

## **Online Marketing and Vertical Business-to-Business Portals New Opportunities & Benefits for Exporting Companies**

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### **Online advertising**

Online or internet advertising grows at double digit annual rates and is expected to keep doing so in years to come. Within online promotion, sponsored keyword searches such as “Google Adwords” are in high demand. Also, online advertising on so-called business-to-business B2B marketplaces is a high growth area.

A recent survey amongst industrial marketers shows that 70% participate in online directories. Further, e-mail marketing, search engine optimisation, newsletter sponsorships and banner advertising are popular. Online B2B marketplaces often offer packages that are a combination of many of these tools.

Currently, online advertising spending as a percentage of total media spending is still relatively low considering the share Internet has in total media consumption. This factor, in combination with growth of overall Internet use, will boost online advertising in the coming years. Part of this growth will be at the detriment of marketing spending in traditional venues and media, such as tradeshows and print media.

Why is this?

### **Benefits of online advertising**

*Continuous exposure* - Online marketplaces provide exposure 24 hours a day 365 days a year. This is an important advantage, as this creates a constant flow of leads all year round. These can be mixed into the normal sales workflow. A one-off presence on a tradeshow, apart from being discontinuous, can also generate undesirable workload peaks for marketing and sales staff.

*Global Reach* - Online advertising, for obvious reasons, has no geographical limits. Through online B2B marketplaces, international, exporting companies can get access to new geographical regions they look to expand in. Some B2B marketplaces and online media offer a truly global audience and presence. Recent developments allow advertisers to specify their geographical markets of choice and direct their marketing efforts accordingly.

*Traceable Results* - Online marketing tracking tools are getting ever more sophisticated. This allows sales and marketers to obtain complete and very detailed profiles from all visitors to certain content. This helps marketers to address their classic challenge of measuring effectiveness of budget spent. Further, recent IT developments allow personal details of prospects and other results to be imported into the client's own customer relation management system (CRM).

*Convenience* – With online advertising it is becoming easier to control, update and edit content and graphics. This allows immediate changing of campaigns and content, new product launches as they happen. Compared to traditional media, less manpower is needed for set-up and maintenance. In general there are few deadlines to be met and no travelling, organisational and set-up efforts are required.

*Reach a larger, targeted professional audience of your exact choice* - An additional benefit offered by B2B vertical portals is that they provide access to large, focused audiences. While this is also the case for some traditional media, B2B marketplaces can grow very large because of their wider geographical focus and the fact that they offer a wide, complementary range of content and information services. In the case of Environmental expert this goes as wide as: articles & news, books and magazines, events, recruitment, products, software, services, a company directory and buyer's guides.

*High cost/benefit ratio* – As a result of all the above, marketing money spent on B2B marketplaces tends to provide traceable lower costs per lead and costs per visitor.

### **Examples of established online B2B marketplaces**

- Generic Industry B2B venues:
  - Thomasnet [www.thomasnet.com](http://www.thomasnet.com)
  - Globalspec [www.globalspec.com](http://www.globalspec.com)
- Specific B2B venues for the Water & Environmental Industry
  - VertMarkets, Inc. - Wateronline [www.wateronline.com](http://www.wateronline.com)
  - Environmental Expert [www.environmental-expert.com](http://www.environmental-expert.com)
- Traditional media, professional organisations and event organisers moving online:
  - WEFTEC [www.weftec.org](http://www.weftec.org)
  - Aquatech – Aquatech Trade [www.aquatechtrade.com](http://www.aquatechtrade.com)
  - Pollution Engineering [www.pollutionengineering.com](http://www.pollutionengineering.com)
  - Environmental Protection [www.eponline.com](http://www.eponline.com)

## **A Case study - Eimco Water Technologies on Environmental Expert**

Eimco Water Technologies [www.glv.com](http://www.glv.com) specializes in the design and supply of equipment used in the treatment of domestic and industrial water and wastewater (including water re-use), as well as large-scale water intakes for the power and desalination markets.

Since 2002 Eimco has a sponsorship package including a fully interactive web-exhibit (or “Storefront”) on Environmental Expert. This allows them to promote all solutions and capabilities, press releases and other relevant content. Further exposure is generated through newsletters, product alerts and product showcases distributed by Environmental Expert.

Results:

1. An online stand that receives approximately 6,000 visitors per year. Further, there is an important branding exercise on a venue that receives 150,000 unique visitors per month.
2. Over the last 2 years, 2,500 leads were generated, with full contact details, all backed-up and accessible through an online control panel.
3. Leads received vary from simple phone/fax request, web visitors, brochure downloads, requests for quotations and proposals (RFP, RFQ) and invitations to participate in tenders.

## **Key information and figures on Environmental Expert**

Environmental Expert connects over 1,000,000 environmental industry professionals from around the globe to over 16,000 companies that provide the products, services and information they need to do their job successfully.

Environmental Expert is more than just an online marketplace! Unlike other sites, the Environmental Expert portal contains an unmatched wealth of industry-related information and resources, like publications, events, articles, job postings, press releases & news, thus ensuring that professionals use Environmental Expert as a professional tool and keep coming back to stay in touch with what's happening in the industry.

We currently provide premium marketing services to over 1600 companies in the industry by helping them promote their equipment, services, publications, events, and more to our industry-specific user base, the only online environmental industry community that truly spans the globe.

## **Environmental Expert Overall User Statistics**

- Participating companies 17,000 of which 1,600 sponsors
- Geographical: North America 44% / Europe 44% / Asia Middle East 10%
- Registered Users: 150,000+
- Unique Visitors per Month: 150,000+
- Page views per Month: 700,000+
- E-Newsletter & Alert Subscribers: 50,000+
- Unique Visitors in 2008: 1,000,000+