fundamental to plan and align this method with the overall digital marketing strategy of the company. Thus, so, in all marketing strategies it is imperative to focus on a plan around the customer and not products or services. This is particularly important because this project is based on online services and how potential customers use them.

Additionally, and prior to developing the digital marketing strategy itself, it is essential to define the overall plan for generating and implementing the strategy. A marketing strategy plan provides a framework that gives a logical sequence to follow to ensure inclusion of all key activities of a marketing strategy development. Over the years many business strategy process models had been disclosure.

Chaffey *et al* (2006) have suggested that e-marketing strategy development should include similar elements to a traditional marketing strategy. McDonald (2006) considers that a marketing planning process is not a linear sequence of steps and should be adaptable to the people and the circumstances of the firm. However, with these considerations in mind, McDonald (2006) suggested the adoption of a framework divided into four phases: goal setting, situation review, strategy formulation and resource allocation and monitoring. The details of each phase are shown below:

- Goal Setting
    - Mission;
    - Corporate objectives.
- Situation Review
    - Marketing audit;
    - SWOT analyses;
    - Assumptions.
- Strategy Formulation
    - Marketing objectives and strategies;
    - Estimate expected results;
    - Indentify alternative plans and mixes.
- Resource Allocation and Monitoring
    - Budget;
    - First year detailed implementation program.

A similar framework (SOSTAC®) has been developed by Paul Smith (1999) and has been largely applied by organizations all over the world, originally developed for marketing communications planning can be used to structure all types of plans from business. SOSTAC resumes different stages that should be involved in a marketing strategy from strategy development to implementation (Chaffey 2009). SOSTAC® (acronym of Situation,

Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Action and Control) focuses on the six most important elements of any business (Figure 7):

- *Situation analysis* means 'where are we now?'
- *Objectives* mean 'where do we want to be?'
- *Strategy* means 'how do we get there?'
- *Tactics* means 'how exactly do we get there?'
- *Action* means 'what is our plan?'
- *Control* means 'did we get there?'

Figure 7 – PR Smith's SOSTAC planning model

To smooth the progress of this project and to make the digital strategy workable it will be considered a more manageable marketing strategy plan based on simplified version of SOSTAC plan and RACE planning system. Chaffey (2015) developed the RACE ((Plan), Reach, Act, Convert and Engage) marketing strategy framework. It is all about getting the most of the tools and techniques available online combined with the best practices to get more commercial value from investments in digital marketing. RACE intends to cover the full customer lifecycle or marketing funnel (Figure 8 see below):

- ***Reach*** involves building awareness of a brand, its products and services on other websites and in offline media in order to build traffic by driving visits to different web presences like your main site, microsites or social media pages. It involves maximizing reach over time to create multiple interactions using different paid, owned and earned media touchpoints.
- ***Act***. Act is short for **Interact**. It's a separate step since encouraging interactions on websites and in social media to generate leads is a big challenge for online marketers. It's about persuading site visitors or prospects take the next step, the next Action on their journey when they initially reach your site or social network presence. It may mean finding out more about a company or its products, searching to find a product or reading a blog post. You should define these actions as top-level goals of the funnel in analytics. Goals can include "Viewed product", "Added to Basket", "Registered as member" or "Signed up for a newsletter. Act is also about encouraging participation.

This can be sharing of content via social media or customer reviews (strictly, part of Engage).

- *Convert*. This is conversion to sale. It involves getting your audience to take that vital next step which turns them into paying customers whether the payment is taken through online Ecommerce transactions, or offline channels.
- ***Engage***. This is long-term engagement that is, developing a long-term relationship with first-time buyers to build customer loyalty as repeat purchases using communications on your site, social presence, email and direct interactions to boost customer lifetime value. It can be measured by repeat actions such as repeat sale and sharing content through social media. We also need to measure percentage of active customers (or email subscribers) and customer satisfaction and recommendation using other systems.

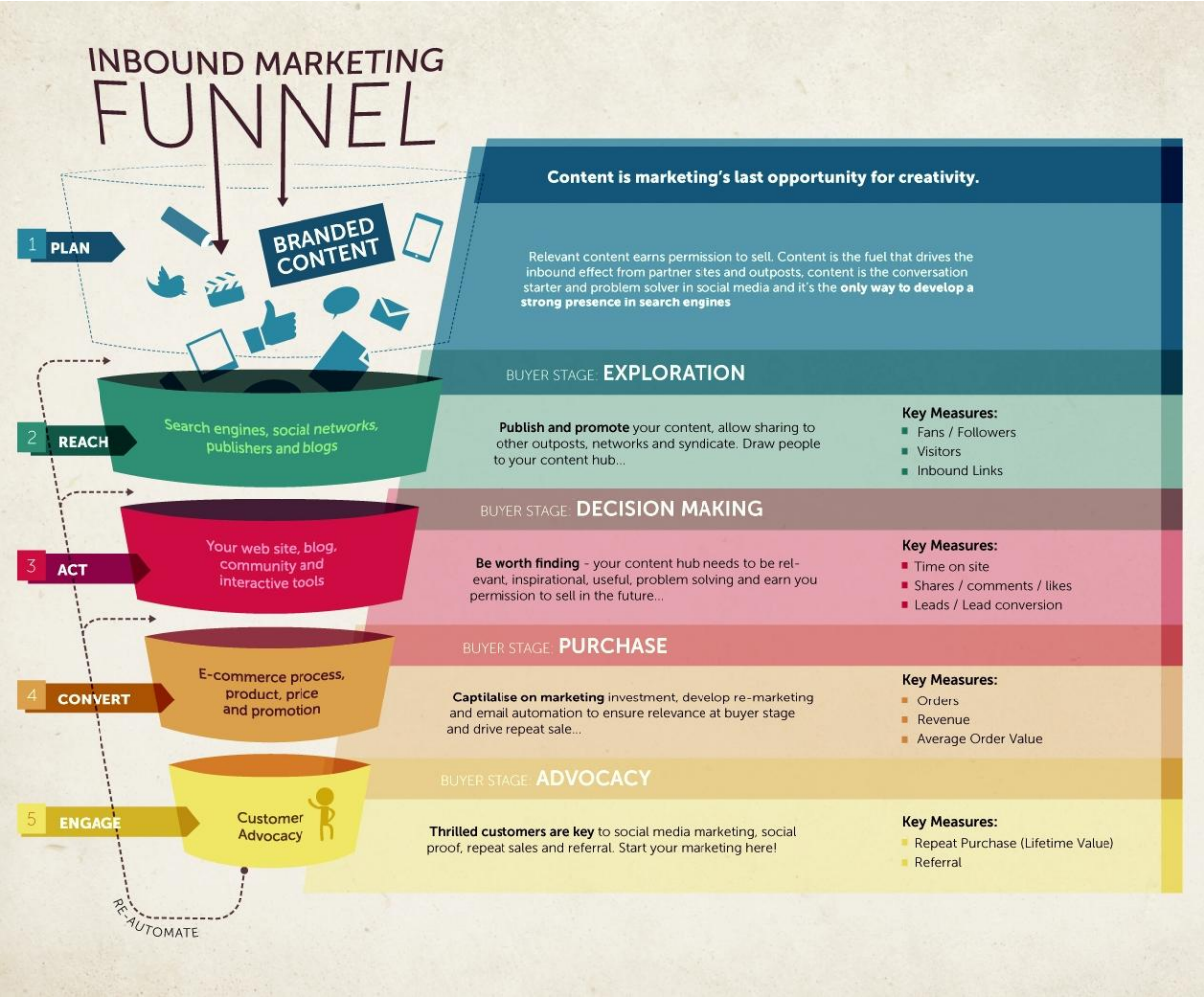


Figure 8 - RACE Planning System (source: http://tinyurl.com/np4vaje)

In this way this dissertation combines two recognised methods of structuring digital marketing plans used throughout the Digital Strategy Toolkit – Smart Insights' RACE Digital Marketing Planning™ and PR Smith's SOSTAC.

Therefore taking into consideration the objectives stated of this project and the time available, this dissertation will follow the methodology bellow:

1. Plan
    a. Situation analysis - Where are we now?

        i. Digital marketing-specific SWOT summary;
        ii. Company digital marketing capability assessment;
        iii. Marketing persona outlines;
    b. Objectives – Where do we want to be?
        i. Define vision for digital channels;
        ii. Digital channel strategy objective summary;
    c. Digital Marketing Strategy – How do we get there?
        i. Targeting and segmentation;
        ii. Positioning;
        iii. Proposition and the Marketing Mix;
        iv. Brand strategy;
        v. Online representation or presence;
        vi. Content and engagement strategy;
        vii. Digital channel acquisition communications strategy;
        viii. Online Value Proposition summary;
        ix. Strategic digital marketing initiatives priority matrix;
        x. Strategic initiative roadmap;
    d. Tactics, Action and Control
2. Reach
    a. Digital media channel effectiveness review;

In the following sections will be performed a detailed description of each step. The remaining steps of the RACE framework – Act, Convert and Engage – will not be covered in this project. As previously explained SCRAIM is still in the *Reach* phase.

3.1 Digital Strategy

Digital marketing planning involves marketing planning within the context of the e-business environment (Chaffey and Smith 2012). For this matter digital marketing planning is based on traditional marketing disciplines and planning techniques, adapted for digital environment. Following what was said before, Chaffey (2015) proposes a combination of the SOSTAC Planning System (P. Smith 2014) and the RACE planning framework for the digital marketing planning. RACE is practical, action-oriented, customer centred and integrates the performance evaluation. Also noteworthy that in every marketing plan, it's essential to centre on building a plan around the customer – not products and tactics (Chaffey and Bosomworth 2015).

The digital strategy for this project is consisted of two main parts. The first part corresponds to the planning (Plan), i.e., create a digital marketing strategy, and the second one corresponds to the Reach, i.e., increase the audience online.

In the following sections will be detailed the structure of the digital marketing strategy.

3.2 Plan

This section represents the first step in the implementation of the RACE framework involving the creation of the overall digital strategy, objective setting and planning. This can be described into three key points:

- Opportunity – review marketplace and set objectives;

- Strategy – create digital strategy;
- Action – implement and manage digital marketing communications.

Connecting the three previous points with the SOSTAC planning system then the approach can be described as follows:

1. Situation analysis - Where are we now?
2. Objectives – Where do we want to be?
3. Digital Marketing Strategy – How do we get there?
4. Tactics, Action and Control

3.2.1 Situation Analysis – Where are we now?

Decisions about strategy and tactics become a lot easier when the businesses knows their customers, competitors, competencies and resources as well as market trends (P. Smith 2014). The situation analysis (where are we now?) comprises the following activities:

- Digital channel-specific SWOT summary;
- Company digital marketing capability assessment;
- Market description;
- Marketing Personas outlines;
- Competitors.

Digital channel-specific SWOT summary

In order to make the strategic review of the company it is required to perform an analysis based on the SWOT tool. A SWOT analysis is a key fundamental part of any business or marketing plan and allows creating an action plan based on the situation of the marketplace. This analysis is the examination of the Strengths and Weaknesses of an organization and the Opportunities and Threats in the environment. Taking into consideration these points it is possible to develop a strategy which may be build on the strengths and eliminate the weaknesses, take advantage of the opportunities or respond to the threats. The strengths and weaknesses are identified by an internal appraisal of the organization and the opportunities and threats by an external assessment.

Company digital marketing capability assessment

This point aims to assess the digital marketing capability of the company. In a digital marketing context capability refers to the processes, structures and skills that an organization embraces in order to plan and implement digital marketing, also referred as the starting point of the future development of the e-business strategy. According to Chaffey and Smith (2012) a digital capability model shows the series of common stages that an organization goes through the adoption or refinement of digital marketing. In this sense it will be used a simple model (Table 1 see below) developed by James Carson and Dave Chaffey with the different stages in the path to reach digital marketing best practices.

Market Description

This point means describing the market where the online service is located and will be marketed. Focus on actionable needs and trends – is the company meeting them, what are they. In essence it answers the question: who are the customers? Understanding these is crucial to reach and influence the audience.

Digital Capability	Initial	Managed	Defined	Quantified	Optimized
Strategic Approach	No strategy	Prioritized marketing activities	Defined vision and strategy	Business-aligned strategy and roadmap	Agile strategic approach
Performance Improvement Process	No KPIs	Volume-based KPIs	Quality-based KPIs "Last click" attribution	Value-based KPIs weighted attribution	Lifetime-value KPIs
Management Buy-in	Limited	Verbal support, but inadequate resourcing	Sponsorship and increased investment	Active championing and appropriate investment	Integral part of strategy development
Resourcing and structure	No specific skills	Core skills centralised or agencies	Centralised hub and spoke dedicated resources	Decentralisation and re-skilling	Balanced blend of marketing skills
Data and Infrastructure	Limited / no customer database	Separate data, tools and IT services	Partially integrated systems and data	Integrated systems and 360º data sources	Flexible approach to optimize resources
Integrated Customer Communications	Not integrated	Core push activities synchronised	Integrated inbound approach	Integrated, personalised, paid-owned-earned media	Media optimized for ROI and to maximize CLV
Integrated Customer Experience	Website not integrated	Desktop and mobile support, not personalized	Partially personalized desktop and mobile experience	Integrated, personalized web, mobile, e-mail and social media	Full contextual personalized experiences and recommendations
	"Laggard"	"Developing capability"	"Competent average capability"	"Above-sector average capability"	"Market leading capability"

Table 1 - Digital Capability Model (source: http://tinyurl.com/q65q55l)

Marketing Personas Outlines

Identifying the customer market and segment is a crucial step in the development and implementation of any marketing strategy. Knowing our customers' needs is a part of a customer-centric approach in the way that the product or service is designed to offer and satisfy those needs. For this reason using Personas user experience is one the methods that permit to go further by understanding the preferences, characteristics and online behaviours of different groups of our customer segment. Personas brings target segments to life.

One of the aspects that usually fall apart is that this definition of the customers and their preferences are constantly changing even more when targeting audience through the Internet. Accordingly it is necessary to bear in mind that this project focuses exclusively on the Internet channel and online services and for this reason the customers and user profiles may change

frequently meaning that is essential to follow their intentions through time and adjust the targeting if necessary.

