



INTRODUCTION

The Internet has created countless opportunities for companies to market their products to potential customers. Websites have proven to be invaluable sources of information for communicating news, company information and product value; however, online tools are only as valuable as their ability to connect with the potential customer. The Internet continues to increase in importance as users rely on it more and more for information gathering when researching companies and product options.

An overabundance of websites and communication outlets using the Internet has led users to rely on search engines such as Google and Yahoo! to sort and lead them to the information they are looking for; however, **these search engines fail to take into account the context in which the term is being searched.** Therefore, those in business-to-business industries often struggle to optimize their ability to connect with potential customers using unreliable search terms. In multiple industries, vertical search engines have begun to emerge, meeting this challenge with steady success. These search engines have combined the convenience of search engines to sort information for the user, while taking into account the context in which the search is being conducted. Within the manufacturing and industrial world, GlobalSpec has emerged as a leader in the online market. With over four million registered users, this vertical search network has the unquestionable ability to connect companies with potential customers in the industry.

Companies can benefit from developing on online marketing tools such as GlobalSpec. GlobalSpec will prove to be a cost-effective and practical marketing tool, providing unmatched potential in lead generation. In addition, by employing new technologies such as vertical search engines, a company can brand itself as a leader in innovation among its target markets.





GROWING CHALLENGES IN ONLINE MARKETING

As touched upon in the introduction, business-to-business companies have been challenged by the generality of search engines. Many users are unable to find the information they are seeking due to the fact that general search engines such as Google do not take into consideration the context in which the terms are being searched. The frustration being experienced by professionals can be depicted in Figure 1, the findings of a Jupiter Research Survey conducted in 2004. To be especially noted are the significant proportion of users that are unable to find results relevant to their query, users leaving their searches without finding the right information, and user perception that there are too many answers to their searches. This suggests that while search engines such as Google are able to bring their users numerous results these results are not always relevant to the searchers background or lack the organization necessary to be of value.

WHAT USERS ARE SAYING ABOUT GENERAL SEARCH ENGINES	
I usually refine my search with additional key words	41.2%
Results are often not directly relevant to my query	41.2%
I usually find a relevant answer to my query on the first page of results	39.9%
I find that there are too many results returned.	32.5%
I often go to more than one search engine to find the answer to my query	32.5%
Too many results are sponsored links	31.2%
I think that results are well organized	21.2%
I am concerned about confusing sponsored links with regular search results	18.8%
I often leave a search engine without finding an answer	18.0%
Engines have become slower to return results	4.4%
I find the sponsored links are usually more relevant than regular search results	4.2%

Figure 1: Source: Jupiter Research Survey, 2004.

With users becoming increasingly disappointed with their search results, companies are being challenged to make their websites stand out among specific search terms. For this reason, companies spent \$7.4 billion in search engine marketing in 2005 (16% of which was b-to-b). More than 50% of Google’s target advertisers are business-to-business, suggesting that business-to-business companies are challenged more so in areas of search engine optimization. This may be due to the niche and specific nature of b-to-b products and industries.

The Internet is becoming significantly more important in data acquisition among purchasers in the industry. In a 2006 GlobalSpec Annual Engineering Trends Survey, 91% of respondents use the Internet to find components and suppliers and 45% spent more than 6 hours/week online for work-related purposes. For this reason, companies producing industrial products and services should consider technologies that help to optimize search engine results for its customers.

