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Search Shop Outrider Adds Social Media To Its Mix

by Gavin O'Malley, Tuesday, Jun 24, 2008 8:15 AM ET

Group M's search marketing agency Outrider went public on Monday with its social media marketing practice.

The group is made up of four social media and search experts tasked with formulating tailored strategies for clients so they may better engage--and glean insights from--the blogosphere and various online communities. General marketing goals include building site traffic, conversions and sales, increased brand awareness and brand association, talent development and business development through networking.

"This is the same thing we've done over the past two years with search," said GroupM Search CEO Chris Copeland. "We see the emergence of social media as a natural evolution in the consumer-driven phenomenon started within the search channel."

It is Copeland's belief that social media optimization has a direct relationship with search engine optimization. It is the process of tailoring content for social media and search, which can include images, video, blogs, news, public relations and podcasts.

"What doesn't change between search and social is that consumers are expressing intent and looking for content," Copeland said. "Our role in the value chain is to help our clients understand where conversations are taking place and how best to think about entering into those conversations."

St. Louis-based Outrider's social media marketing experts attempt to help clients identify opportunities and communities to leverage their business, develop engagement strategies, audit visibility, and evaluate consumer and competitor conversations. The team also provides training for clients to increase fluency of the trends and dynamics of the social space.

According to Outrider's U.S. Managing Director Patrick Garrett, the unit is made up of online evangelists. "We'll give a client the tools to play that role, or to find the right people to do it," he said. "That way, there's no chance of conflict of interest."

Outrider is a WPP company and a division of GroupM, WPP's media



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