



Marketing Technologies And Practices Offer Outsourcing Providers (India) The Next Competitive Advantage

By Abel Stephen

Web: www.quicksilver3.com

Email: abpstephen@aol.com

Abel J. Stephen has more than a decade of leadership experience building business technology solutions for top-tier companies. An accomplished corporate and technical strategist, he has consistently and successfully aligned technology with business, ensuring ROI and decreasing TCO.

Offering an exceptional blend of technical, operational and management strengths, he has served a broad and diverse range of organizations. These include Computer Associates, Bear Stearns, Viacom and it's subsidiaries MTV, Showtime, VH-1 and Nickelodeon as well as UCLA, Princess Cruise Lines, Six Flags, Mandalay Bay and so on. His roles have ranged from Systems Engineer, Administrator, Project Lead, and Manager of Information Technology to Director of Systems Engineering. He has been responsible for the selection/development and integration/implementation of multi-platform hardware and software technologies for major initiatives such as Corporate Disaster Recovery, Content Management Systems, Enterprise Network Security, in-house Customer Relationship Management Systems, custom E-Commerce Applications and Hosting/Co-location. Abel has also been an invited lecturer for institutions such as FIDM/The Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising.

He is currently CEO of QuickSilver3, developing technical solutions for businesses internationally. The company's nonpartisan view of technology products and services enables QuickSilver3 to provide both technology end users and vendors with objective metrics for developing technology strategies and optimizing IT investments.

Abel received his BS from Brooklyn College and is currently pursuing an MBA at Woodbury University, where he is President of the MBA Association Board. He also serves on the Board of Directors for Site Monitoring Inc., a technology and engineering firm, catering to data centers worldwide. He resides in Los Angeles, CA with his wife and two sons.

Abstract

The networked global marketplace is one of four trends that have significantly affected world trade. One resultant issue is that of outsourcing. India can maintain its existing preeminence as an outsourcing

provider by carefully and speedily evolving two critical areas; namely, native communications/infrastructure technologies as well the marketing technologies/practices specifically geared for the Internet medium.

India-Introduction

India is a study of contrasts. Located in southern Asia, bordering the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea, India is between Pakistan and Burma. Its geography places it near important Indian Ocean trade routes. The same locations also contribute to natural disasters such as widespread and destructive flooding from monsoon rains, severe thunderstorms and flash floods to earthquakes. Depending on the severity, the varying climates from the southern tropical monsoon to the temperate, either positively or negatively affects India's agricultural products such as rice, wheat, oilseed, cotton, jute, tea, sugarcane, and potatoes along with cattle, water buffalo, sheep, goats, poultry and fish (Phrasebase.com, 2004).

As a government, it a federal republic with a legal system based on English common law and has Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches. The economy of India is a mix of old and the new business enterprises. It contains the traditional village farming and handicrafts alongside modern agriculture and industries as well as a wide range of support services. India's position as an economic power is also a mix. Approximately one-fourth of the populations cannot afford a proper diet. Many regions suffer from electricity shortages and manufacturing output growth has declined. In contrast, India's position with regard to international payments remained strong in 2001. Its nominal exchange rate is depreciating moderately and it has sufficient foreign exchange reserves (Phrasebase.com, 2004). Phrasebase.com (2004) notes that with significant number of the population being well educated and English speaking; India is a major exporter of software services and software workers. This leads into what Cateora and Graham (2002) state with respect to the emergence of a borderless economic world: The emergence of a networked global marketplace is one of four trends that have significantly affected world trade. One resultant issue is that of outsourcing.

The basis of national prosperity, per American Capitalism, is the idea that the welfare of the consumers, NOT workers, is to be protected. It can be argued that the welfare of American consumers translates into offering them the widest choice of goods and service at globally competitive prices. This in turn, suggest that global trade is an integral part of American prosperity. Global trade expands the economic pie and results in net gains to the American economy (Michaels, 2003). 100, 000 U.S. jobs are lost per year according to McKinsey & Co. However, for every \$100 of labor cost outsourced offshore, over \$112 of value is created for the US economy. For shareholders, this means that they benefit from the 50-70 per cent savings. US companies also benefit from the new exports of telecom services, IT equipment and software. American consumers initially derive benefits from increased quality of services. They will directly benefit from the cost savings when outsourcing reaches critical mass (Michaels, 2003). There are some solutions to aid workers directly affected by global outsourcing. Wage insurance offers the dislocated workers half of the difference between the old wage and the new wage. Tax credits can be offered to employers who hire dislocated workers (Michaels, 2003)