Competitors

All organization operates within an environment that influences the way in which they conduct business. Strategy development should be strongly influenced by considering the environment the business operates in (Chaffey and Smith 2012). Knowing our competitors is one of the parts that make up the business environment. Accordingly at this point it is proposed a benchmark analysis based on the customer personas and scenarios to further understand the core competences and main features among the competitors and leverage them.

3.2.2 Objectives – Where do we want to be?

While the situation analysis describes "where you are now", objectives clarify where you are going – "Where do we want to be".

In this sense effective e-marketing plans are based on clearly defined objectives since these will inform the strategies and tactics and will help in communicating the strategic intents to the workforce and investors (Chaffey 2009).

However, Chaffey and Smith (2012) recommend that should be a clear focus why someone is getting into e-marketing and which areas needs improvement before setting up the objectives. It could cover only one e-marketing area or the entire e-marketing scope. They suggest the use of the 5 Ss framework to help defining the objectives since it gives a holistic view of the e-marketing and its benefits, reasons or objectives. These "objectives" can be summarized into five areas:

- Sell – Grow sales through wider distribution, promotion and sales;
- Serve – Add value by giving the customers additional benefits online;
- Speak – Get closer to customers by tracking them, asking them questions, creating a dialogue and learning about them.
- Save – Save costs of service, promotions, sales transactions and administration, and so increase profits or transactions.
- Sizzle – Extend the brand online. Reinforce brand values in a totally new medium.

Being defined the reason of getting into the e-marketing, the objectives could be set. They should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant and Time-bound).

Inside objectives definition ("where do we want to be?") Chaffey (2015) includes three additional activities:

- Vision definition for digital channels;
- Digital channel strategy objective summary;
- Digital marketing performance dashboard.

Vision definition for digital channels

The definition of a vision statement allows an insight of the future, i.e., a picture of how the digital channel will support the organization through defining strategic priorities. So this point represents the creation of a vision statement which shows how digital media and technology will transform the organization. The vision statement should be disseminated by the all company's elements.

Digital channel strategy objective summary

This section represents the links between the SMART objectives, the tactics used to fulfil them and KPIs to prove that the strategy followed it is on-track. Table 2 shows an example of the table suggested.

Objectives	***Substantiation (informed by situation analysis or insight)***	***Strategies to achieve goals***	***Key performance indicators (critical success factors)***
Reach objective(s) *Increase brand awareness and visits to company websites, apps and social network sites*			
Act objective(s)	**Not covered in this project**		
Convert objective(s)			
Engage objectives(s)			

Table 2 - Example of table representing the relationship objectives, strategies and KPIs

Digital marketing performance dashboard

In Table 3 are displayed a list of relevant KPIs suggested by Dave Chaffey (2015). These KPIs allows the creation of a business dashboard and help company managers verify the effectiveness of their strategies. They represent a pooled analysis of all strategies to reach the audience and also measure content marketing ROI.

Measure	***Tracking metrics***	***Performance drivers***	***Customer-centric KPIs***	***Business value KPIs***
Reach Audience	• Unique visitors • New visitors • Visits • Conversation volume	• Share of audience • Share of search • Brand/direct visits	• Cost per click and cost per sale • Brand awareness • Conversation polarity (sentiment)	• Audience share (owned media) • Share of voice (earned media)

Table 3 - Relevant KPIs

Most of the measures are available from Digital Analytics tools (e.g. Google, Adobe, IBM Analytics), but some KPIs may required to be integrated to other sources such as social media or Marketing Automation systems.

3.2.3 Digital Marketing Strategy – How do we get there?

Situation Analysis answers 'where are we now?', Objectives clarify 'where do we want to go?' and Strategy summarizes 'how do we get there?'. Strategy requires the ability to see the big picture. In the following points there are the strategy components that need to be addressed:

- Segmentation and targeting;
- Positioning;
- Proposition and the Marketing Mix;
- Branding strategy;
- Online representation or presence;
- Content and engagement strategy;
- Digital channel acquisition communications strategy;
- Strategy definition technique: online value proposition summary;
- Strategy definition technique: strategic digital marketing initiatives priority matrix;
- Strategy Implementation Technique: Strategic initiative roadmap.

Segmentation and targeting

Since customers are all different, a marketer can rarely satisfy everyone in a market. For this sense marketer's start by dividing the market into segments identifying and building distinct groups of buyers to better meet and satisfy customer specific needs. After identifying market segments, the marketer decides which presents the greatest opportunities – which are its target markets (Kotler and Keller 2015).

Bearing in mind that one of the goals of this project is the analysis of digital marketing tools in order to reach customers, targeting will be accomplished through search marketing.

Search marketing involves both paid and owned media. The owned media corresponds to the natural search engine optimisation (SEO) but both share similar targeting options. The critical success factor means that company is targeting the right keyphrases that will get the best results.

Positioning

Positioning is the act of designing the company's offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the target market (Kotler and Keller 2015). Positioning the service offering demonstrates the company's strategy and ensures the way to achieve a competitive advantage in the market, given the more direct competitors of an organization.

Proposition and the Marketing Mix

Marketing Mix is concerns providing differential value to customers through varying the 4Ps through *Product*, *Price*, *Promotion* and *Place*. Applying this marketing model to services, and in this case online services, the marketing model must be extended to include three more Ps: *Physical Evidence*, *People* and *Process*.

Branding

Branding is much more than a name or logo of the service. Chaffey and Smith (2012) highlight three characteristics for a successful brand:

- Brand is dependent on customer perception;

- Perception is influenced by added-value characteristics of the product;
- The added-value characteristics need to be sustainable.

In summary, a brand is dependent on a customer's psychological affinity for a product or service, and is much more than the name or symbol elements of brand identity. Chernatony (2001) suggested that online branding requires delivering three aspects of a brand: rational and emotional values, and promised experience based on rational and emotional values. The factors that influence the online customer experience are present in the Figure 9.

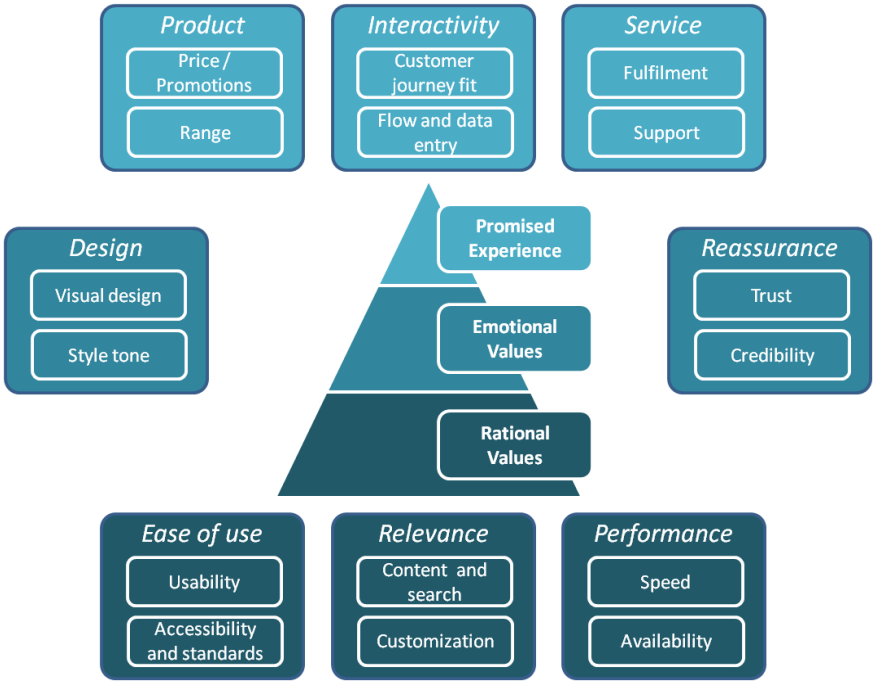


Figure 9 - Different elements of the online customer experience

Online representation or presence

This section represents the Web site strategy which includes the site architecture (number of sites or pages, sub-domains, landing pages), the site goals and how will they be achieved. This topic may also include priorities for social presences.

Content and engagement strategy

If the goal is to reach the customers, the service or business Web site must have content to gain the initial interest of customers. This content may also support the buying process and stickiness of the Web site, i.e., the Web site is so rich in contents and features that visitors and customers feel compelled to stick around for some time. Though the ultimate goal of this project is to reach the audience and is important to realize that the Web site contents may interfere in the other phases of the marketing funnel: act, convert and engage.

Digital channel acquisition communications strategy

This point outlines how the web site will acquire traffic and what are the main approaches. Key digital media channels for traffic acquisition would include:

- Search engine marketing (natural and paid);
- Social media marketing and Online PR (think brand strategy);
- Partner and affiliate marketing;

- Display advertising;
- Email marketing to leads database.

Online Value Proposition summary

Chaffey and Smith (2012) concerning *Online Value Proposition*: "there are millions of sites to choose from and thousands of new domain name are still added every day. How will you stand out?".

The purpose of this step is to define the unique forms of customer value that the service can offer through the websites and apps to encourage customers to do business with the company online and stay loyal:

- Describe the business in one sentence as perceived by its customers;
- Choose the most important differentiating attributes that show how the business delivers to its customers. How can these be emphasized online. Considering the marketing mix elements as ways to differentiate the services online (Product, Price, Place, Promotion, Physical Evidence, Process, People).
  - Financial Value – Dependability brings customers a quality product at a low price;
  - Innovative Products – Always providing the very newest products or ideas;
  - Customized Relationships – Services are tailored to meet the needs of the customers.
- Summarise the online value propositions (OVPs).

Strategic digital marketing initiatives priority matrix

Main strategic initiatives from the SWOT are then reviewed by placing in one matrix (Table 4) to give approximate priorities. The most important priorities (e.g. P1 or P2) with the lowest capabilities (e.g. C3 or C2) should be acted on first.

P1 = Very Important			
P2 = Important			
P3 = Lower importance			
	C3=Below Average capability	**C2=Average capability**	**C1=Leading capability**

Table 4 - Strategic digital marketing initiatives priority matrix

Strategic initiative roadmap

The roadmap is the long-term plan of initiatives considered in the prioritisation matrix since it usually will not be practical to implement everything within a six month period. The roadmap shows the long-term commitment and investment needed for digital marketing. The roadmap can be divided in quarters, half years or years (Table 5 see below).

3.2.4 Tactics, Actions and Control

Tactics are where the rubber hits the road to get results, so this section is the definition how the strategy will be implemented in the real world, which digital marketing activities will be considered and how they will be controlled. Dave Chaffey (2015) groups the digital marketing activities into three areas:

- Reach;
- Act and convert;
- Engage.

Strategic initiative	**H1 20XX**	**H2 20XX**	**20XX**	**20XX/20XX**
Reach				
Act	**Not covered in this project**			
Convert				
Engage				
Customer Insight and targeting				
Brand enhancements				
Governance and resources				

Table 5 - Roadmap initiatives matrix

3.3 Reach

Reach is the final stop of the digital marketing strategy for this project and represents a top-level review of six core digital marketing techniques to increase visits to a website:

- Search marketing;
- Online PR;
- Online partnership;
- Display advertising;
- Opt-in e-mail (for acquisition);
- Social media marketing.

Each of the six core digital marketing techniques is compared against the competitors and the ones that need improvement are prioritized. Table 6 shows the example of the matrix applied to search marketing since it is the most relevant for this project.

	Search Marketing – SEO and Pay-per-click / AdWords
Rating of current capability compared to competitors	
Priorities of success factors to improve?	
Priorities for new communications techniques to trial?	
Overall priority or value compared to other reach channels?	

Table 6 - Search marketing review

4 Proposal

The methodology and digital marketing strategy described in the previous chapter will now be developed and applied to an online service. This proposal will be based on SCRAIM service.

4.1 Situation Analysis – Where are we now?

For a business to succeed, first and foremost it is necessary to understand the current situation of key elements of the business. So this section represents the situation analysis of Stronstep and SCRAIM.

4.1.1 Digital channel-specific swot summary

This project will take a different approach for the SWOT analysis: firstly will be analysed the opportunities and threats followed by strengths and weaknesses. This sequence is commonly given the name of TOWS analysis, or situational analysis, and combines the external factors with those internal to the company, and strategies are developed based on this matrix. The TOWS analysis not only gives a review about the current situational analysis but also helps creating a more effective strategy by enhancing the relationships between each element of the SWOT analysis (Weihrich 1982):

- SO strategy (Maxi – Maxi) – maximize strengths and opportunities.
- WO strategy (Mini – Maxi) – minimize the weaknesses by taking advantage of external opportunities.
- ST strategy (Maxi – Mini) – maximize strengths to reduce the impact of external threats.
- WT strategy (Mini – Mini) – defensive tactics in order to reduce internal weaknesses and avoid external threats.

The result of TOWS matrix is showed bellow:

Opportunities

- Readymade processes;
- Features to promote productivity and team efficiency;
- Web based software – SaaS model;
- Mobile friendly service;
- *Freemium* price strategy;
- Trending capabilities;
- No geographical barriers, global market;
- Project management software and services is a gigantic market (USD 2 billion);
- Organizations are always striving to incorporate tools that make more efficient their business process.

Threats

- Competitive market with historical players like Microsoft;
- Highly developed strategies of SEM and SMO from competitors;
- On-premises software;
- Organizations internal politics and culture.

Strengths

- Technology based on the AIM methodology in conformity with the TSP/PSP (Team Software Process and Personal Software Process), CMMI (Capability Maturity Model Integration) and Six-Sigma ;
- Technology based in partnership with SEI4 (Software Engineering Institute), ESI5 (European Software Institute), UP (University of Porto) and Multicert.
- Flexibility provided by a low cost structure, allowing the swift adaptation to several situations;
- Technical Know-how of the development team;
- Proximity with CMMI and SCRUM communities;
- Mobile friendly website;

Weaknesses

- Low notoriety in the market and brand awareness: SEO not proactive, low % of visits;
- Newly social network strategy, still being implemented;
- Reduced content marketing;
- Limited digital resources;

WT Strategy

- Continuous SEM and SMO programmes;
- Development of engaging content;
- Editorial calendar for regular content marketing;

WO Strategy

- Promote unique features with different contents types;

ST Strategy

- A single tool that offers all relevant features and gathers all the information for managers;
- Focus on high-converting keywords part of the SEO strategy;
- Bold the advantages of SaaS and build strategic partnership (cloud security).