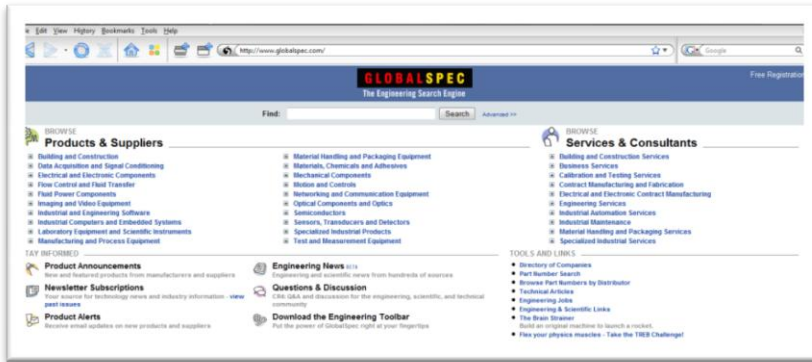




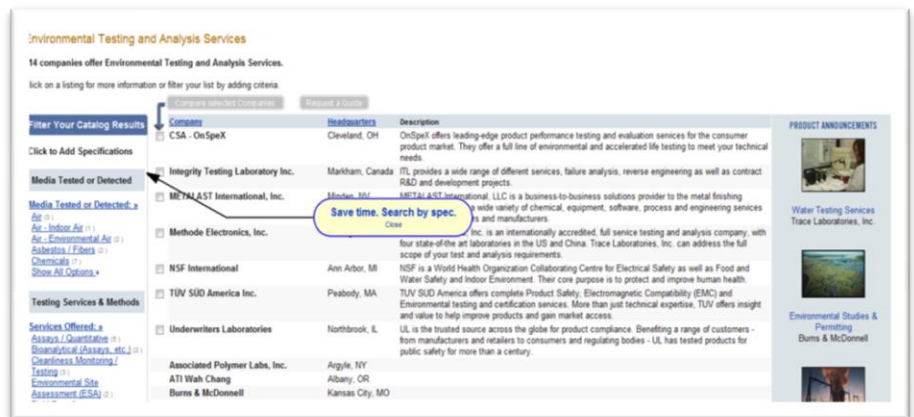
GLOBALSPEC

While directory searches have allowed users to search through listings in order to find the relevant information, they are often limited in that they are organized and maintained by people rather than spider software. For this reason, these listings are unable to find information from outside their own website. Vertical searches such as GlobalSpec however, are

able to implement the same search technologies of Google making it a more effective tool. Not only is GlobalSpec able to search through its paying listings, but also is able to pick up on other web content. This web content is then categorized along with its listings. GlobalSpec members are given the advantage by being able to collect lead information, list products and reach out to GlobalSpec's five million users.



GlobalSpec was created in 1996, and since has become the leading specialist in targeted search, information services and e-publishing serving the online industrial marketplace. Unlike other directories in the industry, GlobalSpec allows its users to search using a search tool bar as well as through product and supplier categories. After using the search option, GlobalSpec allows users to specify their search through spec information such as size, material and compatibility making it an efficient resource for searchers.



After the searcher has specified their search to their liking, GlobalSpec provides them with an alphabetical listing of companies that provide that product. Only after the searcher clicks the company's name, GlobalSpec then sends the users direct lead contact information to the listing company. The searcher can select to be contacted by the company, sent more product information, sent a quote, or sent more information about the company. The company is then able to use the contact information of the prospect for sales and follow up conversation as well as to improve their own mailing lists.





Users by Top Industry Segments	
Manufacturing	792,000
Engineering/ Technical Design Services	396,000
Aerospace/ Defense/ Government	352,000
Automotive/ Transportation	352,000
Oil/ Gas/ Utilities	264,000
Industrial Machinery/ Tools & Equipment	264,000
Electronics & Semiconductor	220,000
Medical/ Biotech/ Pharamceuticals	220,000
Educational/ Research Institutions	176,000
Communications	176,000
Instrumentation & Controls	132,000
Computer Systems/ Peripherals	132,000
Chemicals/ Plastics/ Rubbers	132,000

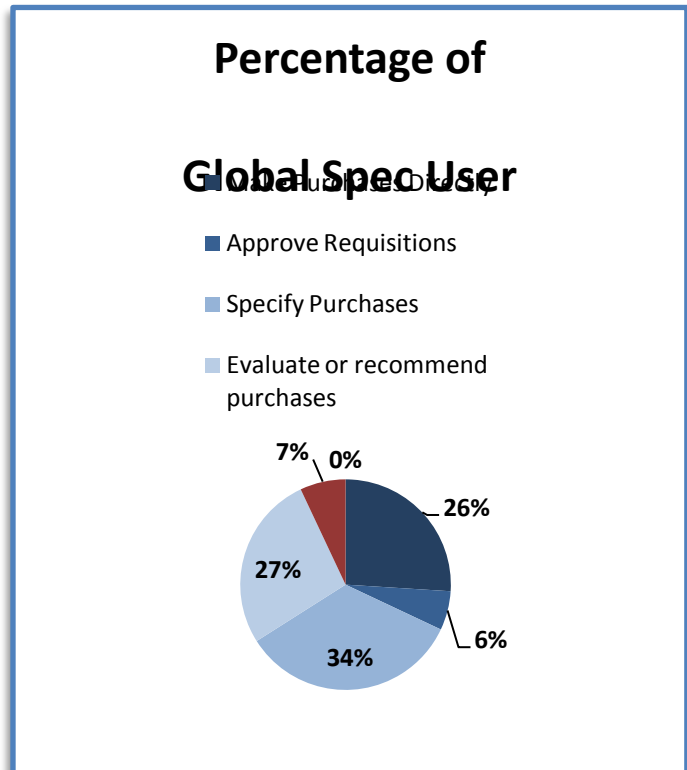
TARGETED AUDIENCES

With over five million users in the industrial sector, GlobalSpec offers its advertisers a broad reach of professionals in multiple industry sectors from general manufacturing to automotive to media to chemicals and many more. The following table provides specific information on users and the industries in which they identify themselves. GlobalSpec offers over 60 industry and application specific e-newsletter publications to its many members. These e-newsletters allow GlobalSpec users to target and test advertising in various sectors of the industrial market. These newsletters are by opt-in only, and therefore are sent only to those potential customers that are involved with a particular industry and the leads back can be re-used by the advertiser.

