



Web 2.0 Marketing Podcast

*Internet Marketing Secrets #133 - Podcast Transcription
with Michael Campbell and Howie Schwartz.*

Michael Campbell: With me today is traffic specialist Howie Schwartz, who is king of the Web 2.0 Marketing and traffic generation. These are social news sites, bookmarking sites, blogs and video sites that Google pays attention to. This is not the same old SEO from 2005 with its sandbox, where you had to wait three months to show up in the rankings.

Using Howie's Conversation Domination techniques, I get top search engine rankings in a couple of days. Not weeks, months, years, but I've actually achieved top rankings in just a few hours. Now, I wouldn't have believed it possible, but I've done it for myself, not once, but many, many times.

Now, I'm a firm believer in Howie's Web2.0 tactics, and welcome him to the call. Howie, are you there?

Howie Schwartz: Thanks, Michael. I really appreciate the invite, and it's an honor to be here because I've been reading your newsletter for probably, I can't even imagine, three or four years now.

Michael: Oh, wonderful. I've been following your career as well. And lately you've been just at the cutting edge with this Web 2.0 marketing stuff. So let's jump right in and start chatting a little bit about these Web 2.0 strategies and tactics.

I'd like to say, what started it for me was checking my log files. One day I found a whole lot of traffic coming from this site called Scribd. And when I checked it out, some dude was posting my articles on this service. I thought, OK, whatever, free publicity. And then I really didn't think anything else of it.

And then a podcast I did with Colin McDougall a few weeks ago, he suggested that I post all my stories and articles there. Not so much for the traffic, but the SEO benefit. Then he showed me a little video about submitting to Propeller.com, and I tell ya, I'm hooked.

So, how did you get started with all this Web 2.0 Marketing stuff, like posting to the social news sites?

Howie: Sure. Over the past two years, I've been looking at what Web 2.0 is doing, purely from an SEO benefit to start. And as soon as I learned about things like del.icio.us for social bookmarking and YouTube for video sharing and Flickr for online photos, I just tried to find as many of these sites as possible to try to get as much of my content there and links. And I noticed a direct SEO benefit from the links that was coming to my sites.

Over time, as each one of these properties got more popular, I notice the same thing as you did. When I was on something like a Scribd or a del.icio.us, not only were there links, there also started to become traffic, because these networks had two things going for them.

The first part was, they actually had their own user base, and the benefit of being on a network, or an article directory, or a blog or really wherever your content and links can be posted, is that you're no longer dependent totally on the search engines for traffic. So, if you lose a ranking or two from Google or they dance or whatever, you're going to still get direct refer traffic from these various properties that you've posted your content and links on. And these sites have just gotten really popular, and they've all built their own audience and market share alone, which is a great benefit.

The second benefit, as you mentioned, is Google is really paying attention to these sites. And the term that I like to use is they're actually "camping out" on these sites. So, what I discovered in doing a lot of testing is that if I post content in the link or something like Scribd, or something like del.icio.us, or a photo with a link to one of my sites or blogs on Flickr, I notice very quick spider activity from Google and the other search engines. Just by watching my log files, I see them come streaming back, and very quickly I was seeing all that content and links and offers being indexed and ranked on Google.

And like you mentioned, sometimes in a matter of hours, you could be on page one in Google. And depending on what your SEO strategy in the past was, it could take weeks or sometimes months depending on how focused you were on visibility, and how focused you were on attracting the search engine bots in the right way, to get your content ranked. You know, it was taking a long time.

So, once I saw how quick Google was responding to these properties, my next step was, "Hmm, what happens if I hit 10 or 20 or 30 of these at the same time? What would happen?" And what I quickly realized was, Google was eating each one of these things... really at the same speed. So, I was able to get not only one of these spots ranked on the first page in Google, many times I was able to gather six out of the top 10 results, or 30 out of the top 50 spots, or 50 out of the top 100 in Google.

And for me, it really completely changed the way I marketed online. So, if we take kind of a step back to the old school SEO style of websites, and search engine marketing and promotion, we would all do the same thing. We'd register a domain name, we'd go and set up some hosting, we'd launch a blog or CMS (content management system), or even we'd do a static site. And we'd do some link building, some article submission, maybe an online press release, and we'd hope and pray that Google bots, and the other search engine spiders would show up and index our site. Like we talked about, it could be weeks or months.

So, once I realized that Google was hanging out on places like Propeller and even Squidoo and Flickr, and even looking for fresh content, I basically started throwing out the old ways of just building static or even dynamic domains on a regular, typical host, and just started focusing exclusively on these websites.

And very quickly, I realized that I was getting a lot more traffic a lot faster, and had the benefit of being able to control a lot of real estate in Google, for pretty much any market that I want to be in. So, it's a little hard to imagine owning seven spots on the first page of Google, just because we've all been trained to fight for one spot at a time.