Per white paper released by the National Association of Manufacturing, U.S. will have a shortfall of skilled employees and factory workers from 2004, due to its demographic and educational structure. The American workforce will peak at 160 million and the labor shortage will grow to 5.3 million by 2010. Result would be production bottlenecks and trillions of dollars in opportunity costs. Every job outsourced generates cost savings to be invested in a better job for another American. Yet global outsourcing alone, cannot replace enough jobs to avoid the imminent skill shortages and associated inflation. For example, all of India's outsourced workers (250,000) represent less than 0.2 percent of the American workforce (Michaels, 2003).

Current US strengths are that US accounts for over 90 percent of the cumulative increase in global GDP over the past decade. US companies account for about half of the global market capitalization. Productivity growth has been the key factor setting the US apart from most countries. To sustain this strength into the future, it makes sense for US to continue to focus on productivity growth. Outsourcing onshore offers a way to improve services productivity. Outsourcing offshore accelerates the growth in productivity through deeper cost savings. For example US exported \$292 billion in services (\$3 billion to India) and generated a trade surplus of \$65 billion in 2002 (Michaels, 2003).

Technology is a generic term and one that may not adequately present the scope of services that can be outsourced to India. Below is a list of what can be outsourced to India (Outsource2India.com #2, 2004)

- IT Services: Software development services, Application development and management, Re-engineering, Conversion and migration (across platforms/ languages/ versions), Data warehousing and mining, Embedded systems, E-commerce applications
- Web Development Services: Portals, e-commerce consulting, e-business IT consulting, Domain registration, Website design and redesign, Website promotion, Web-enabled applications, Website maintenance, Web hosting
- Data Entry: Data control audits, Regular reporting of work systems, Data entry software and validation tables, Dispatch of data to the customer, Double keyed data (when required by the customer), Proof checks

- Programming: C, C++, Visual C++, Java, JavaScript, Java Beans, Java Server Pages (JSP), Enterprise Java Beans (EJB), ASP (Active Server Pages), Visual Basic, Microsoft Access, Novell Networking, EDI and Integration, Bar Coding and Hand Held Data Collection, DOS, Windows 95/98/2000, Windows NT, Business and Industrial Systems, Support of spreadsheets, word-processing and various 3rd party applications, PC hardware and services
- IT-enabled Services Call CentersàHelp Desks - Electronic and voice help desk / Event tracking software, Bookkeeping or clerical support, Data entry, word processing, mass e-mailing inbound and outbound communications, e-mail services, Teleservicing, Telemarketing
- Business Process Outsourcing (BPO): Enterprise Management, Supply Chain Management (SCM), Customer Relationship Management (CRM)
- Back-Office Operations: Accounting: processing accounts payable, accounts receivable or general ledger, Payroll, Inventory, Hardware maintenance, Internal auditing, Benefits management, Benefits administration, Health & Welfare administration, Defined Contribution/ Defined Benefit administration and customer service, Health claims administration, 401(k) plan record-keeping, Human resources, Asset management and staffing (supplement your existing e-business staff, access both management and technical assistance on a long term or monthly basis)
- Infrastructure: Communications and messaging, Upgrading and configuring message management software, Launching an XML strategy, Integrating e-business messages with CRM, ERP and legacy systems, Managing change as your e-business programs and business systems evolve, e-business operations, management and day-to-day operation of EDI infrastructure creation and management of a new XML strategy, e-marketplace development, ERP integration, communications monitoring, trading partner management, order processing, workflow enhancement, evaluation and benchmarking, application hosting, system implementation and integration, system maintenance, upgrades, backups, disaster recovery
- Communications and Networking: Telecommunications, Computer telephony, Internet telephony, e-solutions
- Media and Entertainment: Advertising, Film-making, Animation, Printing and publishing, Consulting services, Photography
- Operations: e-marketplaces, web applications, XML and EDI operations, implementation assistance, security administration, monitoring data traffic, generating activity reports, troubleshooting problems, creating any necessary maps, system support, help desk
- Relationship management: Customer Care Services, customer acquisition, customer activation, customer retention, cross-selling/up-selling, inside sales, surveys and polling
- Community Management: Managing your ongoing partner relationships, opening e-business channels with new vendors and customers, meeting with partners, defining e-business requirements, establishing the rules of play, educating them on benefits, security measures and day-to-day procedures
- Medical Transcription: Patient history and physical reports, Clinical notes, Office notes, Operative reports, Consultation notes, Discharge summaries, Letters, Psychiatric evaluations, Laboratory reports, x-ray reports and pathology
- On-site service: On-site assistance, System setup and testing, software installation, Preventive maintenance, Communications and network testing, On-site and depot hardware repair

