Glossary of on-line marketing terms

As more and more NCDC members become interested and involved in on-line marketing, the demand for a deeper understanding of the terms used in the field is growing. To help answer this need, we have compiled this list of the most common terms used in on-line marketing and SEO.

301	A permanent server redirect or change of address for a web page found in the htaccess file on Apache servers. Useful for dealing with canonical issues.
adwords	Google Pay Per Click contextual advertisement program, the most common way of basic website advertisement.
affiliate	An affiliate site markets products or services that are actually sold by another website or business in exchange for fees or commissions.
algorithm	A program used by search engines to determine what web pages to suggest for a given search query.
alt text	A description of a graphic, which usually isn't displayed to the end user. Alt text is important because search engines can't tell one image from another. Special web browsers for visually challenged people rely on the alt text to make the content of graphics accessible to the users.
analytics	A program which assists in gathering and analyzing data about website usage. Google Analytics is a popular, free analytics program.
anchor text	The user visible text of a link. Search engines use anchor text to indicate the relevancy of the referring site and of the link to the content on the landing page.
authority site	A web site which has many incoming links from other related expert/hub sites. Because of its association with other trusted hubs, an authority site usually has high trust, pagerank, and search results placement. Wikipedia, is an example of an authority site.
back link	Any link into a page or site from any other page or site. (also inlink or incoming link)
black hat	Search engine optimization tactics that are contrary to best practices as defined by Google Webmaster Guidelines.
blog	A web site which presents content in a more or less chronological series. Content may or may not be time sensitive. Most blogs us a Content Management System such as WordPress rather than individually crafted web pages. Because of this, the Blogger can concentrate on content creation instead of writing technical code.
bot	A program which performs a task more or less autonomously. Search engines use bots to find and add web pages to their search indexes. Spammers often use bots to "scrape" content for the purpose of exploiting it by the Spammer. (robot, spider, crawler)
bounce rate	The percentage of users who enter a site and then leave it without viewing any other pages.
canon	Legitimate or official version
canonical issues	It is difficult to avoid duplicate content, especially with CMSs like Wordpress, due to the fact that www.site.com, site.com, and www.site.com/index.htm are usually seen as dupes by the search engines. However these issues can be managed in several ways including 1) using the 'noindex' meta tag in the non-canonical copies, and 301 server redirects to the canon. (or duplicate content)

click fraud	Improper clicks on a PPC advertisement usually by the publisher for the purpose of undeserved profit. Click fraud is a huge issue for ad agencies like Google, because it lowers advertiser confidence that they will get fair value for their advertising investment.
CMS (Content Management System)	Programs such as Wordpress, which separate most of the technical Webmaster tasks from content creation so that a marketer can be effective without acquiring or even understanding sophisticated coding skills.
content	The part of a web page that is intended to have value for and be of interest to the user. Advertising, navigation, branding and boilerplate are not usually considered to be content. (Also text, copy)
contextual advertisement	Advertising which is related to the content.
conversion rate	Percentage of users who convert. Clicks, sign ups, and sales are examples of conversions.
CPC Cost Per Click	The rate that is paid per click for a Pay Per Click Advertiser
CPM (Cost Per Thousand impressions)	A value used to quantify the average value / cost of Pay Per Click advertisements. M = the Roman numeral for one thousand.
Crawler	A program which moves through the worldwide web or a web site by way of the link structure to gather data. (bot, spider)
directory	A site devoted to directory pages. The Yahoo directory is an example.
directory page	A page of links to related web pages.
duplicate content	Content which is similar or identical to others found on other pages in a web site. A site may not be penalized for serving duplicate content, but it will receive little if any trust from the search engines compared to the content that the search engine considers being the original.
e commerce site	A web site devoted to commercial transactions.
feed	Content which is delivered to the user via special websites or programs such as news aggregators.
Frames	A web page design where two or more documents appear on the same screen, each within its own frame. Frames should be avoided because spiders sometimes fail to navigate them correctly, and many users find them confusing.
gateway page	A web page that is designed to attract traffic from a search engine and then redirect it to another site or page. A doorway page is not exactly the same as cloaking but the effect is the same in that users and search engines are served different content. (Also doorway page)
gadget	Small applications used on web pages to provide specific functions such as a hit counter or IP address display. Gizmos can make good link bait. (Also gizmo or widget)
Googlebot	Google's spider program
hit	Currently a meaningless term replaced by pageviews or impressions. A hit happens each time that a server sends an object (documents, graphics, include files, etc.) One pageview could generate many hits.
hub	A trusted page with high quality content that links out to related pages.
HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language)	Directives or "markup" which are used to add formatting and web functionality to plain text for use on the internet. HTML is the mother language of the search engines, and should generally be adhered to strictly and exclusively on web pages.
impression (page view)	The event where a user views a web page one time.
index Noun	A database of web pages and their content used by the search engines.
index Verb	To add a web page to a search engine index.