But basically in the method that we're talking about on this call, I actually don't register any domain names, I don't set up any hosting, I'm just totally using the power of free Web 2.0 sites and free blog hosting, to host all of my content and my offers. And the benefit is really

immediate rankings on Google and the ability to control 30, 40, 50 spots, when someone is searching and going through 10 pages of Google, to own all that real estate.

So for me, it really changed the whole entire way that I've been marketing online over the last year.

Michael: Yeah. There's going to be a lot of people who won't believe it, but they really need to go and look at the case studies that you did, at some of the events, where you were speaking, and look at the case studies that you did, where you went and actually dominated several - I won't call it long tail because they're more like medium tail - medium tail search terms for Halloween costumes.

And seeing is believing. When you can actually go in there and see in the video, where you demonstrate that you own 18 out of the top 20 positions in Google. When I saw that video, it was one of those real "Aha!" or "light bulb" moments. But, I also realized that you can use this in a more gentle method, that you could post to the blog and then submit to maybe three or four of these services and then get four of the top 10. So, it could be a little bit more gentle.

And I have to say that I've done it. I did one last night. I posted to my blog. And it was great to see Google come within five minutes, and actually spidered my blog post within five minutes of me, what I call, "jiggling" the web by posting over on Propeller or Digg or one of those. And it was just incredible.

Now, I didn't get indexed right away, but I was spidered, and within five hours, I had three pages within the top 10 search results, and then within a day, I had four out of the top 10 for my keyword phrase and it's still there today. That's amazing.

Howie: And it's a different way of approaching search marketing, which is fun. For me, I just needed to evolve from sort of the mass domain creation and page generator stuff that I was doing in the past, which has just become a lot less effective.

Michael: Yeah, the "black hat" stuff. The search engines have got so smart and so good at filtering that kind of stuff out. But, this new style of marketing, it's aggressive and you're pretty blunt about it in your audio recordings, saying, "Yes, it's aggressive, but it's not cloaking, it's not spamming, it's not illegal, it's nothing black hat, but it's not bleached white either."

And I heard you say this, "Someone will take the commission, why shouldn't it be me. It's a war and you want to win."

Howie: Yeah, the funny story that I like to tell is, I was speaking at Jack Humphrey's event in Vegas in September of '07, and basically what I did - and the case study that you mentioned - was related to the authority summit, and also I did it again at the marketing main events, and recently for Jeff Johnson's traffic workshop also.

So, basically when people were searching for the events, all they could find in Google was the fact that I was speaking. So, I got up on stage and it was kind of funny. I put up a screenshot of me and Jack in some boxing gloves and we talked about how this is a battle. And I threw him a box of tissues, because basically we were joking around that we couldn't find his blog, it was all the way on page four, because I just owned everything.

So, a very nice woman raises her hand and says, "You know, Howie, is this fair? I'm searching for the hotel, I'm searching for stuff about the event, and all I could find was your

stuff. Is this fair to your competitors?" First, I was going to give - I was on stage, there was all these people - should I have a politically correct answer?

And I'm kind of like, "This really isn't me. So, let me just tell it like I feel". So, I was like, "No, it's not fair. This is war. And I treat every niche market like a battle. And I see all of my competitors lined up on the battlefield, and they have little sticks and they have some twigs and they have some BB guns, and I show up with a Sherman tank and I roll over them - I roll over their villages, and I'm just destroying everything."

And that's kind of the way that I try to market. And like you mentioned, it is a little bit more aggressive, and you can tone it down and be a little bit more peaceful. But, you hit it exactly on the head when you said, "If someone is going to get a commission, why shouldn't it be me?" And that's really the way that I feel.

People are using search engines today, in a different way than four or five years ago. They are very, very specific in their search queries and their intent is very clear. When someone types in - as you mentioned - like the Halloween case study that I did. Someone is looking for "Pirates of the Caribbean" Halloween costume. They know what they want to go as for Halloween. They're not thinking, they're not looking for ideas, they're ready to make a purchase.

So, why shouldn't I own eight out of the top 10 spots in Google for anything related to Pirates of the Caribbean and Halloween, and have it be my affiliate link and my commission, because they're there to buy and there's no reason for my competitors to get it.

Michael: Right. It may as well be you. Now, let's talk about, is that the kind of training that people can expect to find inside of your "Conversation Domination" private site?

Howie: Yes.

Michael: When I tell my friends how much it is to get in, there's always an uncomfortable silence. I tell them how much it is, at \$1,500 it's, "cricket...cricket...cricket" But if you think of it this way, it's for a whole year of updates. So, that's the same price as an average private site that charges 125 bucks a month!

When you put it in perspective, it's just average. But the training isn't average from my experience. I've already been in there and soaked up everything that there is inside of the site. And what people don't realize, is that Web 2.0 marketing changes daily. What worked today won't work tomorrow, and that you're adding content to your private site almost every couple of days. What kind of stuff can people expect to find?