The author contacted an Indian outsourcing company, Tata Consulting Services. Dr. Sai Prakash, Director of Strategic Planning, responded to the query regarding the challenges faced by TCS via an e-mail. An excerpt is below (Sai, P., 2004):

"I. Business Value of Technology / Business Transformation Outsourcing

Clients are increasingly exploring avenues for reaping demonstrable business value of their technology investments. Consultants are also expected to articulate - in their proposals or value propositions – some of the initiatives leading to overall business transformation.

II. Sustainable Competitive Advantage

Global Consulting firms expanding their offshore operations and major US companies setting their own offshore units tend to pose a distinct challenge to the business models of established Indian players - price, differentiation and market re-segmentation.

III. Global IT Governance Structures and Program Offices

Global corporations forming unique IT governance structures involving both business and technology users would offer great opportunities for competent consulting companies that have mature systems and processes for addressing client-specific issues - be it relationship management or business solution frameworks or architectural assignments.

IV. Rationalization of Consulting Offerings

As Business-Technology integration and Business Transformation goals become paramount for clients, consulting firms need to deal with greater managerial dilemmas germane to rationalization of offerings (spread and depth) and avoidance of commoditization of the same.

V. Market Sentiments and Statutory Impediments

Given the anti-outsourcing sentiments and statutory trade barriers enacted by a few countries, there is bound to be rethinking among the offshore players on subjects as varied as talent management, cultural integration into global economies and social responsibility in local environments" (Sai, 2004).

The author also spoke via telephone with James Thomas, VP of Marketing TCS (North America). A paraphrase of the conversation is below (Thomas, 2004):

Tata Consultancy Services will exceed \$900 million from US in 2004. TCS also gets business from India itself for example, India's National Stock Exchange. TCS has 80 of the Fortune 500 companies as its clients; for example, American Express and even IBM, which is outsourcing entire projects to TCS. TCS has also branched into Uruguay, Japan etc. and is careful to fully comply with local and foreign Federal/State/Local laws during onsite, near-shore and offshore project management/deployment. Mr. Thomas also noted that US Federal Reserve Board Chairman Dr. Alan Greenspan himself indicated that US must "re-adapt". Mr. Thomas is of the opinion that the Protectionist vs. Open/Free trade must be examined carefully. Challenges for TCS per Mr. Thomas are:

- The "coordination of growth balanced by Quality of Service"
- Understanding Business Process Outsourcing
- Hiring the right people
- Strategically acquiring infrastructure (Thomas, 2004)

Additional challenges include that India appears to lack high quality middle management. Also, motivation and growth opportunities for employees are an issue. As demand goes up and the level of opportunities for an information worker diminishes in a company, the attrition level goes up (Michaels, 2003)

Indian companies can maintain their outsourcing leadership in several different ways. They can continue providing cost savings to clients via lower administrative overheads and cost of personnel. They can also keep focused on quality improvement via Six Sigma, best of breed Project Management Principles etc. Furthermore, a clearer emphasis on higher productivity, as in 48 (or more) hour workweek and 24x7 operations, will help. These companies need to continue accelerated growth in knowledge and talent pool. They must also be vigilant in avoiding capital expenditures. Finally, the companies must improve focus and competitive advantage.

India-Infrastructure & Marketing Technologies

It is the author's opinion there are two critical areas, which can fuel competitive advantage; namely, infrastructure technology and marketing technology geared for the network medium of the Internet.

