

# **BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**

## **FACULTY OF COMMERCE**

### **DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING**

#### **DIGITAL MARKETING**

**BS456**

**TIME: 3 HOURS**

#### **INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

1. Answer question **One** and any **Three** questions from 2-6.
2. Each question carries 20 Marks.
3. Start each question on a fresh page.
4. Credit will be given for use of relevant examples.
5. No Cell Phones are allowed in the Examination Room.

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#### **QUESTION ONE**

##### **Tourism association increases website visits 88% by making on-site SEO changes**

In 2019, traffic to the Outback Queensland Tourism Association (OQTA) was on a downward trend. The OQTA website had enjoyed a strong peak through the middle of 2019, however the traffic dropped back toward the end of the year as new website content started to slow and public relations around the Year of the Outback began to naturally come to an end.

The year 2020 started reasonably solid, however, the lockdowns in March significantly reduced holiday interest in the region and traffic volume suffered greatly.

This wasn't a new problem caused by the pandemic per se, but with so much beyond the team's control thanks to the global souring of the tourism industry, the team had a new urgency to maximize the performance of everything they could control. While lockdowns were still in place, the team worked on search engine optimization (SEO) to make sure the website would be given the best possible chance of recovering and capturing traffic once lockdowns were lifted.

"SEO is the primary way that travellers find out about the holiday options that are available in the outback, and as a marketing channel organic search consistently delivers the highest portion

of new visitors who have never experienced the region before,” said Denise Brown, CEO, Outback Queensland Tourism Association.

Outback Queensland’s website had enjoyed years of blog content creation and had amassed hundreds of blog articles covering topics about outback travel from every angle. Unfortunately, this content wasn’t guided by what is best from a search engine visibility perspective. This approach worked reasonably well when the website content was always being refreshed, but once the new content started to dry up, so did the traffic.

The team used an artificial intelligence (AI) tool to audit the website and identified numerous penalties on key traffic-driving pages – duplicate content, on-page SPAM penalties, and poor internal link flow. To remedy these issues, they:

- Restructured internal link flow – pointed additional on-page contextual links internally to the focus pages
- Removed broken links and cleaned up page rank leakage points – eliminated 400+ broken internal links, opening up link flow previously blocked or pooled in dead-ends
- Rewrote meta title tags to be shorter and more focused on the key phrase
- Boosted the domain rank of the home page by optimizing on-page content and its position within the site hierarchy based on the key phrase “outback”
- Removed some links from the footer that were spreading page rank too thinly to non-relevant pages
- Reviewed all internal anchor text and adjusted non-relevant anchor text (e.g. ‘click here’) to either contain the key phrase or a phrase within the basket of keywords
- Reduced inter-page content duplication by adding unique content to target pages with a priority to increase the ratio of unique non-keyword focused content.

“The rise of AI tools for SEO is bringing about a renaissance in how we think about the field. There are AI solutions for content generation, backlink recommendations, schema mapping, and prioritization, all of which are driving better outcomes. Dealing with a site like Outback Queensland posed unique challenges in SEO, given the number of search terms they wanted to



rank for. But we found that by targeting our main efforts on a few of the most important keywords, and then doing site-wide tasks like sculpting the site's link flow and reducing algorithmic penalties on the ranking pages, we were able to lift the site's rankings across a huge array of search terms," said Chris Pahor, Chief Operating Officer, Brewco (Outback Queensland's SEO platform).

The team increased traffic volume with zero investment in paid media, without prospecting for any new backlinks from external websites, and without creating any new pages or content (except for changing a few sentences on key pages).

Although rankings are typically more of a longer-term objective, the technical tune-up work had a flow-on effect to the whole site. For example, the site's search engine results page (SERP) ranking for the critical phrase "map of Queensland" (due to the increase of road-trip style holidays) increased from #4 to #1, generating additional monthly search traffic exposure of 33,100.

The changes the team made lead to an 88 percent increase in traffic compared to the previous year (an additional 92,947 visits) and moved the company to position one in Google for 10 high-value keywords (like maps and town names). For every \$1 spent on this SEO project, the website gained \$22 of traffic value.

Not only did more people visit the website, they clicked on more content, stayed longer on the site and converted at a higher rate than the previous year. Pages per session increased from 3.82 to 4.25. Website visitors spent an additional 29 seconds on the site – average session duration increased from 2:10 to 2:39.

Ultimately OQTA is a referral website. When looking at lead numbers, in comparison to 2019 (before any dedicated SEO was done on the Outback Queensland website), operator leads from organic search increased 477%.

### **Required**

- a) With the reference to the case study explain the following terms:
- i) Search Engine Optimization (SEO),

(5)

- ii) Artificial Intelligence (AI). (5)
- b) Distinguish between organic search and paid media with reference to the case study. (10)
- c) Evaluate the remedies to Outback Queensland Website problems. (10)
- d) Describe how AI was used to enhance SEO in the case study. (10)

**[40 Marks]**

## **QUESTION TWO**

Using examples, explain the following terms:

- i. Search Engine Visibility, (5)
- ii. Email Marketing, (8)
- iii. Affiliate marketing. (7)

**[20 Marks]**

## **QUESTION THREE**

- a) Explain the three email metrics you would use to analyse and track emails. (12)
- b) Explain the actions you would take when optimizing your email. (8)

**[20 Marks]**

## **QUESTION FOUR**

Discuss the importance of social media as a tool for building trust and engagement. **[20 Marks]**

## **QUESTION FIVE**

Using a relevant example, describe a user journey of an online shopper. **[20 Marks]**

## **QUESTION SIX**

Evaluate the various forms of online marketing communication campaigns that drive traffic to a website. **[20 Marks]**

**\*\*\*END OF THE PAPER\*\*\***