Howie: I'll give you a great example that I'm not sure if you noticed yet. Scribd changed their whole entire setup about four days ago. And anything that you've posted previously that had links [recording drops out]. And we noticed that because we basically have a whole R&D team that tracks all of the changes on all of these Web 2.0 sites, pretty much in real time as they're happening.

We started taking a look at our referrals and what was going on, and saying, "What happened to Scribd." So, I had one of my guys who spend about two days non-stop, because there was no FAQ post, no news, no email from Scribd, they just changed.

And we basically had to go through everything and rip the whole service apart, to find out that you actually had to go in to your old posts, and change from their flash viewer to another sort of link-friendly viewer, or when you're adding your contact, use their Write application, which is almost like their own version of Microsoft Word.

So, that's kind of the value and the reason why we need... I don't like to call it a monthly membership site. It's kind of an annual program, because every day this stuff is changing. And I've been treating this like my personal mastermind group, and when something happens, I email everyone and say, "Hey, guys, here's what just happened with Scribd. Just so you know, here's the change. Let me go figure this out."

And within 48 hours, I was able to email everyone... sort of 16 pages of an updated guide and saying, "Here's how you fix everything in Scribd and make it even better." And, man, this stuff is changing so fast. Propeller.com, that's another interesting one that I bet a lot of your readers and listeners aren't familiar with. And the reason that they're not is because it just changed. It was Netscape.com.

Michael: Right.

Howie: Netscape was originally sort of a crusty old portal, right? And then they wanted to be more like Digg, and so they started doing social news like Digg and social bookmarking. But, they're rolling that off to Propeller and now Netscape is going to be another portal. I don't even know exactly what they're going to do with it.

So, unless you're paying attention to this market, Michael, and you're seeing all these changed, but people who aren't, they're missing out on opportunities like that. And even today, Google's actually ranking your Netscape and your Propeller stories both at the same time. Over time Google will roll out, and they suggest either Netscape will redirect everything to Propeller or Google will get smart and realize that it only should be ranking Propeller.

But right now, if you know that, and if you're in our membership, we basically talk about how to promote both at once. And part of that is through pinging, which we could talk about afterwards, and part of that is treating this as a network effect.

So, this is really kind of paradigm shift in search marketing. It's away from marketing a domain, and it's marketing a network of properties. I'm actually thinking about, how do I get attention and market my Scribd, my del.icio.us, my Flickr, my YouTube, my five free hosted blogs. So, I'm trying to market my whole entire network.

And when you treat it like a network, things rise up as a network, which is a lot of fun. And that's really how we can get seven out of the top 10 spots in Google for an important search phrase that's going to convert into buyers, which is sort of the other part of our training.

We've spent a lot of time talking about conversations that are worth dominating. I'm not out there dominating underwater basket weaving, because no one's buying anything. I'm out there and doing the research and spending the time to find conversations where I'm actually going to get active buyers. And that's really kind of what it's all about.

For me, just everything's changed. Traffic means nothing. I don't bother and I'm not impressed anymore by how many visitors I'm getting. Even rankings on broad phrases mean nothing, because they're not buyers, they're not converting.

I know you're also friends with [Jerry West](#), and Jerry West talks about - and I believe in this fully - the new long tail, or the concept of buying key phrases. Not the fact that it may have three or four or five words in the search query, but the fact that someone is further down the buyer funnel, they're ready to buy.

And that's really what we're all about in Conversation Domination, is how do we find those conversations on those buying terms. And you are finding things that are going to convert, because that's really the stuff that's worth marketing. The more general things, it doesn't matter. Three years ago, I would have been really pleased with myself - five years ago - that I could rank for "Halloween costume" as a term.

But if you look at your conversions on that one, it's going to be pathetic because you don't know if people want to buy a Halloween costume for their dog. You'd laugh at how many Halloween costumes I've sold for dogs and cats. I had no idea!

But, when you do the research at that level, you'll start to learn interesting things, which is always a lot of fun. But the term "Halloween costume", the conversions are awful. You need to get towards that buying key phrases "Pirates of the Caribbean Halloween costume" or "Halloween costumes for dogs", because those are the things that people are ready to buy. They've made their decision on what they want. They're not browsing, they're buying.

And I've given up on browsing traffic. To me, they're just wasting bandwidth, they're wasting time. I'd be happy to basically dominate a search phrase that has 30 searches per month. And everyone's like, "When I look at Wordtracker..." Again, nothing wrong with that tool, I don't mean it like that. But, when you look at old metrics that say, "Oh, I shouldn't focus on that", there's going to be no action.

I'm the opposite. I'm like, that's a buying key phrase. The 30 people who search for that are all buyers. So, I may own eight out of the top 10 spots on Google, and out of those 30 people, can I convert, what 8% of them, 10% of them? What's the number, and how many sales can I generate, versus trying to get 0.0001% of a general phrase, that's never going to make me any money. So, it's kind of funny.

