
IDEABRIDGE



The IdeaBridge White Paper Series:
Website Research Template



WEBSITE RESEARCH TEMPLATE

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Summary

Use this template to conduct your own research on all of the direct and indirect competitors on the Web.

Objective

Our objective is to learn best practices from the Web's leading sites in our category of _____ by conducting a detailed research study of at least 150 leading sites that cater to our niche. We will convert the best practices learning into Action Plans for future-period rollouts.

The results will form a central component of our Marketing Research.

Justification

Many of the Web's leading sites that cater to our market niche have conducted extensive research into our market; we can easily leverage-off of their investment and studies. For example, Microsoft claims to have invested over USD\$50 Million in developing the research and the content for their www.bcentral.com site. Another example is www.allbusiness.com, which was recently acquired by GE Capital for an estimated USD\$135 Million. Clearly, we can learn from sites that have invested millions in research and focus group studies in the development of their website, content and product offering.

The Research Process

- Step 1: Identify no fewer than 150 sites that cater to our market. These can be largely identified through search engines.
- Step 2: Conduct a cursory review of each of the 150 sites to determine if a detailed review is justified. (This quick review should take no longer than 5-10 minutes per site.)
- Step 3: Prioritize all those sites that require a detailed review and complete the Product/Service Comparison Chart for at least the Top-10 in each of the categories outlined below. (This will take at least 2-3 hours per site).
- Local direct-competitors
 - US and International competitors
 - Indirect competitors (portals, product-specific portals, etc.)
- Step 4: Complete the detailed review of the Top 5 sites in each category. This is a template-driven process and will require about 1-5 hours per site.
- Step 5: Consolidate the data and arrive at our conclusions and recommendations for our Phase II launch.
- Step 6: Incorporate the data into our Marketing Research and Sales Plans.

Note regarding sites under analysis

It is important for us to understand the compelling benefits of these sites, and why so many people are driven to consistently return to them. Our research template is designed to vet-out these issues.



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<p>Site Name/URL (Paste hyperlink) ALSO: insert the link to the person we need to email if we are going to link to their site. Any restrictions to linking to site? Any costs to do this? Comments!</p>	
<p>Site's Main Purpose? What groups and industries is it designed to target, serve and appeal to?</p>	
<p>Will they pay us if we were to drive traffic to their site? Would they advertise on our site? Should we advertise on theirs?</p>	
<p>Who are the featured Partners, affiliates and sponsors of the site?</p>	
<p>Does this site offer any alliances or partner programs we should pursue?</p>	
<p>Expert Advice Available here? What kind of experts? How does it work? Is there an on-line community?</p>	
<p>Is registration required to access any portion of the site? Is it an option or is it required?</p>	
<p>Should the Marketing Manager go to this site and spend the time to thoroughly review it?</p>	
<p>What specifically should be incorporated into our site from this site?</p>	
<p>What is best about the site?</p>	
<p>What Products and Services are featured on this site?</p>	
<p>What do you like least about the site?</p>	
<p>List all the important forms or templates that we should think about incorporating into our site.</p>	
<p>Cut and Paste all the great business links on this site. (Use the Hyperlinks here.)</p>	
<p>List any great news links here.</p>	
<p>Would you use this site on a regular basis if you were a small business owner? Any compelling reason to return to the site over and over again on a regular basis? Why? Be specific!</p>	
<p>Site statistics and traffic: any statistics on the number of users, size of community, traffic, etc?</p>	
<p>USE THIS SPACE TO INSERT YOUR OVERALL COMMENTS ABOUT THE SITE. DOES IT HAVE A UNIQUE APPEAL OR OTHER ATTRIBUTES THAT SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS WOULD FIND COMPELLING? THIS IS YOUR SPACE FOR ANY AND ALL ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT THIS SITE.</p>	