In addition, GlobalSpec users tend to be highly involved with the purchase decision process of their company. As depicted in the graph below, 93% of GlobalSpec users are involved in the decision making process when acquiring new equipment, services or software.

OPPORTUNITIES IN ADVERTISING

GlobalSpec offers multiple opportunities for advertising that allows companies to target audiences and promote specific products. From company listings to specialized e-newsletters, GlobalSpec is a marketing tool that allows companies to reach potential customers that are actively searching out their services. TrueNorth Marketing can help enhance a GlobalSpec customer’s services in the following ways.

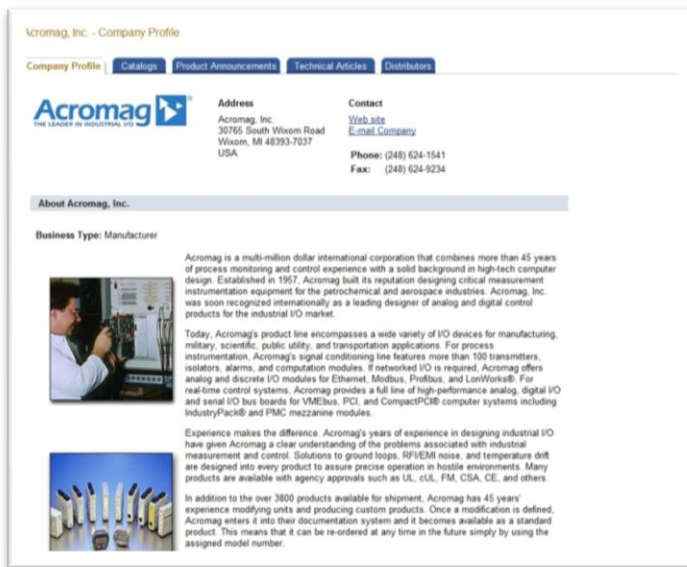




COMPANY LISTINGS

GlobalSpec offers extensive listings for its advertising companies. Unlike many directories in the industry that only offer contact information listings, GlobalSpec offers full company profiles, catalog, product announcement listings, links to company technical articles and video, and distributor listings. By offering this extensive information GlobalSpec becomes an informational resource to its users rather than just a directory listing. It also allows advertising companies to provide customers with more extensive information than just their product category and email address. This helps to guarantee that the leads that GlobalSpec produces are qualified and actually interested in the product line a company offers.

Because of the quality and extent of content within GlobalSpec, company listings on the site often appear on the first couple of pages in keyword searches. This helps them to reach out not only GlobalSpec customers, but those potential customers that are still currently using general search engines.



TrueNorth will be able to create content for the website that is cohesive with the company's branding efforts. In addition, content will be succinctly representative of the company's business and product value. With extensive experience in manufacturing and B2B communications, TrueNorth will be able to target messages towards business professionals in a manner that is both engaging and informative, increasing interest in the company's services.





PRODUCT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Product announcements are just one way in which customers can use GlobalSpec tools to reach out to the opted-in site community. There are two different types of product announcements. The first type of announcements are sent to professionals that identify themselves within a certain market segment. This “newsletter” shows pictures and short descriptions of various products within the industry, and links to a larger description and catalog page. Professionals that click the ad in order to receive more information have their contact information sent to the advertising company. In addition, the company can opt to take advantage of billboard product announcements, where a picture and short description of a product are posted on the side bar of searches in various categories. The product announcement once again links to a larger catalog page and the contact information is sent to the advertising company.



NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING

As before mentioned, GlobalSpec has over 60 application and industry oriented e-newsletters. These newsletters work much like the rest of the GlobalSpec site. When an advertisement is clicked the contact information of the user is sent to the advertising company. These advertisements are an effective way to test and penetrate new industry markets. With substantial subscribership (for example the Automotive Publication has over 60,000 subscribers and the Industrial Processing Equipment has 154,000 subscribers) advertising companies are able to decipher the amount of interest in various industries and applications in a cost effective manner.



CONCLUSION

While search engines have revolutionized the way users able to access and utilize the web, they are not an end all solution. Business to business customers looking for a more effective and efficient means of accessing industry relevant information are looking to vertical search engines. Services, such as GlobalSpec, provide users with the ability to search for specific services, products and equipment, down to their most minute specification, giving more power to industrial procurement officers. As decision makers become more and more comfortable with the technology, they are likely to turn more frequently to these types of technologies when researching vendors and manufacturers. Industrial companies wishing to remain in consideration will need to consider adding these technologies to their marketing initiatives.

With expertise in online communications, TrueNorth Marketing offers consulting services for customers looking to expand their marketing scope into new technologies such as GlobalSpec. Call TrueNorth at 585.423.9440 or email us at info@truenorth.biz for more information on how we can help your company take advantage of online opportunities such as GlobalSpec.