Michael: Yeah. I always like people who go along that line of thinking, because I wrote about that in "Nothing but Net" in 1999, and I said, people typing in "cell phone", you don't know what they're thinking. But if they type in "Nokia N80 leather case", that's a buyer.

Howie: Exactly.

Michael: And usually those will convert. And that's why I've made a quiet living on the Internet with my mini-nets, going after makes and model numbers. I'll gladly take something that gets 30 or 15 searches a day and convert that traffic, as opposed to something getting 100,000 a day and converting less than 0.0001%.

Now, when you were talking about Scribd, the audio cut out there for a second. So... what exactly happened to the links that were on Scribd? Did you say that the links, they stopped working, and now you have to use their new editor to make the links work again?

Howie: Yeah. This is sort of the reason why I've been treating this like my personal mastermind group in Conversation Domination. It's because exactly that things are changing so fast in this marketplace, that Scribd basically just removed the active links, and they have kind of an interesting flash browser.

Michael: And they didn't tell anybody.

Howie: No, they don't tell anybody, no one ever does. [laughs] Whenever anyone makes changes, no one ever is nice enough to - except for Squidoo. When all of Squidoo's slap stuff happened this summer, they actually came out and talked about what was going on

and what you needed to do. So, they were the only ones; everyone else just kind of plays dumb and doesn't tell anyone what happened.

So, what we noticed - just because we're researching this and we're living and breathing it, and I have a full team full-time dedicated to this - is the links went away.

A lot of people one, didn't notice it. Some people who did notice it just thought it was dead and stopped promoting there. What we did is we spent about two days researching it, and found that you can change in the options, the settings and move away from just their flash display to get the links back.

Or you can, instead of just uploading a PDF like we were doing before, you could use their Write module, which is instead of using Microsoft Word and uploading a Word doc, they have their own little editor now, which is brand new. And that keeps the integrity of the links.

So, this stuff is just happening every day, all of these changes. What I mentioned before, and I'm not sure if the audio cut out on this part, was that when that happens, I immediately email the group and say, "Hey guys, here's what just happened in Scribd. Give me some time." And we go figure out what we do. And within two days, we basically had a 16-page reports saying, "Here's everything you need to do to not only get Scribed back to the previous point, but how do we even make it better".

And that's what we're doing every single day.

Michael: For me, I found that Scribd and Propeller and Digg, offer the most ranking juice for SEO purposes. After posting to my blog, I also promote my post on at least those three services. And very often, I'll end up owning at least three or four of the top spots in Google for my keyword phrase.

Now, if you had to pick just a handful - say five - what would be your favorite Web 2.0 properties and why?

Howie: That's a great question, and it changes pretty much every week, so, I'll give you this week's answer?

Michael: OK.

Howie: I'll tell you which ones have stayed the same and which ones have changed maybe over the last few weeks. I still hit Squidoo all the time, and it's funny, because a lot of people listening to this will say, "Wasn't Squidoo slapped?" And yes it was, but again really in my experience, there are really few penalties in the search engines.

When I was doing my black hat stuff, I used to get penalized. I would get whole networks of domains blown and de-indexed by Google. Everything is really just a series of filters, and Google, to me, is nothing but a whole bank of little dials and they just tweak things.

Did they tweak the authority of Squidoo and how it could rank? Sure they did. And I actually even had the opportunity to interview Seth Godin about what happened during the summer.

He talked very frankly about the reasons why and so much spam, and what changes they were making how to do it. So, yeah. So, the way that Squidoo is being valued, their authority was lowered a little bit. And this happens on an ongoing basis all the time. That's why we see so many ranking changes. To me, a lot of it is just Google, just revaluing and re-weighting different properties.

So, I still hit Squidoo, but I hit Squidoo maybe a little bit of a different way. One, I make sure that I use multiple modules like Squidoo wants to see. And then, after I talk about my favorite properties, I'll talk about how I promote them by pinging. So, I'm also pinging the RSS feed - which I can explain in a few moments - of Squidoo, which is how they get Google's attention. And for me and all my markets, I still find Squidoo ranks on page one consistently, even after it was kind of re-balanced and revalued this summer.

The second one, I will agree with you, I like Propeller. I'm going to move Scribd off the list, because even though we have our links back in Scribd using the methods that I mentioned, I have not seen new content ranked there yet, because this just happened. Again, this is all real time, so this just happened a few days ago. So, I'm actually temporarily taking that off my top five list until I can retest it.

So, I'm still liking Propeller. And the way you get on Propeller is by getting your content on Netscape. So, my trick is two things. One, I spend a lot of time on my tag research. I research tags the same way that I would research key words. And I also will use tags on Squidoo. And when I go to Netscape and Propeller, I'm actually pinging the RSS feeds from both of those. I'm also pinging the tag pages on both those services.