With a population of 1,045,845,226 people, India only has 5,000,000 Internet users. India has to evolve its mediocre telephone network into a cable modem network that can sustain VoIP services. This will allow the native producers of goods and services to better communicate and also establish a reliable web presence for both internal and global marketing. Phrasebase.com (2004) has this to say about India's telephone system:

"local and long distance service provided throughout all regions of the country, with services primarily concentrated in the urban areas; major objective is to continue to expand and modernize long-distance network to keep pace with rapidly growing number of local subscriber lines; steady improvement is taking place with the recent admission of private and private-public investors, but, with telephone density at about two for each 100 persons and a waiting list of over 2 million, demand for main line telephone service will not be satisfied for a very long time domestic: local service is provided by microwave radio relay and coaxial cable, with open wire and obsolete electromechanical and manual switchboard systems still in use in rural areas; starting in the 1980s, a substantial amount of digital switch gear has been introduced for local and long-distance service; long-distance traffic is carried mostly by coaxial cable and low-capacity microwave radio relay; since 1985 significant trunk capacity has been added in the form of fiber-optic cable and a domestic satellite system with 254 earth stations; mobile cellular service is provided in four metropolitan cities international: satellite earth stations - 8 Intelsat (Indian Ocean) and 1 Inmarsat (Indian Ocean region); nine gateway exchanges operating from Mumbai (Bombay), New Delhi, Kolkata (Calcutta), Chennai (Madras), Jalandhar, Kanpur, Gaidhinagar, Hyderabad, and Ernakulam; 4 submarine cables - LOCOM linking Chennai (Madras) to Penang; Indo-UAE-Gulf cable linking Mumbai (Bombay) to Al Fujayrah, UAE;

India-SEA-ME-WE-3, SEA-ME-WE-2 with landing sites at Cochin and Mumbai (Bombay); Fiber-Optic Link Around the Globe (FLAG) with landing site at Mumbai (Bombay) (2000)" (Phrasebase.com, 2004).

In parallel to the network infrastructure development, India has an opportunity to lead with in the area of using technology for marketing on the Internet. Considerations for online marketing include, but are not limited to, web content development, web branding, website optimization, web analytics, pop flash ads, linking strategies and deployment, (Outsource2india #1, 2004), paid (bid for placement) listings, advertising / e-zine / eNewsletter / sponsorships.

Web Branding

It can be said that a company's vision defines who they are and the values in turn define its culture. These provide parameters for what the company does and how. A brand is a function of how well the company's vision and values are represented in its action. This is what produces a brand-identity in the marketplace. The graphics, logo, advertising, design, and packaging visually represent the brand-identity. A rule of thumb to evaluate the effectiveness of a web-brand-identity is to obscure the logo on the web page and see if the site would easily change into an entirely different context. If it can, it means that the branding equals the logo—a failure in terms of branding. Other considerations include ensuring that the site meets the information-retrieval agenda of web-users by providing comparative data, prices, etc., high-personalization, avoiding online-sales-pitches, communicating the company's values with customer-focused innovativeness and usability that promote repeat visits. (Schuster, 2004)

Website Optimization

More than half of web users rely on search engines to navigate pages. (Microsystems, 2004) Search engine optimization of web sites is predicated on fully understanding what people are typing into search engines in order to find a product or service. Although, web page optimization for search engines can be considered a passive, rather than an active approach to marketing, a defined effort does need to be made to create the optimized website (Bloofusion #2, 2004). For the sake of illustration, we'll refer to the fictional web site, Web-A. It is important to note that search engines lack the sense of semantics—they work on the basis of keywords, without really knowing what those keywords mean (Bloofusion #3, 2004). For example if Web-A has the text, "solve your construction problems", an individual's search for "construction advice" would not yield Web-A; the search engine's index would not correlate Web-A with the search keywords.

There are a few tools that can assist in creating keyword target list. Free tools such as the Overture Search Term Suggestion Tool or the commercial www.wordtracker.com, work on the same principle. Both will ask for a keyword and return related keywords/phrases as well as the search frequency, i.e. the number of people searching for each specific keyword or phrase during the last month. The determination will then need to be made as to whether to include into Web-A, the most popular keywords (which means high competition with other sites using the same keywords) or the less prominent ones (which means that very little traffic may be generated). Using the keywords more frequently on each web page of Web-A can further increase web-A's ranking by search engines. Additionally, www.goodkeywords.com is a freeware meta-tag creation tool. Adding the keywords desired into their Keyword Pad function, would generate a keyword meta-tag, which can be pasted into your HTML file.