SO Strategy

- SEO in order to promote SCRAIM high value and unique capabilities;
- Expand SCRAIM awareness through CMMI and SCRUM communities;
- Develop partnerships and promote backlinking.

Company digital marketing capability assessment

This point aims to assess the digital marketing capability of Stronstep and its service SCRAIM. In accordance and regardless of the limited action of buy-in management Stronstep digital capability may be essentially classified as managed or “developing capability”.

Strongstep digital marketing processes and management are under development with top prioritized marketing activities involving social media, e-mail marketing and search engine optimization. For this matter Stronstep evaluate and measure SCRAIM website audience using some of volume based Google Analytics KPIs.

Being a start-up company with limited resources the product development and marketing teams as well as the infrastructure are centralized. Although there are some IT services that are not centralized as for example the website management or the customer database. In fact,

Stronstep does not have any CRM system to manage their interactions with SCRAIM customers even though there is a clearly intention from management to implement it in a short-term. Regarding the lack of autonomy in the management of the Web site it may represent a serious barrier in the implementation of the marketing strategy because it could compromise timings.

Figure 10 shows the different levels of digital marketing capabilities and within SCRAIM to-date level.

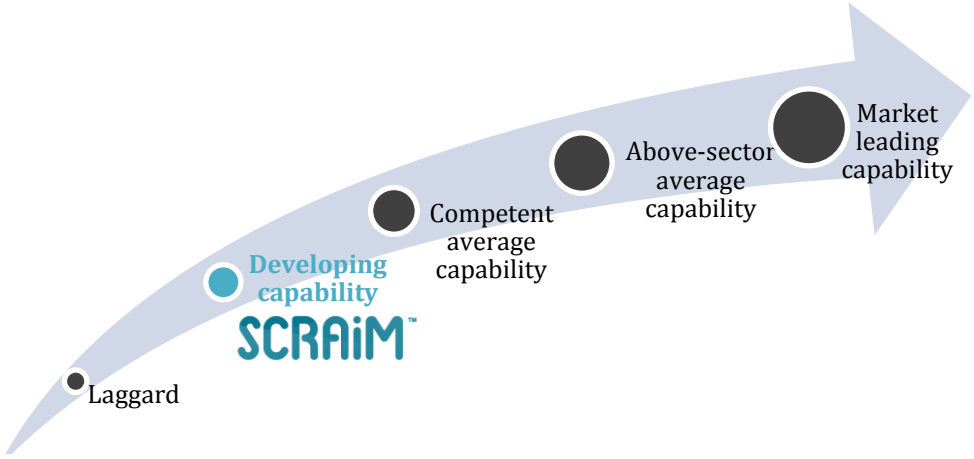


Figure 10 - Digital marketing capabilities progress

Market Description

Today organizations recognize that projects are increasingly more complex: numerous key characteristics, large amount of roles, an unavoidable mobility of the workforce and foremost tight deadlines and accurate cost control. Without appropriate software support organizations cannot effectively manage projects.

Project Portfolio Management (PPM) is a recognized approach that an organization can use to centralize management of the processes, methods, and technologies used by project managers and project management offices (PMOs) in order to analyze and collectively manage current or proposed projects based on numerous key characteristics.

Project Portfolio Management is a colossal market for a start-up company. The market research IDC expects the PPM market to reach $5.7 billion by 2018 (IDC 2014). This market includes some large players being around for awhile and consequently having a large market share as for example Microsoft, HP, SAP or Oracle. However recent trends towards the adoption of SaaS services helped to lower the market entry barriers and we are now witnessing an explosion in the project management software category. The site Capterra (2015) currently identifies 415 different services.

According to ICD (2014) ”organizations continue to struggle with the complexity of project, program, and product delivery while seeking to manage economic and political volatility as operational and business needs change and swirl dynamically. Agile management of human, financial, and other resources is key. In response, demand will remain ongoing for PPM tools. Smaller vendors will play a key role in product and market innovation, and differentiated PPM solutions will come into play in that context as further consolidation and product evolution occurs".

An international study on the project management software's, conducted by the Standish Group (Chaos Report 2014) found that 31.1% of projects will be cancelled before they ever get completed, 52.7% will cost 189% of their original estimates and an average of only 16.2% of the software projects will be completed on-time and on-budget.

This proves that the solutions currently in the market present some technical limitations and are not achieving their full potential. The difficulty lies in finding the proper tool set that suits specific needs, that actually helps project managers to be in control of their projects, in order to make the best decisions every time and everywhere. Top management wants to easily and quickly know how projects are going, which projects are in control and which ones are out of control, and why.

As described before SCRAIM was developed in order to assist the software development companies in managing their projects' portfolio, allowing a close monitoring of all ongoing projects, since deviations, risks, tests, among others. SCRAIM aims to overcome some shortcomings of current tools offering some differentiated features and adapted to the current reality.

Marketing Personas Outlines

In Table 7 (see below) are represented three fictional profiles of SCRAIM customers based on interviews and customers reviews of the service. This information was provided by Stronstep and it is available on the SCRAIM site (https://www.scraim.com/).

Competitors

In the project management category there is a wide selection of software's. Figure 11 illustrates five of the most popular project management software's and Table 8 (see below) details the features available on each of those solutions.

Figure 11 - Most popular project management software (Capterra 2015)

Name	***Description***	***Online behaviour***	***Content wanted from our website***
Paul	Male, aged 35-45, IT/SI Department Manager, medium-sized software development company. Paul is a rational person and has well defined objectives. His decisions are always based on reliable documentation like market analysis. Like any other manager Paul wants to be sure that your department is working efficiently and that there are no cost overruns.	When Paul browses the Internet he clearly knows what his looking for. He frequently uses the precisely words in search engines and the exact URL's.	Paul values trends reports, infographics, press releases, referrals and case studies from successful customers.
David	Male, aged 35-45 Project Manager and Team Leader. David decision-marking capability is half rational half emotional. His main responsibility is to manage IT projects and his team. His IT knowledge is regular but on the other hand he has a deep knowledge regarding project management and will always seek for market best practices and certifications.	David online behaviour varies between the exploratory and the exact queries.	David will put more emphasis on content related to their daily tasks for example best practices for project and process management, and team management. Product features, checklists and interactive demo will also have a positive effect on his decision-making.
Anna	Female, aged 20-30 IT/SI Technician. Anna is young professional and she has just started her professional carrier and she is relatively emotional.	Anna online behaviour his quite exploratory meaning that she quite often users search engines to discover something new and to help on her daily tasks. Her decisions are based on the reviews of other online users and if possible she will select inexpensive solutions.	Free and viral content will be valued by Anna. Reviews, community forums or some celebrity endorsements may also inspire her decision-making.

Table 7 - Persona User Experience

Features	*SCRAIM*	*MS Project*	*Basecamp*	*Atlassian Jira*	*Wrike*	*Podio*
Budget Management	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Bug Tracking	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Collaboration	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Email Integration	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗
File Sharing	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gantt Charts	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Idea Management	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Issue Management	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
Milestone Tracking	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Percent-Complete Tracking	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗
Portfolio Management	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Project Planning	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
Requirements Management	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
Resource Management	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Status Tracking	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Task Management	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
Testing / QA Management	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
Time & Expense Tracking	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Cloud	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Server	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗

Table 8 - Benchmarking competitors features

According to the Table 8 it is possible to verify that the most popular tools in the market do not offer all the features available in SCRAIM which meets the wishes of Stronstep to launch a service with distinctive features.

Features available in only one of the most popular competitors:

- Budget Management;

- Idea Management;
- Requirements Management;
- Resource Management;
- Testing / QA Management;
- Time & Expense Tracking;

Features available in only two of the most popular competitors:

- Bug Tracking;
- Percent-Complete Tracking;
- Portfolio Management;
- Status Tracking;

4.2 Objectives – Where do we want to be?

This section defines SCRAIM objectives and the key performance indicators. Thus, SCRAIM top-level broad goals are to achieve in five year period:

- 300.000 (free and paid) users;
- Sell the company from the fifth year for 55 million Euro's.

Being SCRAIM an online service the marketing strategy is closer to the digital channels and e-marketing strategies are nearest relative. For this reason and the objectives explained for this project, SCRAIM follows an e-marketing strategy.

Probably all five reasons of the 5 Ss framework (Sell, Serve, Speak, Save and Sizzle) for using e-marketing can be considered in order to support and reach SCRAIM ambitious goals. Yet it is important to note that the organizations should be clear about objectives towards the appropriated allocation of resources. For this purpose objectives should be SMART.

It is extremely difficult to forecast the website users, accordingly the top-level broad goals of SCRAIM management should be broken down and narrowed in order to make them real and measurable in the short-term. Based on the current amount of users it was applied a multiplier effect. For this reason this project will focus on the goal of reaching 3.000 users in the first-half of the implementation of e-strategy towards achieving the 300,000 users in the fifth year. Table 9 represents a "roadmap" of the annual objectives for a five year period.

As-is	1st year 1st half	1st year 2nd half	2nd year	3rd year	4th year	5th year
2000	**3.000**	**6.000**	**12.000**	**30.000**	**90.000**	**>300.000**
1.5	2	2	2.5	3	3.5	-

Table 9 - SCRAIM number of users in a five year period objective

Taking advantage of the 5 Ss framework the main e-marketing objective is Speak: make use of digital marketing communications tools to speak with SCRAIM audience when they're not on the site and encourage them to visit the site. This can be achieved using search engine marketing but in following sections this subject will be defined and detailed.

4.2.1 Vision definition for digital channels

The long form of vision statement for SCRAIM:

> "Be a reference player in the support solutions for the software development projects market, according to the AIM, CMMI and SCRUM methodologies."

This vision supports the organization purpose and helps providing inspiration for everyone involved in leveraging SCRAIM.

4.2.2 Digital channel strategy objective summary

Table 10, illustrates the digital channel strategy by linking the SMART objective of reaching 3.000 users in the six months and the tactics to fulfil it.

Objectives	*Substantiation*	*Strategies to achieve goals*	*Key performance indicators*
Reach objective(s) To increase the reach of SCRAIM website from 2,000 unique visitors per month to 3,000 over 6 months focusing on earned media.	This is a 100% increase. Currently the SCRAIM site gets about 2,000 visits per month sustained essentially by traditional marketing campaigns. With improved content quality and other SEO practices is very likely to reach 3.000 of unique visitors in 6 months.	• Proactive SEO • Social media amplification; • Partnering with complementary sites (affiliate marketing programme).	Increase volume/% of: • Organic search visits – monthly increments • Brand mentions via social media
Act objective(s)	**Not covered in this project**		
Convert objective(s)			
Engage objectives(s)			

Table 10 - The relationship objectives, strategies and performance indicators

4.2.3 Digital marketing performance dashboard

Since this project is focused in search engine optimization Table 11 (see below) displays a list of relevant KPIs that can be applied to track and measure SCRAIM SEO efficiency.

As previously stated some of these indicators can be easily removed from Google Analytics.

Measure	*Volume of SEO-related visitor KPIs*	*Market share of visitors KPIs*	*Quality of natural search visitor KPIs*	*Efficiency of SEO KPIs*
Reach Audience	• Number and % visits form SEO; • Number and % of visits from non-brand search;	• % of total search demand for selected target keyphrases; • % of positions for selected target keyphrases; • % visibility for selected target keyphrases;	• Average bounce from natural search compared to other channels; • Average conversion rate for natural search compared to other channels; • Average page depth of natural search compared to other channels.	• Number / percent of pages generating SEO visits • Number / percent of pages generating non-branded SEO visits – these are more difficult; • % of target keyphrases generating visits/sales; • Bounce rate for non-branded SEO visits.

Table 11 - Specific SCRAIM SEO KPIs

4.3 Digital Marketing Strategy – How do we get there?

This part describes the strategy to achieve SCRAIM objectives outlined in the previous section.

4.3.1 Targeting and segmentation

SCRAIM addresses the B2B (Business to Business) market and within small and medium-sized software development enterprises without efficient project management methodologies. As a SaaS application SCRAIM will be directed to the mass market in this sense that anyone can take part of the exactly the same service.

Thus, SCRAIM addresses the following targets:

- Project and Product Managers of software development SMEs;
- IT departments of large companies;
- Any team/project of software development that needs a platform to collaborate, identify issues, tasks, testes, among others.

The strategic service plan does not include, at this stage, target directly the large companies market. It would be an extremely complex task, because such organizations have their own systems, or, have systems quite entrenched in the way they work. Thus, switch to a new service which has no awareness or prominence in the market would require many resources

and probably would be doomed to failure. However Strongstep does not rule out departments within large organizations with specific needs and which have some level of autonomy from the organization itself. Taking this into consideration SCRAIM also has in target any team or project of software development that needs a platform with the features that SCRAIM offer.

Bearing in mind the segment's attractiveness and the company's objectives and resources the strategy to this target market goes through the service specialization, i.e., the firm specializes in a service which is sold to different market segments. Initially focused in the SMEs market but with the clearly vision to strike in the future other markets and become a reference player in the support solutions for the software development projects.

4.3.2 Positioning

As stated before, the ultimate goal of SCRAIM is to be a reference player in the support solutions for the software development projects market, according to the AIM, CMMI and SCRUM methodologies.

Figure 12 represents the positioning in the market, the service itself and some complementary services in order to reflect the competitive advantage over competitors.