So, let's say our topic was - it's getting cold here so - skiing. Let's say I'm talking about a new pair of Solomon X-Scream skis. What I would do is, my tag research would be ski, skiing, Solomon, X-Scream, winter sports. I'd really think through what my tag research would be. So, I would also go and I would ping each of that tag pages on Netscape and Propeller.

The third one, I'm liking a new funky little service called Quizilla.com. What's cool about this is - take a step back - you want to be on properties six months before any of your competitors hear about them. And that's really where all the money is made and all the attention can be grabbed. Because once everyone learns about it, you're competing against too many people.

So, when everyone was doing MySpace, I stopped friend-adding on MySpace a year ago, when the first \$37 ebook came out. For me, it was dead at that point. So, when everyone starts talking about things openly, is typically when things are - if not over - then they've at least become less effective.

So, I like to really be out there and find things way before anyone's talking about it. So, Quizilla.com, a funky little site, ranks really well on Google, and also allows you to choose anchor text for your links. Each one of these services in Web2.0 is different. Some allow anchor text, some don't. Some allow images, some don't. So, we always try to learn through that. So, that would be three services.

The fourth, and I'll combine two, if that's OK.

Michael: Sure.

Howie: I love free blog hosting. Even when you're posting your own content on your own blog, I like to go out there and either post a variation of the content, or sometimes the same thing, depending on how lazy I am, or what the goal is of the site. If it's an authority domain that I'm managing every day, I'm going to vary the text. If it's a quick hit because I want to sell Halloween costumes, I will go out there and use the same duplicate content.

So again, the case studies that I'll show on the site that I'll mention at the end of the call, will show you that the duplicate content issue, you can kind of throw it out the window, and most of what's written on public forums is wrong in my testing. So, you can either use the

same post or vary it, and I change that based on the long-term, or quick-hit nature of what I'm trying to do. So free blog hosting...

Michael: Is that the name of the website, Free Blog Hosting?

Howie: Oh, no. Actually I was going to name two of them.

Michael: [laughs] OK.

Howie: There're 20 or 30 of them that you can use, and we talk about all of them. One of the two that I like the best is WordPress.com. And most people are familiar with WordPress. You install it on your own domain. WordPress.com is basically a multi-user environment, where you can create a sub-domain, so it would be SolomonXscreamXYZ.WordPress.com. And the same thing, I use my tag research there, and categories. I will ping the RSS feed there again.

And then there's another free blog host. You know, I use the standards, and I pay attention in Conversation Domination and I report on who the search engines are buying, because traffic follows there. So, I still use Blogger from the good old days. I use Yahoo! 360. I'm going to combine a few services in here. Yahoo! 360, because Yahoo! Owns it. Live Spaces, because MSN owns it.

And another external service, I like Live Journal. I found that that ranks really well. So, I kind of combined a few into that number four spot. But again, I'm treating everything as a network effect. My attitude is, why be on one blog host when I could be on 12. And I do the same thing, I do my tag research and I ping each one of these.

And this might sound like a little bit of work, and you know what it is? But, everything that I do is 100% outsourced. I actually do none of this stuff myself.

And probably 50% of our training is dedicated to how to manage outsourcing, and setting up the step-by-step guides for each of these services, and detailed video explanations. Basically, I just do screen captures and Camtasia videos of everything, and I show everything that I give to my own outsourcers. So, this is exactly how I'm running my business every day. And then the fifth one, let me see, what am I liking?

Michael: So far we've got Squidoo, Propeller, Quizilla, and several free blog hosting services. Scribd is off the list.

Howie: Yes, Scribd is off the list right now. And again, next week, it might come on the list. But after they did their change, I need to go, and I need to retest and see how everything is working. So, let me look at - actually I could open up a log file here and see what it's working on.

This is kind of funny, Bumpzee.com. And it's a funky little social networking site, almost like a cross between Digg and del.icio.us. And I'm just looking at some rankings here. It's just consistently ranking. And again, it's a service that everyone's ignoring. And again, you have tags on there and you also have an RSS feed.

So, those are the five services that I would focus on. I mix things up and this is always changing and there's new services launching every day. But, if you started with those five tonight and did a little post there and pinged the RSS feeds and just paid attention to your tag research, in a few hours or - depending on the market - in a day or two, you're going to start to see rankings.

And that's really the beauty of this stuff, its instant rankings. You mentioned [Colin McDougall](#) at the front of the call. I was showing this stuff to Colin and it was kind of funny, he called me back and said, "Howie, I just beat you". And I said, "What to you mean?"

Michael: [laughs]

Howie: "You talked about ranking on Google page one in four or five or six hours". He's like, "I have a six-minute ranking." So, he showed me a post that he did using Conversation Domination techniques in six minutes. He was on page one in Google.

Michael: That's incredible.

Howie: In 30 minutes, he had \$150 commission from a sale.

Michael: [laughs] Yeah he told me the story behind that one. He did a product review and had his affiliate link in the article. It was a really great idea.