"Use a controlled vocabulary to add keywords to the meta-tags for your pages: Create a list of common terms for your subject area and make sure that each of these terms is added to the keywords meta-tag for those related pages. Do not add a keyword if the page is only peripherally related to the term. Only use keywords that describe the main topic of a page"(Microsystems #2, 2004)

"[Zipf's Law](#) predicts that traffic for any particular keyword on a search engine will be proportional to its popularity rank. That is, the number of queries (and hence potential click-through to your site) for the most popular keyword will be ten times greater than that for the tenth most popular term. And traffic to term #10 will be 1,000 times higher than traffic to term number 10,000. Search engine logs don't quite [match](#) Zipf's curve, and they vary from one engine to the next. But the lesson remains: If you're not matching the top keywords, forget it." (Boutin, 2001)

There are several technical limitations in doing search engine optimization. Some issues such as search engine crawlers not being able to process frames, have gone away. One that remains is that most search engines will not be able to index text that is in Flash animation. Similarly, search engines can't follow links to other web sites or pages embedded in Flash. A site built entirely in flash will be invisible to search engines (Bloofusion #1, 2004). Another problem are the e-commerce sites whose product pages are dynamically generated.

"While will crawl any URL that a browser can read, most of the other search engines balk at links with "?" and "&" characters that separate CGI variables (such as "artloop.com/store?sku=123&uid=456"). As a result, many individual product pages don't show up outside of . One way to circumvent this difficulty is to create static versions of your site's dynamic pages for search engines to crawl. Unfortunately, duplicating your pages is a huge amount of extra work and a constant maintenance chore, plus the resulting pages are never quite up-to-date — all the headaches dynamic pages were designed to eliminate. A far better strategy is to follow the lead of Amazon and rewrite your dynamic URLs in a syntax that search engines will gladly crawl. So URLs that look like this ... amazon.com/store?shop=cd&sku=00004WFIZ&ref=p_ir_m&sessionID=107-6571839-6268523 ... become ...amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/ref=B00004WFIZ/ref=pd_ir_m/107-6571839-6268523. Amazon's application server

knows the fields in the URL are actually CGI parameters in a certain order, and processes them accordingly.” (Boutin #2, 2001)

Linking Strategies and Deployment

Search engines (, AltaVista, Lycos, Yahoo, etc.) and directories also base Web-A’s ranking on link popularity, which is determined by the quality and number of other web sites linking to Web-A. For instance, Google’s Page Rank assigns a web site a value between 0 (no backward links) and 10 (tremendous number of links). The majority of web sites have a value of 5 or 6. www.google.com and www.microsoft.com for example, have a Page Rank of 10. A link from the home page of either of these sites to Web-A, will increase the latter’s Page Rank much more than if the link originated from someone’s personal homepage (Bloofusion #4, 2004). LinkPopularity.com provides a free service that query AltaVista, and Hotbot for their lists of sites that link to Web-A.

Directory listings can be found in professional and trade associations and memberships, e.g. Chamber of Commerce. Online yellow page directories , such as SuperPages.com, are also a good source in which to list Web-A. In fact, if Web-A is listed in the Yellow Pages, then these directories may already list Web-A along with maps and driving directions. An ‘enhanced listing’ of Web-A, which would display the site at the top of any relevant search results, can be bought with a small fee. Yahoo.com is also a paid submission service for all but local and non-profit sites. Yahoo will review sites for an annual fee of \$299 and include it in an appropriate directory area within seven days, if the site “passes” their criteria. However, the fee is non-refundable even if the site is rejected (Gamse #2, 2004).

If there is an undertaking to increase Web-A’s link-popularity, there are a few considerations to bear in mind. Ensure that Web-B (the one who will be placing a link to Web-A on their site) has Page Rank of 4 or more. Link within the community; i.e., if Web-A is a medical supplier, then link with other medical suppliers and not a pet store. Link also with sites that are complementary with regard to products or services. Also ensure that Web-B have very few links aside from Web-A on their site. Being the only external link on Web-B increases the “power” of Web-A. “the “power” of the link is divided by the number of external links, so that you get the most power by being the only external link on that site.” Make every effort to have Web-A’s link-text contain the desired keywords (e.g., the entire hyper-link would be the text, “Click here for <http://www.web-a.com/>, the top medical supplier in the US.) (Bloofusion #4, 2004). If Web-A reciprocates with Web-B in linking, open all of Web-B’s links in Web-A, in a new browser window or use a JavaScript to create a smaller window with no address bar in it. This will reduce the risk of traffic leaving Web-A and not returning.