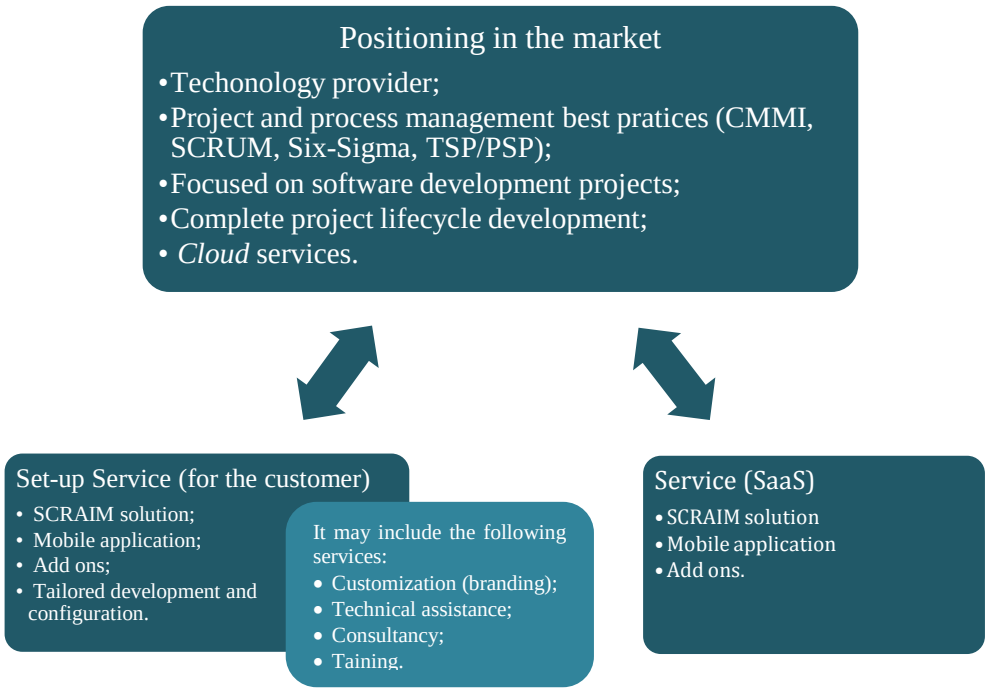


Figure 12 - Positioning in the market

4.3.3 Proposition and the Marketing Mix

This chapter describes the marketing mix of SCRAIM, i.e., the seven elements that make up the SCRAIM marketing strategy and provide differential value to customers:

- Product;
- Price;
- Place;
- Promotion;
- Physical Evidence;

- People;
- Process.

Taking into consideration that the marketing strategy follows a mass marketing strategy the marketing mix is offered evenly to all customers in a global market.

Product

The Product Life Cycle is divided into four different stages: *Introduction*, *Growth*, *Maturity* and *Decline*. As SCRAIM just entered the market and is introducing new features the service is positioned at the *Introduction* stage (Figure 13). This stage corresponds to a period of slow growth sales as the marketing strategy should be developed around product awareness among innovators and early adopters. All the components of the marketing mix need to be aligned with these assumptions.

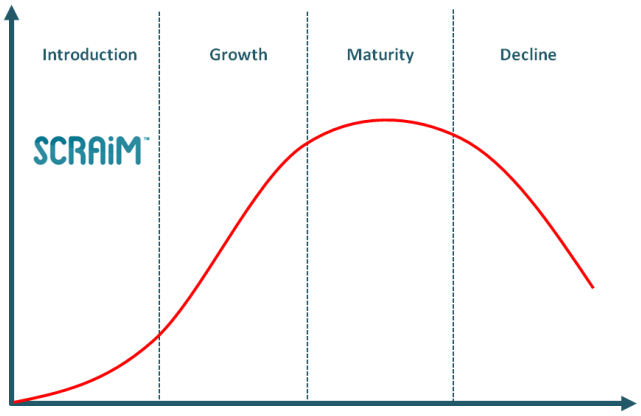


Figure 13 - SCRAIM Product Life Cycle

Kotler (Kotler and Keller 2015) introduced a five level model to describe the perceived value of customers regarding a product or service (Figure 14).

Therefore it is necessary to address the five levels of the service where each level adds more value to the customer.

The fundamental level, the *core benefit*, corresponds to the service that the customer is really buying, in this case, when a project manager buys SCRAIM service his buying a system to help to manage his projects.

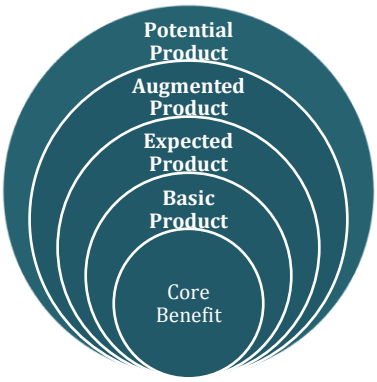


Figure 14 – The Customer-Value Hierarchy - five product level

At the second level, *basic product* level, SCRAIM includes project management basic features as for example: project planning and scheduling, milestones tracking, task managing and Gantt charts.

At the *expected product* level, customers expect a set of attributes and conditions that they normally expect when they purchase this service. SCRAIM customers expect a reliable, responsive and free bug service where they can manage their projects.

In the *augmented product* is the level where SCRAIM pretends to make the difference from the competitors, the level where the service exceeds customer expectation. SCRAIM offers a SaaS platform where customers can easily track and organize the projects issues, manage team allocation and keep track of the time and costs spent, and have real perception of what's going on with overall vision of all projects. Additionally SCRAIM includes some readymade development processes following international software engineering best practices.

At the last level, *potential product*, SCRAIM could take an enhanced view of the previous levels and offer additional services as for example training on customer site, service customization and consultancy.

Despite of SCRAIM already includes attributes of the level *augmented product*, the service is still in the introduction phase and for this reason may not offer all the conditions for this stage. For this reason the level that best suits SCRAIM is *expected product* as perceived by the people who use the software.

Price

Price is a crucial factor because it influences purchase intention and the company profits.

SCRAIM adopted a *Freemium* price strategy to rapidly reach a wide fraction of the market. The Freemium model enables to attract a large base of free users, that some will convert into or attract paid users by charging for advanced features or services.

Therefore, SCRAIM have two packages of paid services that differ only in the maximum number of users: *Light*, and *Standard*. A third package will be released soon and is targeted for customers who require more than 25 users. The differences between free and paid packages are explained in Table 12.

	Free	*Light*	*Standard*
Price	0€	6€	15€
Users	5	15	25
Infrastructure (virtual machine)	Public Shared	Private	Private
Issues + Time Tracking	✓	✓	✓
Project Dashboard	✓	✓	✓
Ready Made Dev. Processes	✓	✓	✓
Collaboration (wiki, news, forums)	✓	✓	✓
Documentation + Code Repository	✗	✓	✓
Release Planning	✗	✓	✓
Risk & Impediments Management	✗	✗	✓
Tests Management	✗	✗	✓
Budget Management	✗	✗	✓
Training	✗	✗	✓
Support	Feedback Ticket	Dedicated	Dedicated

Table 12 - SCRAIM packages characteristics and prices

The price is charged for each registered user, monthly or annually. If the annually payment is chosen, a discount that can vary from 5% to 10% will be applied.

Once again a benchmarking of SCRAIM major competitors is a key part of the strategic planning. In this sense it was taken an analysis regarding the packages and pricing applied by competitors. The results are shown in Table 13 (see below).

	SCRAIM	***MS Project***	***Basecamp***	***Atlassian Jira***	***Wrike***	***Podio***
	Free	Project Pro for Office 365	10 active projects	JIRA Agile 10 users	Free	Basic
Users	5	5	Unlimited	10	5	Unlimited
Price	-	25€	20€	$20	-	$9
	Light	Project Online	40 active projects	JIRA Agile 15 users	Professional 5 users	Plus
Users	15	Unlimited	Unlimited	15	5	Unlimited
Price	6€	33€	50€	$75	$49	$14
	Standard		100 active projects	JIRA Agile 25 users	Professional 15 users	Preemium
Users	25		Unlimited	25	15	Unlimited
Price	15€		100€	$150	$99	$24
	Full		Unlimited projects	JIRA Agile 50 users	Enterprise	Enterprise
Users	*Coming soon*		Unlimited	50	Unlimited	Unlimited
Price			150€	$300	$199	*n/at*

Table 13 - Benchmarking analysis of the competitor's prices

In summary:

- All the main competitors offer a variety of monthly packages;
- Wrike is the only competitor that follows a *Freemium* strategy up to 5 users;
- Basecamp offers the exactly the same features independently of the package chosen;
- Microsoft Project is the most expensive solution for less than 5 users and Atlassian JIRA is the most expensive in all other options;
- SCRAIM offers a very competitive price among his competitors.

Place

The whole process of distribution, sales and customer service of SCRAIM is done over the Internet. Allen and Fjermestad (2001) argue that the Internet has the greatest implications for Place in the marketing mix since the Internet has a global reach. In this sense the digital channels used to communicate with customers are:

- Website;
- E-mail;
- Facebook;

- YouTube;
- Linkedin;
- Google+;
- Twitter.

In a digital marketing strategy all channels of communication should be considered as a part of a common strategy although, for this project, the focus will be only the Web site for the reasons and objectives stated before.

Promotion

E-commerce managers constantly strive to deliver the most effective mix of communications to drive traffic to their e-commerce sites. For this sense specification of the *Promotion* is usually part of a communications strategy and includes the selection of target markets, positioning and integration of different communications tools.

One approach for developing promotion tactics is to specify the communications techniques required for different stages of the buying process (Chaffey 2009). These techniques are represented in the Figure 15 and are often combined in what is known as a 'traffic-building campaign'.

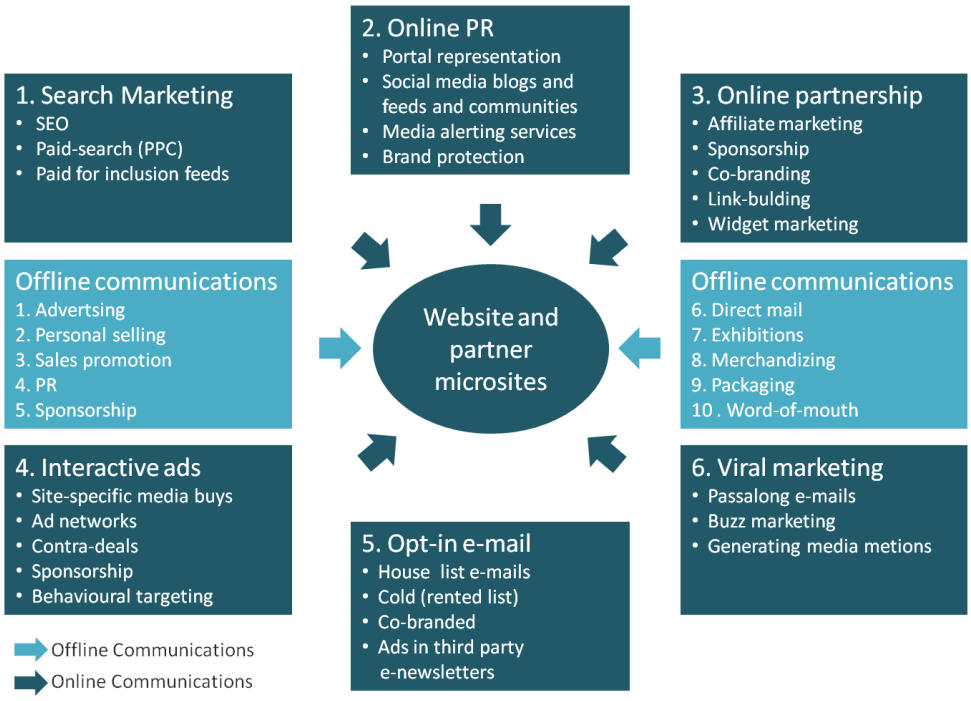


Figure 15 - Online and offline communications techniques for e-commerce

The different techniques can be characterized as traditional offline marketing communications or online marketing communications which are today referred to, by those working in online marketing, as digital media channels. From an e-commerce context the main reason for applying these techniques is often to increase brand awareness and acquire new visitors. Also to be noticed that a marketing communication strategy will not be successful if it meets its objectives of acquiring site visitors but the cost of achieving this is too high. This is particular relevant for a start-up service like SCRAIM.

According to Chaffey and Smith (2012), search engines are the primary method of finding information about a company and its products. If a company is not outstanding in the search

engines, then many potential sales could be lost due to the company dependency on the strength of its brand and offline communications to drive visitors to the web site.

Given that SCRAIM have none or very low visibility in search engines the development of the communication strategy will focus on the primary method or technique for promotion – search marketing and search engine optimization – also in accordance with this dissertation purpose.

As explained in the introduction, SEO involves a structured approach used to increase the position of a company or services in search-engine natural or organic results listings for selected keyphrases. Today, search engines algorithms use a list of unknown variables with different weights to obtain the SERPs. Briefly this means that traffic is drawn to sites that have relevant content. Even though, there are some well-known factors that influence search engine rankings and can drawn traffic to SCRAIM site and promote the service:

1. **Define primary, secondary and tertiary keyphrases for page:** instead of focusing in one keyword consider variations of a term and related terms used by searchers. Table 14 shows an example.

Keyphrase type	*Definition*	*Examples*
Primary	The main phrase that we are targeting.	**project management**
Secondary	One or two similar phrases that are used less often.	**project management saas**
Tertiary	Less commonly used longer phrases, often based on additional qualifiers used to describe the product.	**complete project management saas**

Table 14 - Example of primary, secondary and tertiary SCRAIM keyphrases

2. **Create powerful brand messages across key site pages:** for prospects, the search results pages in Google may be the first time they experience a brand, so it is essential to make sure that we are transmitting a powerful and convincing message. Figure 16 shows an example of SCRAIM following best practice targeting primary, secondary and tertiary keyphrases although part of the message is cut-off. This example should be applied for other keyphrases as well.