Now in several of the examples you mentioned, the tag research is very important. Maybe you could explain to the listeners - who might now know this - what tags are, and how you benefit by doing this research on them.

Howie: Sure. What I find so interesting about this stuff, is that the more things change, in a lot of ways, the more things stay the same. The concept of blog and ping, which everyone over-spammed and is burnt out a little bit, that still works but in a different way. We're still pinging blogs, but I'm not just on Blogger. We're on LiveJournal and WordPress.com and all these are the free blog hosts that we work with.

So, Sean Wu - who came out with "tag and ping" a little bit over a year ago, the concept was using tags on your blogs - focused on Technorati, because that really was where tags were starting a summer or so ago. But, that's also evolved, where every single Web 2.0 property has tags.

So, what tags are, is a way for you to label your content, and to just reach out and tell Google what your page is about. So, instead of Google having to guess what this is about. You're saying, this page is about - please categorize this - about winter sports and skiing, about Solomon skis, and X-Scream... X-Scream is the model name.

So, when you focus your tags at that level, and it's really nothing more than just a way to categorize your own content or posts, you have a few benefits. One, you're really telling the search engines how to categorize your content, and any time you can give them this signal - in my experience - you're really moving yourself along and it's much easier and quicker to get rankings".

The second things is, each one of these tags are actually - on most Web2.0 sites - their own unique page. So, what's great is... and again, this extends from what the Technorati tag and ping was a year and a half ago. It was on Squidoo, I have a Squidoo tag, or HubPage - it's another one like Squidoo, or Propeller. Each one of these things would have a tag page.

So, when you go to the individual tag page of Propeller.com/tag/skiing, you have the ability to have your content also on there. And a few things are going to happen. One, it's another link back to that Netscape or Propeller direct post. So, you're actually increasing the visibility and the ranking power of that post.

But, these tag pages also rank themselves on Google. So, many times in Propeller, it won't only be my story, it will be my tag page. It'll be my Squidoo tag page. Hub Page is another one that's competitive with Squidoo, and they're called "hot hubs", which is kind of funny. But, I see my hot hubs ranking all the time.

So, in your tag research, I'm not only doing the general phrases like "skiing". I'm getting the buying phrases. I'm getting Solomon and X-Scream XYZ - again, whatever the model number and there is a tag, because the beauty of that is, all of your competitors aren't doing it. So, what's the only listing on that tag page? You.

Michael: Right.

Howie: So, that's what's great. And those tag pages rank really well. How do you get them to rank, you promote them. How do you promote them? You ping them. Most people think, pinging is just for blogs, but it's not. Every Web 2.0 property and every tag page has an RSS feed. Everything with an RSS feed can be pinged.

Michael: So, now you've got your article submitted to Propeller. And then by taking the time to put in your tags - I think, they allow you five - you're getting yourself on five new pages all linking to that post. So now you're also on five additional pages that the search engines will come and spider.

And by pinging that tag page, you're saying, "Hey, search engine! There's something new on this tag, something new on this tag, something new on that tag..." So, you actually ping all five of those tags. And then very often what's happening, it's not just your post that you made on Propeller, but your tag page is showing up in the top of the search engines. That's brilliant!

Howie: And it's another spot. And that's really what this is all about. This is all about how many spots or properties can we get ranked, because they're not domains. Again, we're not registering any of these domain names or anything like this anymore. We're working off the backs of these Web2.0 properties and these free blog hosts.

And any time you have anything that can be ranked, as long as you promote it and raise your hand and say, "Hey, Google, I have something over here" - by pinging it - "Come, check it out." Oh man! It just ranks across the board.

So, you can have, let's say two pages on Google, you have twenty results. You can have one from Netscape, one from Propeller, one tag page from Netscape, and one tag page from Propeller. So, right off the bat, that one action that you did just generated four listings out of twenty.

Michael: Yeah. I tried it last night. After listening to that audio in your private site, I went and I pinged the tag in the category page, because I put myself on... I think, it was DIY (do it yourself) or technology or something, and I appeared on MSN in position #9 for my keywords. But, it was the tag page that showed up, not my posting. That was outrageous!

Howie: And the reason why is, when you do your proper tag research, exactly how you're doing it, you are bringing a little attention. With pinging, you're just helping the search engines along. It's pretty powerful when you look at it. Again, it's this whole network effect. We're not marketing a domain name. We're marketing a network of properties. For me, it's just a lot more fun and I can really leverage the power of the fact that Google wants this new, fresh content. They're dying for it.

This is really the big change that Google is sitting there... I think, I used the phrase before that they're camping out. They're waiting for new content there, and they're ranking it instantly, because that's what the market wants. They don't want old Wikipedia pages. They don't want old stories on CNN. And where do they get new content? From social news, from social networking, from social bookmarking, from Squidoo. This is where the new user-generated content is working.