Paid (Bid for Placement) Listings

Aside from linking, the other search engine optimization method is the commercialized pay-per-click search engine. www.Overture.com, the best-known provider says:

“Paid search provides advertisers with a precise and efficient way to connect with customers searching for their specific products and services. It also offers content providers and search portals an effective way to monetize their sites.”(Overture.com, 2004)

Web-A would bid for a search term, for example, “medical supplies”. If Web-A’s bid is among the top three bids, then searches for “medical supplies” in the search engines, MSN, Freeserve, Lycos, Alta Vista, Excite and Yahoo will return Web-A’s site as a top three match. CompareYourClicks.com compares ten pay per click engines, showing the cost of up to the top 6 bids for any keyword. A web page’s Page Rank can be viewed by installing the Toolbar (www.google.com/toolbar) for Microsoft Internet Explorer. Beneath the URL field, a horizontal gauge will indicate the specific Page Rank, if the mouse is moved over it.

does alert the end-user as to the potential privacy conflict in using their Page Rank.

“We understand and respect that you are concerned about your privacy. That’s why we want you to know that if you choose to enable the Toolbar’s advanced features (e.g., viewing the Page Rank of web pages), the URLs of the sites you visit will automatically be forwarded to . The purpose of our Toolbar Privacy Policy is to inform you of this process, explain the type of information is collecting, and explain how you can enable or disable the advanced functionality.” (, 2004)

Web Content Development

Web content is very different from paper content. Consider that 79% of Internet users always scan and only 16% read word-by-word. Furthermore, reading from computer screens is 25% slower than from paper. These facts suggest that web content should be 50% the size of its paper equivalent. Split each document into multiple hyperlinked pages since users are not willing to read long pages. Given that users can enter a site at any page and move between pages as they chose, each and every page should be independent. The content should be sufficiently self-explanatory without the need of assumptions that the user has seen the previous page. Links are appropriate when used to refer to background or elaborative information to assist those users who lack the necessary knowledge to understand/use the page. Write in the “news you can use” style to allow users to quickly find the information they want. Readability can be improved by including graphs, flowcharts, screenshots and explanatory captions (with descriptions themselves being 150 characters or less) and by limiting the use of full-page graphics. (Microsystems #1, 2004)

Link quotes from magazine reviews and other articles to the source avoid "marketese" to reinforce the site's credibility. Frequently updating to reflect current metrics, news and so on also increase credibility. Compared to print, the web is less formal and more of an immediate medium with room for a little humor. However, avoid cute headings, metaphors, complex writing styles and puns, particularly in the headlines.

Scannability can be improved by highlighting. Highlight key information loaded words and those words that differentiate the page from the other pages on the site. Bulleting, using the tag and having hyperlinks themselves (being already in blue-color) have information carrying words will all draw the eye. Linking itself speaks to navigation; the quickest means by which to present the use the relevant information. Self-referential terms such as "Click here," "follow this link," and "this Web site" should be avoided (Microsystems #1, 2004)

Web Analytics

In most web analytics discussions a 'hit' is defined as a single request for any item on your website. This can include images, animations, audio, video, downloads, PDF or Word documents or anything else that you allow visitors to access. When a web browser loads a page, it also loads all the components referenced by that page. This means that it requests all the images (often including 'roll over' images for mouse effects) and, perhaps, style sheets, JavaScript files or other external references. A single page load can result in many 'hits.' In contrast, "Page Hits" tells the number of hits to pages (as opposed to graphics or other content). This means that when you load the home page of your site you register only one page hit, in addition to several other kinds of hits. If however, the site uses frames, the frameset page and all the frames that load to make the 'visible page' are each counted as a single page hit. So if your 'home page' actually is a frameset with three frames, it will register four page hits, not one (what the user is experiencing) for that initial load. Since each hit is a single network resource request, having a "page" which will result in multiple hits may slow the load-speed of that page. If a single page (as perceived by the visitor) takes more than eight to ten seconds or longer to load, the user will not come back (or may even cancel loading). (summary.net #3, 2001)