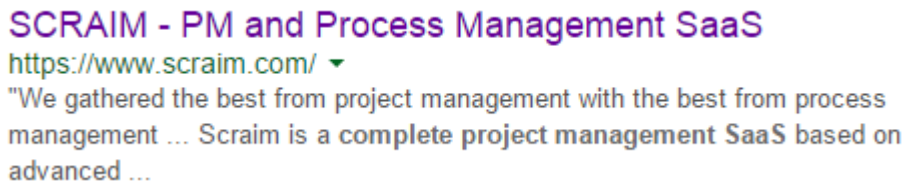


Figure 16 - SCRAIM Google's search result for "complete project management saas"

3. **Use relevant title tags:** the page or browser title is the most important on-page factor determining ranking of a page in the eyes of the search engines. Is also important since it appears in the search results page and should summarize the brand offer + service + content and include a call-to-action. Creative and eye catching titles and descriptions can also drawn traffic for website. Figure 17 (see below) shows SCRAIM to-date title tag. Unfortunately this title tag is applied to every page. Thus, some improvements can

be made for example use targeted keywords first and brand at the end, and also ensure that are no duplicate titles which may point to Google that they are similar pages and it will not include them in the index.

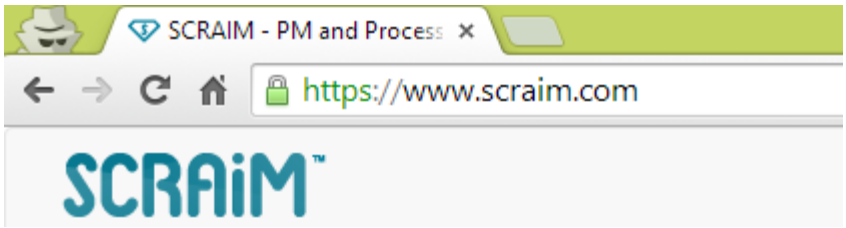


Figure 17 - SCRAIM title tag

4. **Write appropriate meta descriptions:** meta descriptions have little or no impact on the natural search results, but can be a persuasion element of natural search listing since it appears on the search results. Also to be noticed that search engines may penalize pages with similar titles or meta descriptions. Figure 18 presents SCRAIM meta description.

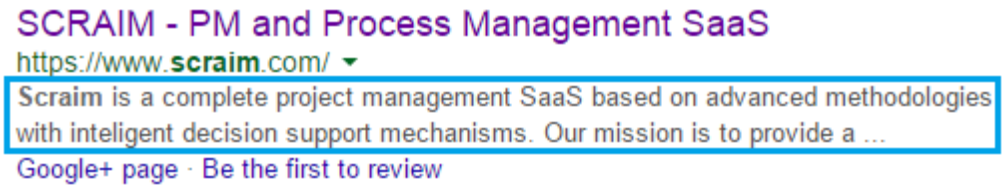


Figure 18 - SCRAIM meta description

5. **Use appropriate page file names:** while not important as the title tag, it is still an important part of the SEO strategy. The page URL is displayed in the address bar of the internet browser and usually identifies the section of the website you are in and the page within that section. Also helps search engines make an association between the words used in the URL and the content topic giving strength to the link. Figure 19 shows some useful tips.

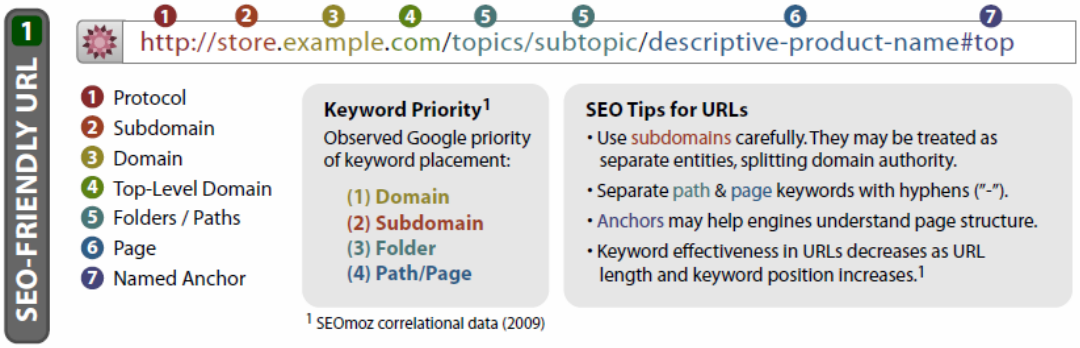


Figure 19 - MOZ Anatomy of a URL (source: http://tinyurl.com/pbt8nbj)

6. **Create appropriate page headings and subheadings:** header tags are used on pages to show headlines or sub-headings. They help by giving pages a structure and allow users to scan a page quickly to find what they are looking for. They usually can be spotted by their font size/style. Headers are usually bigger than the body text and usually either a different colour or bold.

In Figure 20 it is possible to see one of the headings of SCRAIM Web site in this particular case a H1 header. The H1 tag is the most powerful heading tag similar to title in a book.
In this particular case SCRAIM site is wasting an SEO opportunity because H1 is applied in the main page to "Latest News" and it isn´t targeting any primary keywords. SCRAIM headers should feature primary, secondary and tertiary target keywords.

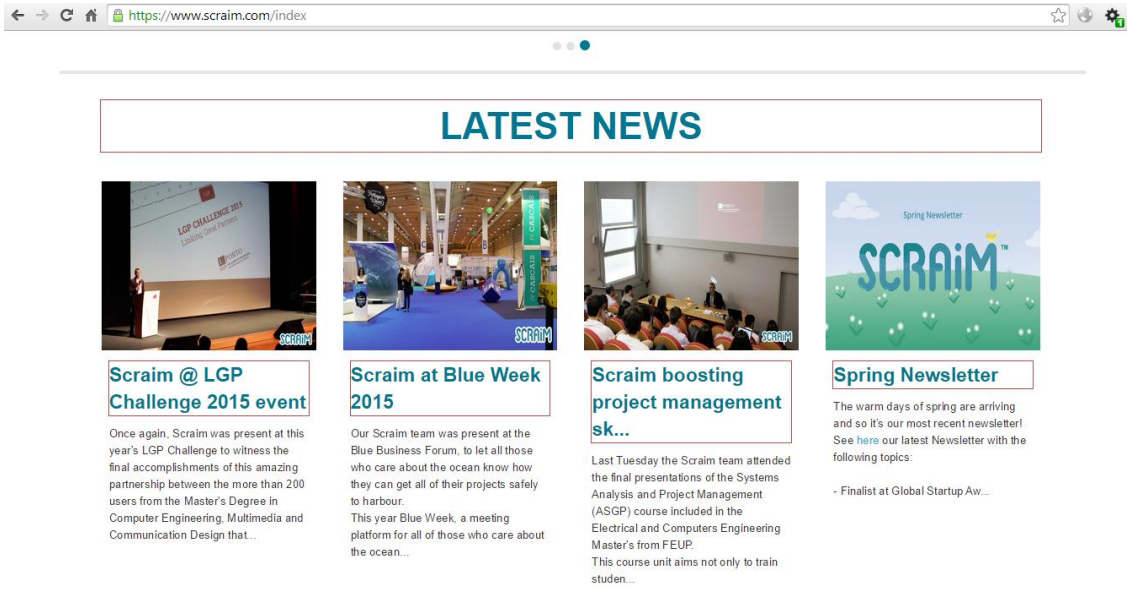


Figure 20 - SCRAIM website headers

7. **Create relevant body copy:** body content is the core text of the page and it should be also the largest content area. The content should be rich in text and sometimes with some images or videos to make it more interactive. This is also an important characteristic that apart from affecting the page ranking also prevents or minimizes the bounce rate (visits in which the person left the site from the entrance page without interacting with the page).
   Accordingly two key points that should be taken into account for SCRAIM body content:
   - Keep text simple in a customer-centric perspective;
   - The target keyphrase should appear in the top content ideally once or twice on the opening paragraphs;
   - Keep the target keyphrase words as close as possible.

The seven steps behind describe some of SEO techniques to enhance the visibility of the website and increase brand awareness. Yet they only make sense if there is content with quality capable of reach a target audience.

Physical Evidence

When buying intangible services, customers search for a physical evidence to sustain their decision. In the online world the evidence is digital.

As it was possible to assess, SCRAIM is in a digital capability development, starting to use the most up to now relevant digital channels to communicate with their audience. This includes the website, e-mail and the social networks making these the physical evidence. So

customers looking for cues and clues for reassurance can use these digital channels making them a critical feature in the process of customer acquisition and engagement.

SCRAIM also provides these guarantees in the form *Freemium* price strategy and also with rewards. Customers can use the application free of charge forever and by inviting three friends to join to SCRAIM community they will receive a 3 months of SCRAIM paid subscription totally free. The Figure 21 shows the company website.

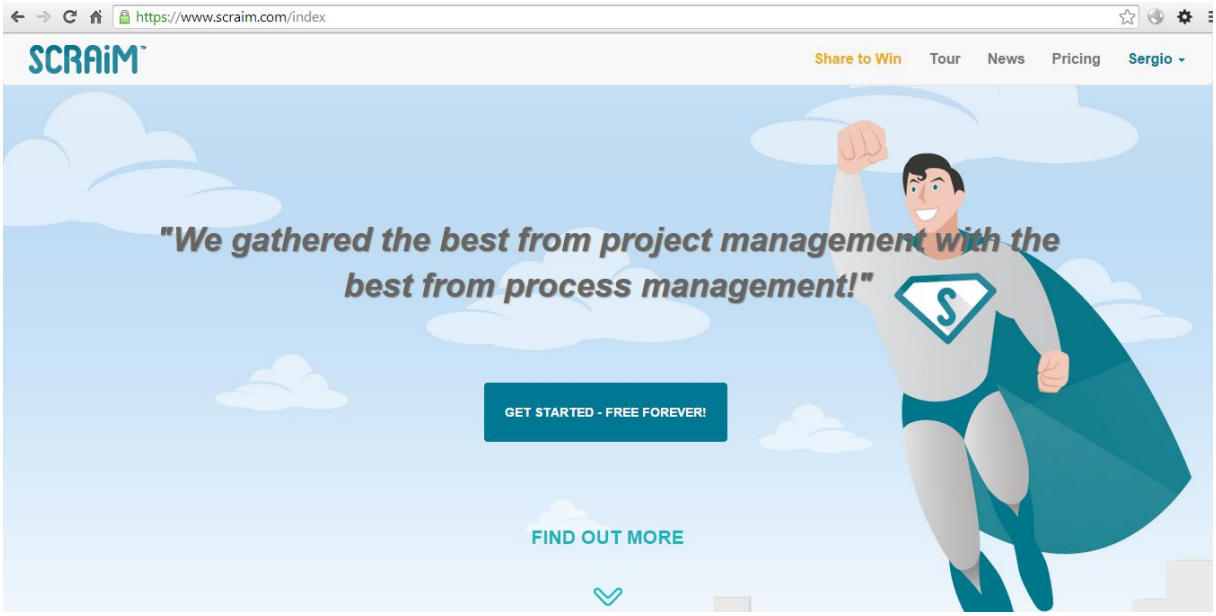


Figure 21 - Physical evidence - SCRAIM website

However there are still some improvements to be made as described in the Promotion section.

People

In services, marketing people, or staff, are a crucial element of the marketing mix since they are part of the service provision. As a service *touchpoint*, frontline employees are a source of customer loyalty and a competitive advantage.

In the online world most of tasks can be automated and the concept of 'costumer self-service' is very common in the e-marketing. Customer self-service allows the customer to receive information fast and effective, and at the same time permits costs reduction by decreasing staff interactions.

Chaffey and Smith (2012) establish that a site company should be designed to service customers. For this matter they set a list of automated features enabling customers to choose the type of contact and streamline interactions. Some of the features can actually be adopted by SCRAIM:

- *Auto-responders*: these automatically generate a response when a customer e-mails an organization or submits an online form;
- *Email notification*: automatically generated by a company's systems to update customers on the status of their registration: for example, registration received, payment received, account expiration. Already implemented in SCRAIM site but requires improvement;

- *Call-back facility*: customers fill in their phone number on a form and specify a convenient time to be contacted. Dialling from a representative in the call centre occurs automatically at the appointed time and the company pays, which is popular.
- *Real-time live chat*: a customer support operator in a call centre can type responses to a site visitor's questions; for example, a widely deployed technology such as LivePerson (www.liveperson.com). Liveperson offers a Freemium plan.
- *Frequently asked questions*: for these, the art is in compiling and categorizing the questions so that customers can easily find (a) the question and (b) a helpful answer. Already implemented in SCRAIM site but only for service subscription.
- *Ask and answer services*: provide a moderated service where customers help each other by answering each other's questions.
- *On-site search engines*: these help customers to find what they're looking for quickly and are popular when available. Some companies have improved conversion-to-sale rates greatly by improving the clarity of the results that the search engines return. Site maps are a related feature.
- *Co-browsing*: here, the customer's screen can be viewed by the call-centre operator in combination with callback or chat. Teamviewer (www.teamviewer.com) is an excellent free tool for this feature.
- *Virtual assistants*: these come in varying degrees of sophistication and usually help to guide the customer through a maze of choices.
- *Customer reviewers and assistants*: online social media enable organizations to recruit customers to help shape their service for other customers through reviews and comments.

Automated services may give some control and quality assurance to customer service although people are also required. For this matter staff needs to be trained and motivated whether they are answering a phone or replying to a tweet.

Process

Process refers to the sequence of procedures and activities that contribute to the service provision. Taking into account the intangibility of the services an excellent execution of the design and development of the service delivery processes are vital to business success.

One of the methods for the service design is the Service Experience Blueprint (SEB). SEB enables an integrated design of the multi-interface service experience, leveraging each channel's advantages to enhance the overall customer experience and engagement (Patrício, Fisk and Falcão e Cunha 2008).

For this analysis were selected two critical processes to the future success of SCRAIM.

The first one is related to the registration process (Figure 23 see below). In this scenario were added additional steps and some improvements over the current registration process in order to make it more smother and richer, for example for the first step is only required a e-mail address and immediately a activation e-mail is sent to the customer with a link for the remaining process of registration. During the registration process, the customer can also view the pricing plans available (all can be tested free of charge for 30 days). Steeped in the registration process is also a video encouraging the use of the software and showing some of the key facilities, and a quick and extremely simple step-by-step tutorial.