Michael: So, we could have used services like blogsearch.google.com or Technorati to keep tabs on our favorite topics and find markets, where the conversations are hot. What others would you suggest? Where should we pay attention? Should we be looking at these tag clouds and topics that we can jump into and things like seasonal trends? Is that where the real strength of Conversation Domination lies?

Howie: A lot of what we teach inside the membership sites, is how to find conversations and which ones are going to be profitable and worth attacking. So, there's a few ways to do it. The seasonality of it is very important.

I did really well with Halloween as a case study. Basically, the URL for everyone is www.cdzn.com/cd. There's a link on your member case studies, right up top. You'll see my Halloween rankings, and I even show my Commission Junction account. I show you how many clicks and how many sales that video generated, which is kind of fun.

Michael: That's a special page just for the listeners of this call. I just want to let them know that that's something that you've set up for me, because I think that you officially closed the membership, but you're extending it a little bit just for these people?

Howie: Yes, exactly. We closed the membership, and then I opened it up for another few days, and then it's closing again. So, part of it just fits my travel schedule. I've been opening and closing. But this page; <http://www.cdzn.com/cd>, is going to stay online. So, everyone will be able to participate in the group. I'm going to leave this page online.

Michael: Oh, that's perfect. Another thing I found effective was jumping into those existing conversations. I've had a lot of people tell me that this is something I should do - look for blogs, where I have some authority on the topic, and then jump into that conversation for almost instant traffic. Is that something that you suggest doing as well?

Howie: Yes. There are actually a few parts in our strategy, and the first one is starting a conversation. So, that's where... you're in a niche market, and in every niche market, every single one has conversations happening, whether you're in toys, whether it's recalls related to China, whether you're in pet food, or health or whatever you're doing, you know, Internet marketing. Obviously, these things are changing every day with search. So, you need to look and pay attention.

So, my tip for that is to use Google Alerts. So, go to Google News. We spent a lot of time doing a lot more detailed training on this, but the quick version would be to go to Google News, type in your key phrase in quotes, and set up Google Alerts. They'll email you every day or as it happens.

This is what I do with my outsourcers. I basically just have Google Alerts sent to them. So, when there's a new topic on diabetes, or a new issue regarding toy recalls or something like that, that's how you find a conversation in your niche market, that you can start dominating right away. So, you start blogging about it.

The other thing that you can do, as you mentioned, is participate in conversations. Each niche is going to have some established authorities. When you look at their blogs and see what they're talking about, you basically can get involved in that conversation. Post on their blog and then basically link back to your blog. And you're continuing the conversation on your blog, but you're taking it to the next step by then promoting your post with Propeller and Squidoo and Scribe, and then other free blog hosts like WordPress.com, Livejournal, and Bloggers.

So all of a sudden, it's kind of fun when this happens. You can move from participating in a conversation to controlling it. So, according to Google, you're now the authority.

And guess what? That makes you the authority, whether you deserve it or not. Because someone is searching for it, you're owning all the top two pages, you're the instant authority, whether you started the conversation or whether you really are the expert or not. It's whoever controls the attention wins. And this is really what the training and the membership is about - it's about becoming the center of attention.

Michael: Yeah, I suggested something like that to a friend of mine from New York. He actually has a site based on sterilizers and he was wondering how he can jump into that conversation. What I suggested that he do is create a conversation and position his product as the solution. So, we went to the Google news, and we looked up "anthrax" for example.

And there's all sorts of posts, almost every day, people are scared in the USA about terrorists and wondering if the government is subject to anthrax attacks. Well, that is perfect, because he could jump into that conversation and provide his products - being sterilizers that sterilize mail - as being the solution to that problem. If you're nervous about it, get a sterilizer for your mail. And that would be a perfect opportunity for him to sell these giant \$10,000 units to people who otherwise might not know that they exist...

Howie: Exactly.

Michael: ...just by jumping into that conversation and positioning himself. Or as you mentioned, there was a toy alert just the other days. One of these toys had these little stick-on-dots that got recalled, even though it's one of the top ten toys of the year. But it got recalled like two days ago, and you could promote something that would be an alternative to that. If you could jump into that conversation and say, "Yes, it's too bad, but I found this other toy that's doing really well and it would make a really good replacement for it".

Howie: And that's your link, and your sale.

Michael: Oh, I love this stuff.

Howie: What's the value of your friend's conversations selling sterilizers? Because that's a \$10,000 sale.

Michael: Yes it is, yes.

Howie: So, that's a conversation that's worth dominating, right?

Michael: Exactly, yeah. And I've also given him some other tips about writing a PDF report, because he wants more people to link to him. And I said, "Well then... why not get together with the Dental Associations, and the body piercing people, and anybody who needs to sterilize something, and write an official guide to that particular sterilizer."

Howie: Yeah, with all the staph infections in hospitals every day. I mean, if you just pay attention to what the news and what the media is telling you, all the conversations are already there, and they're all waiting for someone to own them, they're all waiting for an authority.

Michael: And they all want to link to somebody.