The above is actually related to a marketing term, 'impression'. In traditional advertising, a count of impressions is the number of times an advertisement has been seen or heard; the numbers are often estimated for newspapers, radio or television. The advantage of websites is the logs that can show the hits per ad. When requests for a particular item, such as a page or advertisement are counted, these hits can nominally indicate how many times the item was seen and are therefore sometimes counted as impressions. The only way that you can count the number of times your ad has been viewed is by making sure that it is always served from your server. For example, if your ads are hosted on another site, you must do more than just wending them an image; you must provide them a URL that links back to your server. Doing this means that a request for an ad will go to your server and your logs will record it. (Actually, the request is usually proxied by the advertising hosting company so they can manage delivery and analysis as well.) (Summary.net #2, 2004) Tracking the advertisements placed on the web site, product or service, and comparing the revenue to the amount spent on advertising and other promotions can obtain an ROI ratio. For instance, if you know that every visitor to your site is a potential buyer, and that every page hit makes a visitor more likely to purchase, you may be able to determine as estimated value of a page view in terms of real income using this simple formula: Avg. Sale * Conversion Rate/ Pages per Visit = Page View Value. RealMedia AdServer, CentralAd Advertising Server, AdCycle Content Rotation System are all advertising management tools that can further assist your marketing analysis.

Another metric useful for marketing is "visits" or "sessions". A series of consecutive requests from a given user bounded by inactivity defines a visit. So if a user makes 100 requests, then does not make any for 45 minutes, then 75 more, it is assumed those were two separate 'sessions' or 'visits' to the site.

Referrer information answers the questions, "Where are my customers coming from?". The web server collects this information when a visitor clicks on a link that brings him/her to a page on the site. Because referrer data is sent for every click, even pages on your own site send you referrer information. Links on other web sites are termed 'static referrers' and dynamic referrers are links from content that may no longer exist by the time you see the report. This could be a news story (that only exists on the news site for a day or a week), an email campaign, or a search engine listing.

Advertising / E-Zine Sponsorships

Paid advertising / e-zine sponsorships can also be effective in marketing over the web. For a minimum of \$10,000 over a three month period, Google's Premium Sponsorships program will give Web-A enhanced text links at the top of the results page.

E-zines, which have very targeted audiences, are good candidates to sponsor as they can yield very good rates of response. Ezine-Universe contains a substantial list of e-zines, which could be useful. Ezine Ad Auction provides a service to bid on reasonable rates for e-zine sponsorships and classifieds.

ENewsletters are sources that recipients trust to get the latest news and information relevant to their needs. Advertisers can place within the advertorial section, banners, text messages, etc., in targeted online newsletters, Publishers use "sponsor" or "advertisement" caption along with characters such as *, - , or = to separate the ad from the actual content to alert readers to the commercial nature of the ad message. Advertisers

also have the opportunity to deliver messages using text ads or banners/buttons if publishers provide the same eNewsletter in both the text-based and HTML-based formats. The opportunities for "impressions" is enhanced by the fact that publishers limit the number of ads to one or two, advertisers can secure even further exclusivity with the publishers and that eNewsletters have a longer shelf-life. Care must be taken as with email marketing, that subscriptions are opt-in only as unintentional SPAM could devalue the brand.(Advancis.com 2004). Also, Advertising.com's study revealed that all ads become less effective when impression levels rise, with one to five impressions providing the best revenue return. (Morrissey, 2003)

Pop-Ads

Interstitials are separate advertising windows that spontaneously pop open, blocking the site behind it. The nanoseconds required for the user to close the ad are used to create the impression. A variation of this is the "pop-under" ad remains open behind the active screen until the browser itself is closed. (Jackson, 2001) Jupiter Research's (an international market-research firm) study found that pop-up ads are the most annoying form of online advertising, even more so than SPAM (Nelson, 2004). Surprisingly, these ad continue on the web as even the minimal response rates they elicit, are still double that of banner ads.

Conclusion

It is of interest to note that the US is the primary export partner of India, India owes US the biggest in terms of debt and that India received its largest monetary aid from the US. An equally interesting point is that a search on Google for "India outsourcing" fails to return "TCS" in the top ten of either the regular search results, or for the sponsored links section [search done on June 17, 2004 7:03 PST]. If India can move from merely producing-exporting technology and evolve as a leader in the application of technology to marketing native businesses more effectively to the global community, it will become more self-sufficient and emerge as an economic power. This in turn will spur the US to form a closer alliance with India and there would be multiple opportunities where both nations can reach mutually beneficial arrangements in the areas of imports/exports/outourcing and bi-lateral investments (e.g., "in-sourcing") in each other's economies.