In the other example of the SEB (Figure 22 see below) it was taken into account the point at which a customer is browsing the site and having doubts whether to register or not, because

he does not know which package is best suitable for him and its price. In this example is introduced the chat component embedded in the SCRAIM site. In this case the SCRAIM agent is notified automatically that there is a visitor on the page that is for some time looking for information and instantly a pop-up window appears in the visitor's browser offering help. The visitor accepts help and the agent points to the page where he can find a comparison table of the packages and plans available. The visitor identifies the best suited package for his requirements and advances to the registration process.

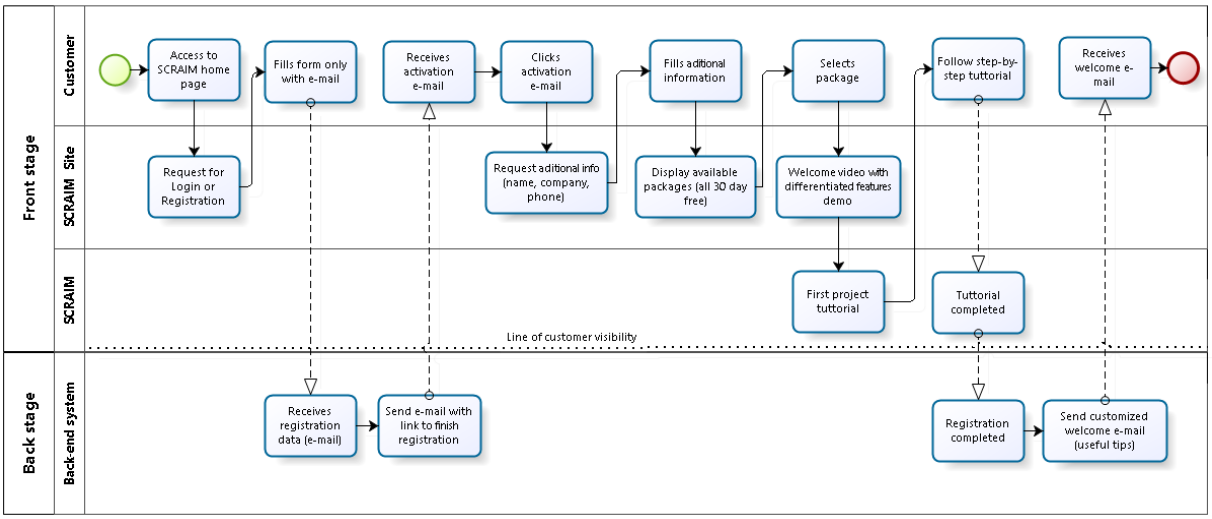


Figure 23 - Service Experience Blueprint for SCRAIM user registration

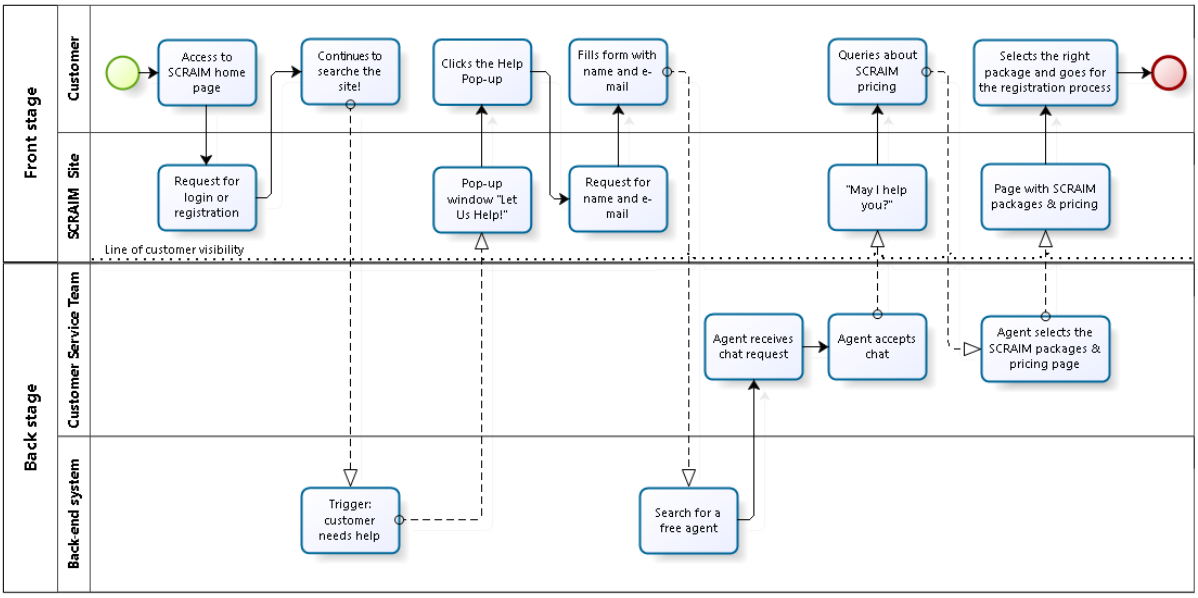


Figure 22 - Service Experience Blueprint for SCRAIM customer service

4.3.4 Brand strategy

As previously stated Chernatony (2001) suggests that delivering the online experience promised by a brand requires delivering rational values, emotional values and promised experience. Taking these values in consideration Chaffey (2009) presented a list of factors which influence each of these values. As a result it is possible to assess SCRAIM brand strategy.

Rational

Rational values are influence by three categories: *Ease of use*, *Relevance* and *Performance*. The first one, ease of use, combines factors like usability and, accessibility and standards. Relevance it's characterized by content, search and customization and the last of the category, Performance, merges performance and availability.

SCRAIM value proposition includes factors like usability and adoption of standards and best practices. For this reason ease of use and performance are two keys requirements included in the SCRAIM offering capable of differentiate the service from competitors and of course add value to customers. However, in terms of relevance, SCRAIM still needs improvement. Although the site has the possibility of a user to login the overall service is not customizable. As regards the content, the site does not present a lot of information regarding the service. This is an essential point to be as soon as possible improved.

Emotional

Emotional values include the factors *Design* and *Reassurance*. Relatively to design SCRAIM has a fresh, young and simple visual design capable of transmitting emotional feelings similar to stress free and efficiency (Figure 24).

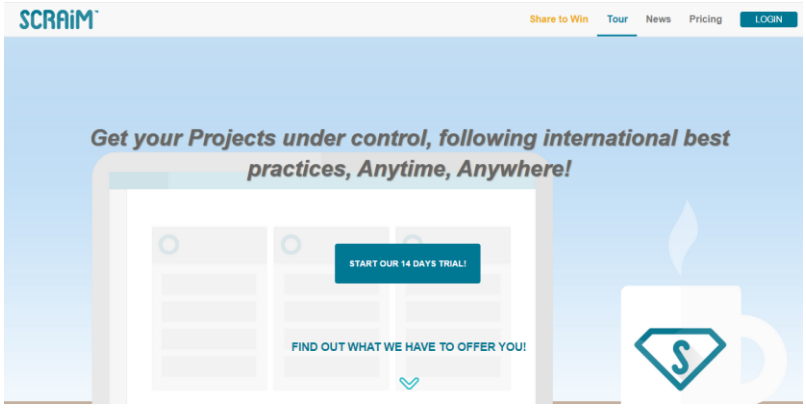


Figure 24 - SCRAIM site (tour page)

Regarding reassurance, there is still a long way to go. As a very recent service, it's still not possible to be recognized as trustable and credible service. However, these two factors should be assured and transmitted to each of the current and future customers. Partnerships and integration with specialized communities will also help to support theses factors.

Promised Experience

Promised Experience represents the product, interactivity and the service related to product. Regarding the product, for this specific case the SCRAIM service, was verified in the marketing mix that SCRAIM adopts a *Freemium* price strategy capable of differentiate among the competitors. Concerning service fulfilment and the customer service they should be reinforced in order to guarantee quality of service to customers.

4.3.5 Online representation

This point represents the definition of the Web site strategy and priorities. Nowadays covering the entire digital world is an extremely time consuming task and therefore priorities must be set to interact with the audience. The Figure 25 (see below) based in the *Digital Marketing*

Radar from Chaffey (2015), helps to prioritise the online presence with different types of sites and applications, valuable for increasing brand visibility. In the centre of all options is SCRAIM site as the core of the web strategy.

The SCRAIM site already has a simplified and exceptionally intuitive structure even though it still requires more quality content, capable of reaching the audience. For this reason it should contain a more detail vision of each of the features combined with the use of some animations (for example GIF images).

The inclusion of use cases from different perspectives based in the user Personas user experience (e.g.: team leaders, project managers, product development) can also have a positive influence in potential customer's and their emotional values.

In the online presence categories it is clear where SCRAIM should focus, some of them are already in development as for example the presence in social networks like Facebook and YouTube, and the own brand proprieties with the creation of a SCRAIM blog. Noteworthy, the importance of search engines always present has a top priority.

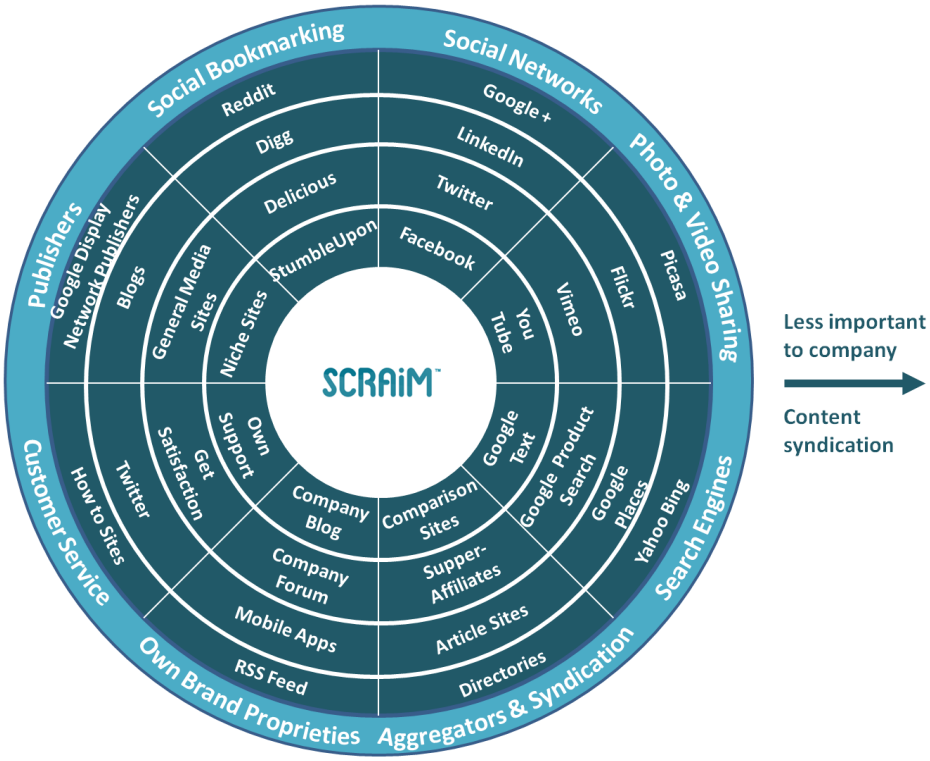


Figure 25 - Digital marketing radar

4.3.6 Content and engagement strategy

Chaffey (2015) developed a *Content Marketing Tool* to help marketers and their companies generate ideas within the most engaging contents types. This tool has become a starting point to structure ideas focusing on the company type of audience, i.e., more or less rational or emotional. The tool consists in a simple matrix with four dimensions (*Educate*, *Entertain*, *Inspire* and *Convince*) with the addressable content inside as it is possible to see in Figure 26 (see below).

In Figure 27 (see below) is represented the content that SCRAIM is currently promoting. Some of the contents offered (marked with a red star) still need significant improvements. For

example, SCRAIM YouTube account only has six videos and the last one was published more than six months ago. Up-to-date content is crucial to site 'stickiness'.

Figure 26 - Content marketing tool (source: http://tinyurl.com/qy5mlzy)

Figure 27 - SCRAIM current content assessment

Dave Chaffey (2015) argues that B2B companies should 'play' in the two left quadrants of the matrix. He also ranks the top left one as the most cut through. So, as it is possible to verify, SCRAIM should start focusing on the content of the left side in order to increase brand awareness.

4.3.7 Digital channel acquisition communications strategy

This point outlines how the web site will acquire traffic and what are the main approaches.

Today SCRAIM is already giving the first steps in the e-mail and social marketing but as defined before, this project is focused on the development of a strategy using search engine marketing and only in the option of natural or organic traffic. As seen in the previous points this strategy is perfectly framed. For this reason the main approach will be search engine optimization and based in the information previously disclosed. Thus the SEO strategy for this project will cover the following steps:

- Keyphrase research and targeting;
- On-page optimization;

4.3.8 Online Value Proposition summary

Business described in one sentence as perceived by its customers

SCRAIM is a project and process management online platform which provides quick setup for new projects supported by international best practices, team's efficiency and productivity improvement (centralized information), fastest communication and larger collaboration, and agile reporting to administration structures.

The most important differentiating attributes that show how the business delivers to its customers. How can these be emphasized online?

Creating and adding more value to a brand is the most influential aspect of digital channels, since it will allow reaching and engaging the audience and even encourage them to share the proposition. Thus, considering the Marketing Mix elements of SCRAIM it is clear that the ones that can differentiate the service online and add value are the *Product* and the *Price*.

SCRAIM offers a complete set of features based in international best practices which makes it unique among his competitors. In addition to the unique characteristics of the service, SCRAIM adopts a price strategy that allows anyone to use the service online free of charge forever.

Product and price can be emphasized online as a part of the communications strategy and using search engine marketing techniques as highlighted in the *Promotion* element of the Marketing Mix.

4.3.9 Strategic digital marketing initiatives priority matrix

Chaffey and Bosomworth (2015) suggest the use of a matrix for prioritizing the initiatives found in the SWOT/TOWS analysis as explained in the previous chapter - Methodology. Although the results achieved are more focused on the appliance of the SEO technique within the *Reach* phase of the RACE planning framework, and for this reason the initiatives are limited. Thus, each of the initiatives will be given only a priority from P1, most important, to P3, less important.