indexed Pages	The pages on a site which have been indexed.
inlink	Inbound links from related pages are the source of trust and pagerank. (incoming link, inbound link)
keyword	The word that a user enters into a search engine.
key phrase	The phrase that a user enters into a search engine.
keyword cannibalization	The excessive reuse of the same keyword on too many web pages within the same site. This practice makes it difficult for the users and the search engines to determine which page is most relevant for the keyword.
keyword density	The percentage of words on a web page which are a particular keyword. If this value is unnaturally high the page may be penalized.
keyword research	The hard work of determining which keywords are appropriate for targeting.
keyword spam	Inappropriately high keyword density. (keyword stuffing)
keyword stuffing	Inappropriately high keyword density. (keyword spam)
landing page	The page that a user lands on when they click on a link in a SERP
link	An element on a web page that can be clicked on to cause the browser to jump to another page or another part of the current page.
link bait	A webpage with the designed purpose of attracting incoming links, often mostly via social media.
link building	The practice of actively cultivating incoming links to a site.
link exchange	A reciprocal linking scheme often facilitated by a site devoted to directory pages. Link exchanges usually accept links to sites of low or no quality, and add no value themselves. Quality directories are usually edited and maintained by humans for quality assurance.
link partner	Two sites which link to each other. Search engines usually don't assign high value to these links, because of the reciprocal nature. (link exchange, reciprocal linking)
link popularity	A measure of the value of a site based upon the number and quality of sites that link to it.
link text (Anchor text)	The user visible text of a link. Search engines use anchor text to indicate the relevancy of the referring site and link to the content on the landing page. Ideally all three will share some keywords in common.
long tail	Longer, more specific search queries that are often less targeted than shorter broad queries. For example a search for "widgets" might be very broad while "red widgets with reverse threads" would be a long tail search. A large percentage of all searches are long tail searches.
META tags	Statements within the HEAD section of an HTML page which furnishes information about the page. META information may be in the SE Results Page but is not visible on the page. It is very important to have unique and accurate META title and description tags, because they are often the information that the search engines rely upon to determine what the page is about. Also, they are the first impression that users get about your page within the SE Results Page.
metric	A standard of measurement used by analytics programs.
MFA (Made For Advertisements)	Websites that are designed from the ground up as a venue for advertisements. This is usually, but not always a bad thing. TV programming is usually MFA.
mirror site	An identical site at a different address.
monetize	To gain income from a site. Adsense ads are an easy way to monetize a web site.
natural search results	The search engine results which are not sponsored, or paid for in any way.
nofollow	A command found in either the HEAD section of a web page or within individual link code, which instructs robots to not follow either any links on the page or the specific link.