References

Advancis.com, Internet marketing: Online newsletter sponsorships, <http://www.advancis.com/eCenter/Spotlight/enewsletter.html> <Access June 02, 2004>

Bloofusion #1, Bloofusion Knowledge Series: Why Search Engines Hate Flash, http://www.bloofusion.com/white_papers/flash/index.shtml, <Access May 29, 2004>

Bloofusion #2, Bloofusion Workshop: The Importance of Keyword Research, http://www.bloofusion.com/white_papers/keyword_research/index.shtml <Access, May 29, 2004>

Bloofusion #3, http://www.bloofusion.com/white_papers/keyword_research/keywords.shtml <Access, May 29, 2004>

Bloofusion #4, Link Popularity & Page Rank, http://www.bloofusion.com/white_papers/link_policy/link_policy.shtml <Access May 29, 2004>

Boutin, P., #1, Search Engine Optimization-Free, http://hotwired.lycos.com/webmonkey/01/23/index1a_page4.html?tw=e-business, June 5, 2001 <Access May 31, 204>

Boutin,P., #2, Search Engine Optimization-Free, http://hotwired.lycos.com/webmonkey/01/23/index1a_page3.html?tw=e-business, June 5, 2001 <Access May 31, 204>

Cateora, P. and Graham, J., "Emergence of a Borderless Economic World", International Marketing 11th ed., 2002 p.176

Gamse, P., #1, Philippa, Cyberspeaker: Outsourcing Your Web Marketing, <http://www.cyberspeaker.com/outsourcing.html>, <Access May 29, 2004>

Gamse, P., #2, Beyond the Search Engines, *Tips and Techniques for Promoting your Web Site*, http://www.cyberspeaker.com/tipsheet_text.html#chapter1.1a <Access May 29, 2004>

, Toolbar Privacy Policy: Introduction, <http://toolbar.google.com/privacy.html> <Access May 29, 2004>

Jackson, J., The effectiveness of pop up ads, July 02, 2001, http://www.entrepreneur.com/Your_Business/YB_SegArticle/0,4621,290749,00.html <Access June 02, 2004>

Michaels, P. M., Disruptive Creation, India Today, August, 4, 2003, <http://www.saja.org/outourcing/michaels2.pdf>, <Access June 07,

2004>

Microsystems, Sun #1., Web Facts, <http://www.sun.com/980713/webwriting/wftw9.html> <Access May 31, 2004>

Microsystems, Sun #2., Writing to Be Found, <http://www.sun.com/980713/webwriting/wftw6.html> <Access May 31, 2004>

Morrissey, B., Study Pop Ups Work, <http://www.clickz.com/news/article.php/2213101>, May 28, 2003 <Access June 02, 2004>

Nelson, C., GOP pop-up Internet ads may win some, lose some, <http://www.dfw.com/ml/dfw/news/politics/8172922.htm?1c>, March 12, 2004 <Access June 02, 2004>

New Media, Contagious Anger over pop-up ads, http://www.medialifemagazine.com/news2004/feb04/feb23/4_thurs/news3thursday.html, Feb, 26, 2004 <Access June 02, 2004>

Outsource2India #1, Outsourcing Internet Marketing: Media Products, Contents, Tools, Resources and Publishing Solutions for corporations and Entrepreneurs, <http://www.outsource2India.com/internet/marketing.asp> <Access May 29, 2004>

Outsource2India #2, What to outsource to India?, http://www.outsource2india.com/why_india/articles/what_outsource.asp <Access June 07, 2004>

Overture.com, <http://www.content.overture.com/d/USm/ps/paid.jhtml>, <Access May 29, 2004>

Phrasebase.com, India Information, <http://www.phrasebase.com/countries/India.html> <Access June 05, 2004>

Sai, P., Personal e-mail correspondence to Abel Stephen, February 13, 2004

Schuster, D., Branding and the Web, <http://www.businessleader.com/bl/aug99/feature1.html> <Access June 02, 2004>

Summary.Net #1, <http://www.summary.net/manual/tutorial/lesson1-1.html> <Access May 31, 2004>

Summary.Net #2, <http://www.summary.net/manual/tutorial/lesson4-1.html> <Access May 31, 2004>

Summary.Net #3, <http://www.summary.net/manual/tutorial/lesson6-2.html> < Access May 31, 2004>

Thomas, J., VP of Marketing TCS [North America] Telephone conversations with Abel Stephen, February 23, 2004.

-

-