- SEO in order to promote SCRAIM high value and unique capabilities – **P1**;
- Development of engaging content – **P1**;
- Expand SCRAIM awareness through CMMI and SCRUM communities – **P2**;
- Develop partnerships and promote backlinking – **P2**;
- Editorial calendar for regular content marketing – **P3**;
- Bold the advantages of SaaS and build strategic partnership (cloud security) – **P3**.

4.3.10 Strategic initiative roadmap

This roadmap is the long-term plan of initiatives considered in the prioritisation matrix. Although, and as explained before, the initiatives are only related to the phase *Reach* of the RACE planning framework. For this reason, there should be a commitment and investment to implement the initiatives settled before on the first year. To be noticed that most priority initiatives should be implemented first.

4.4 Tactics, Action and Control

This digital marketing strategy is very focused on adopting search engine optimization as a tactic to help SCRAIM achieve the defined objectives. So, this section resumes some of the actions presented before regarding the implementation of the digital marketing strategy, and so as the activities to control it.

4.4.1 Tactics and Actions

As mentioned before the main tactic for SCRAIM achieve the proposed objectives is SEO. Search engine optimization will boost the SCRAIM visibility towards the goal of reaching 3.000 users in the first-half of the implementation of e-strategy and 300,000 users by the end

of the fifth year. Thus, it is necessary to align the SEO with the above marketing strategy. SEO alone is not effective.

Since SCRAIM is already a findable site from Google perspective, the actions can be summarized into two categories:

- **Keyphrase analysis;**
- **Improving search engine ranking through SEO.**

The detailed of each of those actions will be presented in the following chapter – Reach.

4.4.2 Control

The measurable KPI's to align against objectives and stay on track, are presented at section *digital marketing performance dashboard* (Table 11 - Specific SCRAIM SEO KPIs).

4.5 Reach

With the conclusion of the digital strategic plan is now possible to review the digital marketing technique to reach SCRAIM audience.

Rating of current capability compared to competitors

The main competitors of SCRAIM already have a mature position in the market with digital marketing strategies and search engine marketing techniques (SEO, Pay-per-click/AdWords) highly developed. We can easily check this by searching in Goole for "project management software". In the first page will appear all the main competitors of SCRAIM. According to the site Woorank (http://www.woorank.com), a Web-based software that generates instant website reviews, SCRAIM is rated at 61.1 points in a 100-point scale. The results of the competitors are presented in ANNEX B: Woorank - SCRAIM main and can prove that their SEO techniques are already highly developed.

Priorities of success factors to improve

The success factors were referred to in the element *Promotion* of the Marketing Mix:

1. Define primary, secondary and tertiary keyphrases for page;
2. Create powerful brand messages across key site pages;
3. Use relevant title tags;
4. Write appropriate meta descriptions;
5. Use appropriate page file names;
6. Create appropriate page headings and subheadings;
7. Create relevant body copy.

These seven points are the decisive success factors for improving search engine ranking through SEO.

Priorities for new communications techniques to trial

In the previous success factors list, the first feature is related to keyphrases. The success of SEO is achieving keyphrase relevance making keyphrase analysis and keyphrase selection the core success of search engine optimization. Therefore, for keyphrase analysis it´s necessary to use the elements identified in the digital marketing plan and analyze their popularity and competition. This is where the digital marketing strategy and SEO find themselves. At this core stage of the implementation of SEO we make use the value proposition of our service

and the unique features to reach our audience. The ultimate goal is to find low-competition and high-converting keyphrases.

Upon the completion of the benchmarking it was possible to identify some unique features compared to major competitors, for example, *budget management*.

Google Keyword Planner is a tool that helps marketers to build search campaigns by finding keyword ideas and estimating how they may perform. Thus, taking the example of the keyword *budget management* it's possible to get some low-competition keyphrases ideas as for example *budget management software* (Figure 28).

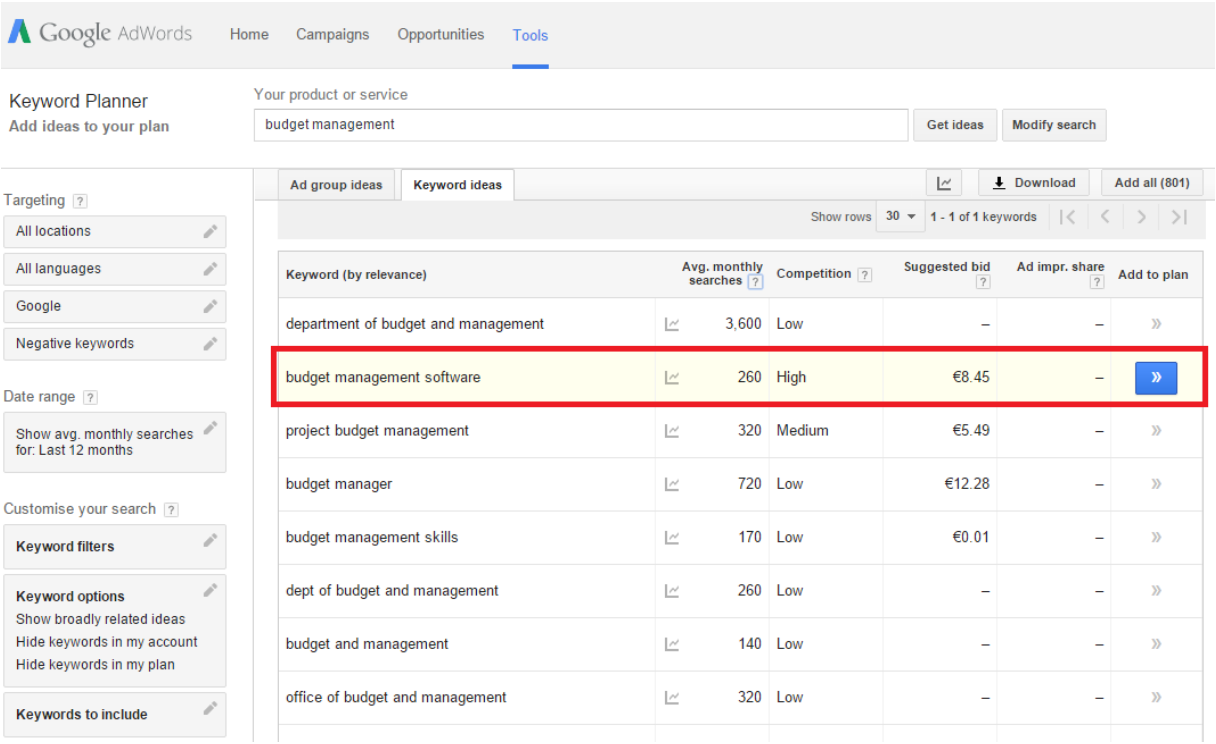


Figure 28 - Google Keyword Planner - Budget management keyphrase ideas

However, Google Keyword Planner presents close variations of the keywords we are introducing. Thus, one alternative is to use the websites of our competitors.

Figure 29 (see below) shows the results when we introduce the site of one of the competitors of SCRAIM, in this case the Atlassian. As is possible to verify the results are richer and varied. One of the ideas that stand out is "online project collaboration". Because these are low-competition keyphrases when compared to "project management software", it is easier to create popular and authoritative content around those keywords.

Let's take the example of Paul, one of the profiles developed in Persona user experience. Paul as a highly rational person is looking for online project collaboration articles or infographics explaining the benefits of such solution. Thus, SCRAIM site can easily create some contents in order to address the keyphrase "online project collaboration articles" or "online project collaboration infographics" and reach Paul and other similar profiles.

There are many alternatives to find keyphrases but these techniques are objective and allow a relationship with the digital marketing strategy.

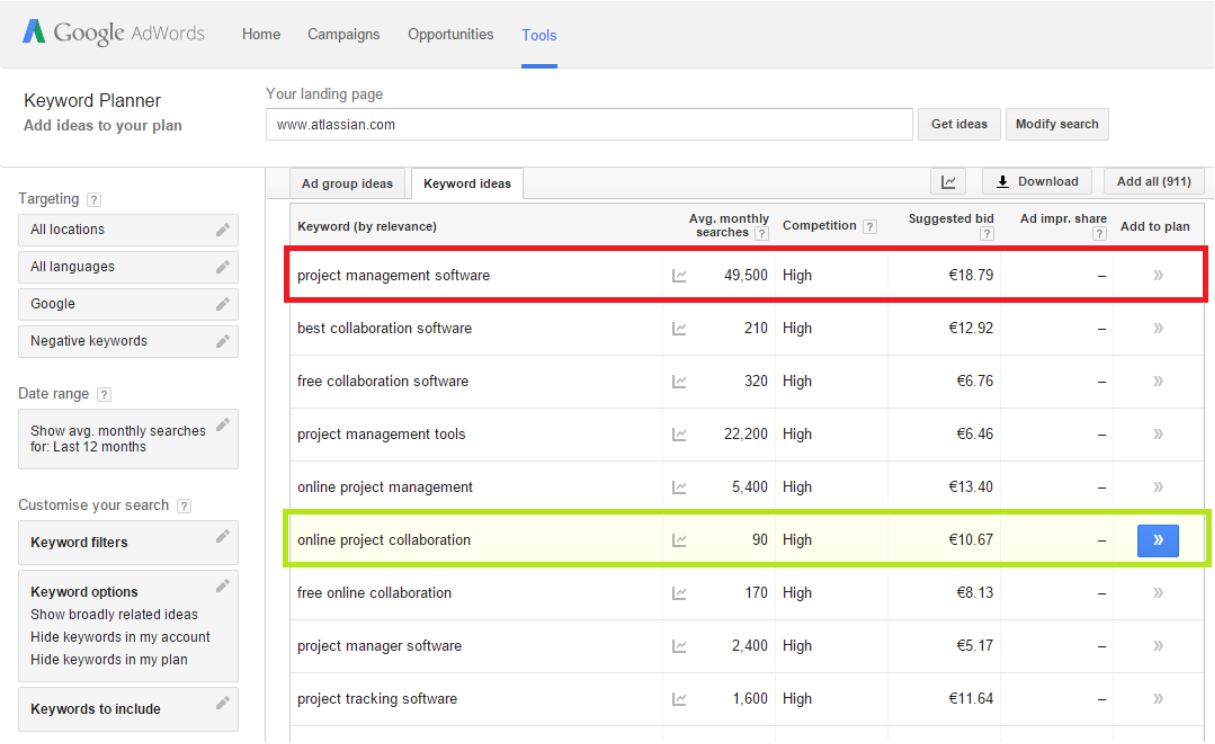


Figure 29 - Google Keyword Planner - Atlassian site example

Keywords and keyphrases are the most important part of search engine optimization. They must be used as much as possible in order to increase the probability of finding high-converting keyphrases and reach customers.

4.6 Chapter conclusion

In this chapter was developed the digital marketing strategy for SCRAIM based on the combination of the SOSTAC Planning System (P. Smith 2014) and the RACE planning framework (Chaffey 2015).

As previously defined the objective of this dissertation is to study and develop a marketing strategy for reaching online customers through the adoption of technique SEO.

Thus, this digital marketing strategy was developed for SCRAIM and is focused in an acquisition strategy to build awareness of off-site.

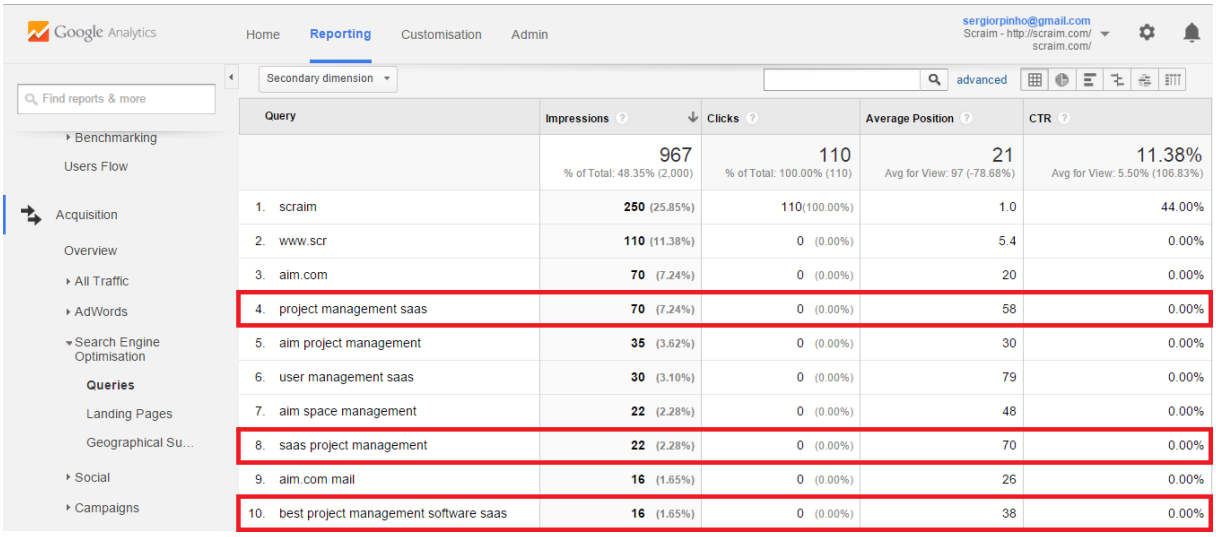
5 Evaluation

Although there are no results on the implementation of this digital marketing strategy, it is possible to make an assessment of the current state of SCRAIM site and strengthen some of the proposed improvements.

Google Analytics, a service offered by Google that tracks and reports website traffic, uses four metrics (*Impressions*, *Clicks*, *Average Position* and *CTR*) specific to Google Web Search data or SEO. In Figure 30 is evident the up to date evaluation of SCRAIM based on these four metrics for one-month period.

One of the startling facts that sustain much of the SEO theory presented before is that some of scarce keyphrases currently used on the site (excluding those that have a link with the name, e.g., scraim, aim, scr) are promoting the visibility of the website on the search engine results as for example "project management saas" or "best project management saas".

In the specific case of the keyphrase "best project management saas" SCRAIM site appears surprisingly, on average, at the 38th position of the SERPs.



