

How to Get 80x the ROI in Traffic Value Compared to PPC

A CASE STUDY IN ORGANIC SEO

THE CHALLENGE



In 2013, Docurated, founded in 2012, was the new kid on the block. With powerful technology supporting sales enablement, knowledge management, and content analytics, they had an innovative solution that solves a primary pain point for sales and marketing as well as a host of other roles – a no-brainer investment for enterprises and smaller organizations alike.

"The value proposition is clear, yet we were struggling to generate inbound interest,"

says Fergal Glynn, VP of Marketing for Docurated.

Wanting to fuel the company's growth, Docurated enlisted the help of MeasuredSEM in January 2014 to enhance visibility, build authority, and boost traffic and enhance lead gen.

The Solution

Realizing an ROI nearly 80x the value a company could generate with a comparable PPC campaign in under three years is a comprehensive undertaking, requiring a multi-faceted organic SEO strategy incorporating both on-site and off-site SEO, fueled in part by content marketing. To generate 80x results for Docurated, MeasuredSEM addressed on-site and technical SEO issues that can hinder visibility, identified target keywords and structured high-value content to boost organic visibility, and implemented value-added content initiatives that targeted relevant industry influencers and boosted engagement.

SEO Site Audit

The process began with a comprehensive SEO site audit, aiming to identify potential improvements that would yield an increase in organic search traffic, leads, and ultimately revenue and profit. MeasuredSEM identified easily rectified technical issues for both immediate and long-term gains in organic visibility, including recommendations for updates to title tags, metadata and URL structures, as well as the identification of broken outbound links, duplicate content issues, "thin" content issues (content that could rank better for target keywords with more in-depth copy), and other concerns that hinder organic SEO. The SEO site audit resulted in a list of prioritized, technical tasks to implement risk mitigation efforts and address issues that may be hindering visibility such as:

- Efforts to **increase page speed**.
- **Alt and title tag** recommendations.
- **Eliminating** unnecessary redirects.
- Addressing **duplicate content** issues.
- Identifying and addressing **"thin" content**.
- Addressing **questionable links** and linking practices.
- Updating the **XML** sitemap.
- Addressing **Google Analytics** setup and implementing Goal Tracking.
- Information **architecture** updates.

Keyword Research and Targeting

In addition to evaluating the site from a technical SEO perspective, MeasuredSEM conducted a comprehensive keyword audit to identify the highest-value target keyword opportunities that are then mapped to specific content initiatives. Keyword research assessed opportunities across brand keywords, services-related keywords and industry keywords. A broad-canvassing approach identified not only opportunities for direct relevance but also ancillary keywords highly relevant to the target audience, providing unique opportunities to reach decision-makers through targeted content initiatives.

Content Ideation

Based on keyword research, MeasuredSEM identified the highest-value keyword opportunities and engaged in an in-depth content ideation process to map specific content initiatives in a variety of formats to target keywords and audiences/buyer personas. A content roadmap was created to generate specific content assets designed to capitalize on high-value keyword opportunities and generate organic search visibility and inbound links, including:

- **Informative glossary pages** targeting industry keywords
- **Expert roundups featuring** industry thought leaders and influencers with insights on relevant, timely issues facing marketers, CIOs, and more
- **Contributions** to authority publications
- **Roundups highlighting** the most valuable tools and apps, blogs, and resources in the space
- **In-depth guides that delve deep** into pressing topics that attract links and shares.
- **Targeted outreach campaigns** to generate shares, links and inbound traffic

Content was mapped out over periods of three to six months, combining multiple formats and a range of relevant target keywords with ongoing outreach campaigns to boost visibility and engagement.

Ongoing Auditing and Reporting

MeasuredSEM prepared monthly reports to assess the effectiveness of the initiatives, evaluating the performance of specific content assets as well as increases in traffic, leads, inbound links, and rankings for target keywords. This ongoing auditing process allowed for reassessing strategy and pivoting when necessary to better reach the target audience and generate traffic, leads and rankings based on the performance of content assets and other results.

Results: Exponential Growth in Traffic and Leads

Using a combination of on-site and off-site SEO strategies coupled with content marketing initiatives, the 34-month engagement produced a 10,004.69% increase in unique visitors by October 2016 and a 7,900% increase in conversions alone.

"I really liked the holistic approach. We saw immediate results from the effort," says Glynn. "We now rank #1 for the keywords we care about – and we're #1 in terms of traffic compared to our competition."

Overall, the campaign generated a return on investment of 765% on organic channel initiatives. But could the same results have been achieved through paid lead gen efforts like PPC?

SEO vs. PPC: What Would It Cost to Buy Similar Traffic?

For the sake of comparison, consider the growth in unique visitors to the website during the entire 34-month engagement. To generate equivalent traffic using PPC during the same time period, it would have cost close to \$14 million to achieve the same results. Yes, that's right: \$14 million. Instead, Docurated spent 7,752% less than the estimated amount they would have invested in getting the same results with paid search. All in all, the ROI Docurated achieved through organic SEO was nearly 80x greater compared to the ROI achievable through a PPC campaign to produce the same results. Cost savings, indeed.

To drill down to a more simplistic comparison, Docurated would have spent an average of \$5 to generate each new visitor using PPC, compared to the average of 0.5 cents to generate each unique visitor through organic methods.

Of course, generating a 765% ROI from organic SEO – an 80x strategy – isn't something that happens overnight. But with expert-led strategy, quality content to fuel your initiatives, and persistence, every company can generate value-added results at an astonishingly lower cost compared to PPC.