

Why Roofers Need to Understand Search Engine Marketing

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You may be the best local roofing company in the neighborhood, but you're still bound to deal with intense competition.

One way to break through all the noise and put your business front and center is through push-style messaging. But you can't forget to pull in leads, too. What's push versus pull from a digital marketing perspective? It's the difference between search engine optimization (SEO) and search engine marketing (SEM). Both techniques rely heavily on search engines, but they're hardly the same.

A Primer on SEO vs. SEM

Let's start with SEO. When you create keyword-rich content on your website, you engage in SEO to promote services like residential and commercial roof replacement, roof repair, and gutter installation. In other words, you "push" your message out in an effort to gain organic, nonpaid traffic.

So what's SEM, and why should you use it if you have SEO in place? SEM works hand in hand with SEO and offers a faster return on investment through pay-per-click (PPC) advertising. In addition to its immediacy, SEM allows you to rapidly (and cost-effectively) grab more leads. You can even target those leads using qualifiers such as demographics and geographic region. Basically, you're "pulling" in a target audience based on their likely interest in what you offer.

Here's another way to understand the value of using SEM as a complement to your SEO efforts:

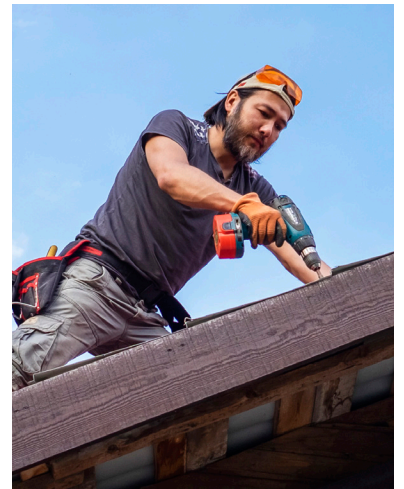
Type "roofing companies in my area" in your search engine bar. You'll receive a page of results. At the top of the page, you'll see SEM or paid ads. After a few SEM ads, you'll be greeted with a list of nonpaid SEO links. Look carefully. You might notice that the SEM ads are for companies that aren't listed in the SEO results. Nevertheless, those companies are getting eyeballs because they've paid to be at the top of the page for a specific keyword.

Of course, nailing your SEM campaigns can be as tough as hoisting a bundle of shingles up a ladder. You need to spend time crafting an effective SEM strategy in order to make this technique work for your roofing business. When you're ready to begin, keep the following steps in mind.



1. Define your target audience.

Unless you're a startup roofer, you can easily identify which type of homeowner, business owner, landlord, or property manager tends to work with your company. Write down everything you know about those top customers, such as their ZIP codes, estimated home value, marital status, or even education level. The more you can narrow down your target audience, the simpler it will be to write compelling SEM ads that draw them in.



Just to be clear, you can have more than one target audience. However, each SEM ad you construct for your campaigns should engage a single type of customer. That way, you'll have a better likelihood of creating messaging that resonates with the people you most want to work with.



2. Conduct extensive keyword research.

Keyword research is a must-do step that many company owners skip. Why? To be honest, it's complex and time-consuming. Certainly, you can rely on specialty software to help you dig up keywords best-suited for your services and target audiences. However, you'll still have to put in a little old-fashioned legwork.

One way to start the keyword research process is to think about all the keywords customers have probably used to find you online. These could be anything from "storm damage repair near me" to "vinyl siding installations in [your city]." You can also spy on your competitors to see which keywords they seem to be using in their SEO copy and SEM campaign ads.



3. Get a basic understanding of SEM ad auctions.

You have your target audience. You have your keywords. You're ready to pull together an ad that will make the phone ring and keep your crews busy all season. But before moving forward, you should understand the basics of SEM ad auctions. Success doesn't correspond with how much money you're willing to spend on each ad campaign. Being successful with a paid digital ad campaign requires you to submit to an auction-style experience.

How does the SEM ad auction work? You're basically offering a top bid for each keyword. For instance, you might be willing to pay up to \$10 per click for the keyword "roofers near me." When someone who fits your target audience types "roofers near me" into the search bar, your ad would go into an auction algorithm. If you win the auction, your ad will be seen, and you'll be charged for any click-through. If you don't, your ad won't be seen — but at least you won't have to pay anything.



4. Win an ad auction.

Like we just said, winning an ad auction involves placing an appropriate bid. However, search engines like Google and Bing don't just take your highest bid into consideration. When deciding whether your ad is worth showing, they'll also consider your quality score, which will be a number from one to 10. In fact, your quality score is just as important as your bid.

What's a quality score? It's a way for the search engine to measure the intent and pertinence of your ad. To increase your quality score, make sure that your ad offers true value for the searcher. Consider this: You're writing an ad around the keyword "affordable roofing repair in Tampa." Your ad should be written with the keyword in mind and not include irrelevant information. Additionally, the link to your landing page should make sense. You wouldn't want to send roofing repair leads to your "About" page or a page selling window upgrades.

Insulate Your Roofing Business Against the Cold Threat of Lost Leads

You work hard at building your brand — and putting roofs on buildings around the community. If you don't have time to focus on taking your SEM strategy to the next level, that's understandable. It's also where forging a partnership with CMG Local Solutions can help.

Like you, we're focused on being the experts in our industry, which involves all facets of search marketing, including SEO and SEM. Our dedicated in-house team can help you reach new customers online and pull them into your sales pipeline.

[Give us a call today](#) to talk about hammering down your SEM.