Query	Impressions	Clicks	Average Position	CTR
	967 % of Total: 48.35% (2,000)	110 % of Total: 100.00% (110)	21 Avg for View: 97 (-78.68%)	11.38% Avg for View: 5.50% (106.83%)
1. scraim	250 (25.85%)	110(100.00%)	1.0	44.00%
2. www.scr	110 (11.38%)	0 (0.00%)	5.4	0.00%
3. aim.com	70 (7.24%)	0 (0.00%)	20	0.00%
4. project management saas	70 (7.24%)	0 (0.00%)	58	0.00%
5. aim project management	35 (3.62%)	0 (0.00%)	30	0.00%
6. user management saas	30 (3.10%)	0 (0.00%)	79	0.00%
7. aim space management	22 (2.28%)	0 (0.00%)	48	0.00%
8. saas project management	22 (2.28%)	0 (0.00%)	70	0.00%
9. aim.com mail	16 (1.65%)	0 (0.00%)	26	0.00%
10. best project management software saas	16 (1.65%)	0 (0.00%)	38	0.00%

Figure 30 - SCRAIM Google Analytics reporting

However, the results also present data that requires special attention. The higher impressions (number of times any URL from the site appeared in search results) are related to name SCRAIM and not to the service value proposition which most likely means that these results were obtained by people who already know the service and not new acquisitions. On the other hand the keyphrases not related to the name do not have any click (number of clicks on website URLs from a Google Search results page) which means that a keyphrase by itself is not effective. Any adopted keyphrase should be linked to relevant content and any relevant content must supply a demand. In the case of SCRAIM site, the content is minimal and for this reason does not inspire and engage the audience.

Some of the prioritized improvements factors for SEO identified in the SCRAIM digital marketing strategy are also recognized by WooRank as can be seen in the two page report presented at ANNEX C.

6 Conclusion

The world is changing and with it the way we communicate and negotiate goods and services. Digital marketing is the driver to reach this technologic and online generation by allowing marketers to customize their message to a specific target market while measuring the return of investment. However the massive development of new e-businesses increases the obligation of differentiate strategies from competitors.

Search engines are the primary source of website traffic along with Google's more than forty thousand searches per second makes processes like searching engine marketing and search engine optimization a strong approach to reach and increase customer acquisition.

Although, search engines like Google are increasing the complexity of the search algorithms having a direct impact on a marketing strategy based on SEO. Thus, a SEO strategy should be leaded by a strong knowledge of the related activities and principles such as creating higher quality content on a reliable basis. It should be noted that SEO is, above all, a process in order to reach people and in that sense the customer-centric principle is also here applied. The priority should be people and not search engines. It will be useless to optimize a website appearance if the content is ineffective.

For this reason this project intended to demonstrate a methodology allowing a structured link between a digital marketing strategy and the implementation of technique of customer acquisition and build awareness of off-site – search engine optimization.

By understanding the service and the market where the service is located it is possible to build a strategic and objective approach of SEO implementation. Given that there's no full guarantee of success when applying SEO, because of its complexity, this perspective allows a greater probability of satisfactory results, since it is possible to reflect in an online marketing technique the market characteristics as well as the intentions of the audience.

In last instance it is possible to argue that the SEO process begins by predicting what a user with a specific profile will query in a search engine. This argument strengthens the importance of keyphrases. The critical success factor means that company is targeting the right keyphrases.

However, as a keyphrase by itself is not effective, in a SEO implementation the effort is only rewarded if there is quality content. Quality content and targeting the right keyphrases are the keys to attract customers to a web site, retaining their interest and achieving repeated visits.

This project had a clear focus on the Web site and SEO, even though in a digital marketing strategy it is important to consider all digital channels involved in the communication with the audience.

In the future development of SCRAIM, this digital marketing plan should consider, apart from the other digital channels, the remaining phases of the RACE framework as Act, Convert and Engage. This way it is possible to cover all stages of the marketing funnel and so increase audience interactions, conversions rates from leads to sales, and long-term customer engagement and loyalty leading to repeated sales and advocacy.

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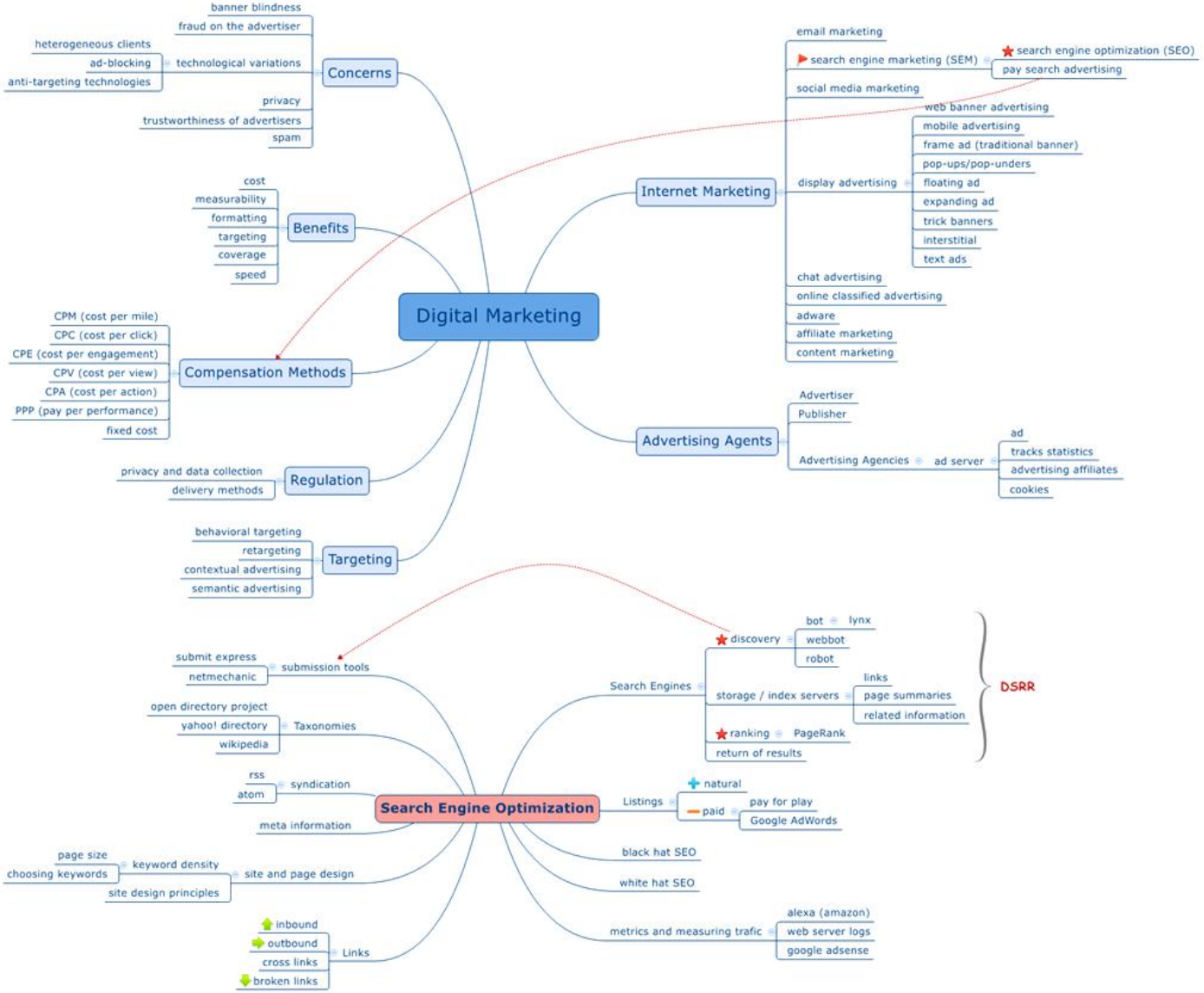
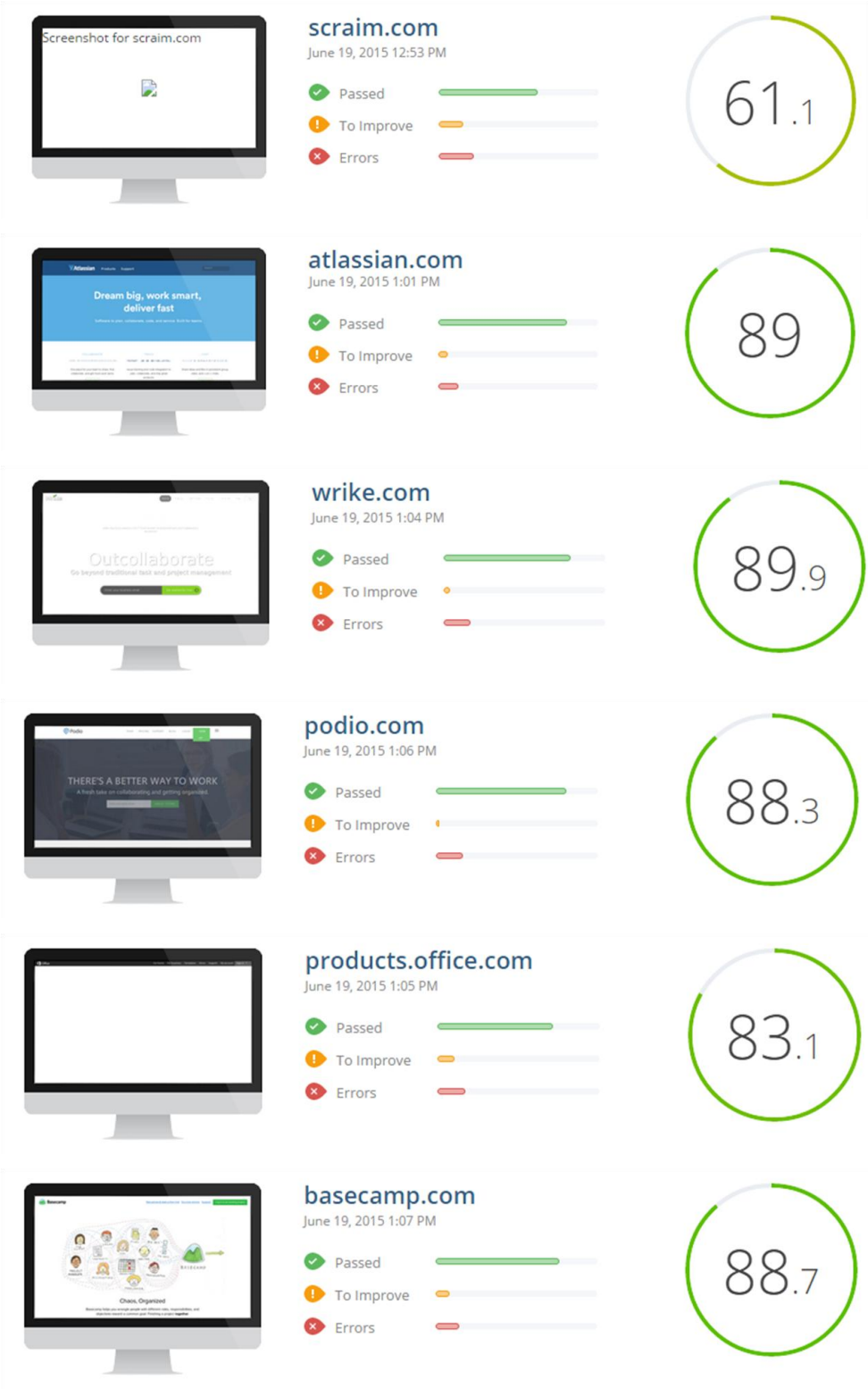
ANNEX A: Mind Map



ANNEX B: Woorank - SCRAIM main competitors assessment



ANNEX C: Woorank - SCRAIM detailed results (1/2)

SEO

Title Tag

SCRAIM - PM and Process Management SaaS

Length: 39 character(s)

Meta Description

Missing

Headings

<H1>	<H2>	<H3>	<H4>	<H5>
1	1	4	6	

<H1> LATEST NEWS

<H2> "We gathered the best from project management with the best from process management!"

<H3> Scraim

Show more

Keywords Cloud

scraim 14 | management 7 | best 4 | project 4 | blue 3 | watch 3 | team 3 | engineering 3 | process 3 | newsletter 3

Keyword Consistency

	Keywords	Freq	Title	Desc	<H>
★★☆	scraim	14	✓	✗	✓
★★☆	management	7	✓	✗	✓
★★☆	best	4	✗	✗	✓
★★☆	project	4	✗	✗	✓
★★☆	blue	3	✗	✗	✓

	Keywords (2 words)	Freq	Title	Desc	<H>
★★☆	project management	4	✗	✗	✓
★☆☆	watch video	3	✗	✗	✗
★★☆	share win	2	✗	✗	✓
★★☆	blue week	2	✗	✗	✓
★☆☆	care ocean	2	✗	✗	✗

Alt Attribute

We found 4 images on this web page.

No ALT attributes are empty or missing.

Text/HTML Ratio

19.4%

ANNEX C: Woorank - SCRAIM detailed results (2/2)

Indexed Pages

94

Google+ Publisher

Your website is missing a rel="Publisher" tag for linking to your Google+ Page.

In-Page Links

We found a total of 23 link(s) including 0 link(s) to files

External Links: NoFollow (1.1%)
External Links: Follow (25.2%)
Internal Links (73.6%)

Anchor	Type	Follow
Configurable Processes	External Links	Follow
No Anchor Text	External Links	Follow
Watch the video	External Links	Follow
Watch the video	External Links	Follow
Watch the video	External Links	Follow
No Anchor Text	External Links	Follow

Show more

Broken Links

No broken links were found on this web page

Backlinks Counter

198

WWW Resolve

Warning, no 301 redirects are in place to redirect traffic to your preferred domain. Pages that load successfully both with and without www. are treated as duplicate content!

IP Canonicalization

Yes

Robots.txt

http://www.scraim.com/robots.txt

Underscores in the URLs

We found underscores in this URL and/or in your in-page URLs.

http://scraim.com/users/sign_in

Blocking Factors

✓ **Flash:** No

✓ **Frames:** No

Domain Registration

✓ Created 2 years ago

✕ Expires in 2 months

Blog

We have not found a Blog on this website.