noindex	A command found in either the HEAD section of a web page or within individual link code, which instructs robots to not index the page or the specific link.
non reciprocal link	If site A links to site B, but site B does not link back to site A, then the link is considered non reciprocal. Search engines tend to give more value to non-reciprocal links than to reciprocal ones because they are less likely to be the result of collusion between sites.
organic link	Organic links are those that are published only because the webmaster considers them to add value for users.
pagerank (PR)	A value between 0 and 1 assigned by the Google algorithm, which quantifies link popularity and trust among other (proprietary) factors.
portal	A web service which offers a wide array of features to entice users to make the portal their "home page" on the web. Google, Yahoo, and MSN are portals.
PPA (Pay Per Action)	Similar to Pay Per Click except publishers only get paid when click-throughs result in conversions.
PPC (Pay Per Click)	A contextual advertisement scheme where advertisers pay add agencies (such as Google) whenever a user clicks on their ad. Adwords is an example of PPC advertising.
reciprocal link (link exchange, link partner)	Two sites which link to each other. Search engines usually don't see these as high value links, because of the reciprocal and potentially incestuous nature.
redirect	Any of several methods used to change the address of a landing page such as when a site is moved to a new domain, or in the case of a doorway.
robots.txt	a file in the root directory of a website use to restrict and control the behavior of search engine spiders.
ROI (Return On Investment)	One use of analytics software is to analyze and quantify return on investment, and thus cost / benefit of different schemes.
scrape	Copying content from a site, often facilitated by automated bots
search engine (SE)	A program, which searches a document or group of documents for relevant matches to a user's keyword phrase and returns a list of the most relevant matches. Internet search engines such as Google and Yahoo search the entire internet for relevant matches.
SEM	Short for Search Engine Marketing, SEM is often used to describe acts associated with researching, submitting and positioning a Web site within search engines to achieve maximum exposure of your Web site. SEM includes things such as search engine optimization, paid listings and other search-engine related services and functions that will increase exposure and traffic to your web site.
SEO	Short for Search Engine Optimization, the process of increasing the number of visitors to a Web site by achieving high rank in the search results of a search engine. The higher a Web site ranks in the results of a search, the greater the chance that users will visit the site. It is common practice for Internet users to not click past the first few pages of search results, therefore high rank in SERPs is essential for obtaining traffic for a site. SEO helps to ensure that a site is accessible to a search engine and improves the chances that the site will be indexed and favorably ranked by the search engine.
SERP	Search Engine Results Page
site map	A page or structured group of pages which link to every user accessible page on a web site, and hopefully improves site usability by clarifying the data structure of the site for the users. An XML sitemap is often kept in the root directory of a site just to help search engine spiders to find all of the site pages.
SMM (Social Media Marketing)	Website or brand promotion through social media.

sock puppet	An on-line identity used to either hide a person's real identity or to establish multiple user profiles.
social bookmark	A form of Social Media where user's bookmarks are grouped for public access.
social media	Various online technologies used by people to share information and perspectives. Blogs, wikis, forums, social bookmarking, user reviews and rating sites (facebook, LinkedIn) are all examples of Social Media.
social media marketing (SMM)	Website or brand promotion through social media.
spammer	A person who uses spam to pursue a goal.
spider	A specialized bot used by search engines to find and add web pages to their indexes. (bot, crawler)
splash page	Often animated, graphics pages with no significant content. Splash pages are intended to look flashy to humans, but fail to attract attention by SE spiders, which can only navigate through text links.
squeeze page	A landing page devoted to capturing opt-in email addresses from prospective subscribers.
static page	A web page without dynamic content or variables such as session IDs in the URL. Static pages are good for SEO work in that they are friendly to search engine spiders.
stickiness	Web site changes that entice users to stay on the site longer, and view more pages improve the sites "stickiness".
text link	A plain HTML link that does not involve graphic or special code such as flash or java script.
time on page	The amount of time that a user spends on one page before clicking off. An indication of quality and relevance of page content.
toolbar pagerank (PR)	A value of 0 - 10 assigned by the Google algorithm, which quantifies page importance and is not the same as pagerank. Toolbar pagerank is only updated a few times a year, and is not a reliable indicator of current status.
URL	Uniform Resource Locator, or Web Address
user generated content (UGC)	Social Media, wikis, and some blogs rely heavily on User Generated Content.
web 2.0	Refers to online marketing and web sites which encourage user interaction.
white hat	SEO techniques which comply with best practice guidelines and do not attempt to unfairly manipulate SERPs.

For more insights and recommended solutions to your online marketing challenges, reach out to Pratt Direct. We can always be reached at: 224-224-6357 phone or hpratt@prattdirect.net