Howie: There's no reason why you can't be it. Yeah, they all want to link to somebody, yup.

Michael: And if he can create a PDF file that says, "Oh, here's how you use the Model 123 sterilizer, and this is how long you bake the stuff for, and here's how you wrap the stuff in it." Then he positions himself as an authority. And he thought, 'well, no I don't want them to have the report'. And I said, "No, no. You host it on your website and position it that... because all these regulations change so quickly that there can only be one copy of this report. You must link to this web page and download the report from here so we can control the information that goes into it."

Howie: Exactly. And you have to opt in. So, all of a sudden you're grabbing a name for it too, which is a lot of fun.

Michael: Yeah. Now, I was doing some early testing with the Conversation Domination strategies and what I found was if the spider has already found my post on their own, the Web2.0 stuff won't necessarily offer me increased positioning from posting to the social news sites. So, what I've found is that it's important to post the article quickly, but don't ping your blog first. So, you post on your blog, and normally because you have a PR4, PR5 Google will come every four days. So, I've got a little bit of a window of opportunity, but you never know when Google's going to come.

So, I put the post on my blog and then I quickly submit the snippets to the social sites like Propeller and Digg. And if I post at the social sites immediately, I get the SEO benefit. It's like the spiders want to "discover" your post from the social news sites. So, I call it "jiggling the web". Jiggle, jiggle, jiggle. So, I jiggle the web with the social posts, and the spider is going crazy. "Where's all this jigging coming from?" It's from the social posts, which all link to your blog posts.

So, it's like creating a buzz about your posts. And the spiders see all these sudden news activity that... you've created, and then they come to find the source. And then in 24-48 hours the indexing will happen and it will figure out that the social posts are secondary, or dupe (duplicate) content and often the social news act as leverage, to pop your original blog post up to the top of the rankings.

Howie: Exactly. And that's just a great observation and the reason why in my testing is... Google is all about signals, so it's social signals. Google looks at bookmarks. They look at Digg, they look at Netscape. And it's social signal. It's a vote.

So, it's a different form of... the old concept of link popularity and page rank, which I just ignore these days. But, the new direction for that is social signals. If someone is talking about something and someone is linking about something in the blogosphere.

If someone is putting something up on Digg, it's a social signal and it's a new type of vote for Google. And man, Google is just eating this stuff up, because they have to, because traditional link popularity and page rank has been abused.

That's why they're fighting so hard to get rid of people buying and selling text links, and how things have changed over the past year. A lot of it is related to that in my testing. But,

the concept of social signals has more weight in the way that things are being ranked and also being discovered in all of my testing.

Michael: Yeah, and with news traveling at the speed of electrons, nobody wants to read news from a week ago, or a crusty old site that hasn't changed in a year. And they're all getting lowered in page rank anyways, and like you say, "we can hopefully ignore a lot of the old strategies and people can start focusing on these new strategies." **And I have to reiterate to the people that are listening to the call, that you are doing this without hosting, without creating static html pages, without FTP-ing, without domain names. You are doing this all on the back of the social news sites, and the Web2.0, and bookmarking sites that they are providing for you to use.**

Howie: And that's a great point, because it sounds like, "Oh, we have to go to subscribe, we have to go do these things". And yeah, there are a few things you have to go to, but let's look at it this way... When you have to go and set up a new site, what you're going to do is you're going to wind up spending all of your time just registering a domain name, changing the DNS name service, firing up FTP. Count the amount of time that it takes to do that, and I bet you can post on Squidoo.com, WordPress, Quizilla.com, all the five sites I mentioned quicker than you could just to set up one domain.

Michael: It's hilarious.

Howie: You're going to get so much more benefit, because all of a sudden, you are playing with five properties versus one.

Michael: And the beauty is, by the time it takes you to FTP, your pages up to your host and adjust your name server, I will already have four out of the top ten on Google. That's funny.

Howie: Exactly.

Michael: Oh, man... We should wrap this up. We're going a little bit too long here. So, with me today has been Howie Schwartz, the undisputed king of Web 2.0 Marketing, SEO, and traffic generation. He's the owner of the Conversation Domination private site, which teaches Internet marketers how to use Web2.0 properties to get to the top of the search engines with maximum sales and traffic.

Thank you so much Howie for being with me here today on this call. I'm sure the readers and listeners got just so much out of it. And I look forward to chatting with you again very very soon.

Howie: Thanks, Michael. This was a lot of fun and again, the special page that we put up for everyone listening is:

[Get Howie's Conversation Domination Here](http://www.cdzn.com/cd): <http://www.cdzn.com/cd>

We've put a whole bunch of case studies up there, so you can see in action, everything we talked about.

Michael: That's perfect. Great Howie! Thank you so much. We'll chat again soon. Bye-bye.

Howie: Bye Michael.

That's it for another podcast (transcription) my friend. Thank you for reading. We'll chat again soon. Until then, here's wishing you all the best for online success.

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