

The Single, Easiest Branding Thing To Do On The Internet for Financial Practices

A free report provided by USA Financial®



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Introduction

I hate the fact that I have to start this report off with a disclosure...but it's imperative.

In general, I'm not a huge fan of "branding" for most financial professionals. Let's face some facts - you will never get the brand recognition of Coca-Cola, Nike, or any of the other big companies out there. **You just don't have the wallet.** No offense. Most *don't*. I've seen countless advisors throw good money after bad at what they called "branding" efforts – everything from billboards and TV commercials to signage at the local softball park.

In most instances, these efforts are costly and leave them with little to nothing to show for it. Frankly, their branding efforts hit too many of the wrong people. Case in point, I had to chuckle to myself recently when I saw that a wealth management firm had paid to hang a sponsor poster at a local softball field (I'm not kidding). I happen to know that the cost for an oversized poster to hang in the outfield is \$500. Granted, that's not *too* expensive, but I'm convinced this firm did not do their homework on who plays softball there. **This message-to-market match wasn't quite optimal.** This particular firm's ideal client is a 55-70 year old with some measurable wealth. Trust me when I say there weren't many of those types playing in the outfield (ironically, the logo on the poster was so small you needed to be in the outfield to even make it out).

This is an outrageous example, but this sort of thing plays out far more than it ought. The biggest danger with branding, from a marketers perspective, is that there isn't really a good way to track results. **It's a little bit like going to firing range and popping off a few rounds at a target while wearing a blindfold.**

You get the point...branding can be a challenging thing for financial professionals to harness.

Until now!

Effective Branding

The purpose of this report is to share with you one effective branding strategy you may wish to consider. When considering a branding strategy, there are a few things I always look at before investing dollars:

1. **Message-to-market match.** This holds true for any marketing activity, not just branding. It is imperative that the message you are serving up matches the needs, wants, and desires of those receiving it. Moreover, for the financial services industry, we want the market to be one that we serve. There's no sense building a brand with 20 year old college students if your target market is retirees.
2. **Pay for performance.** There are not too many outlets that allow you to pay for performance. Nor are there many outlets that will let you get **branding for free**. It exists today.
3. **Reinforce your brand in multiple ways.** To be honest, I don't care much about getting as much exposure as possible to the masses. What I care more about is **getting the MOST amount of exposure to those that matter most – my target clientele**. Once somebody is identified as a target client, that's when your brand awareness matters; reinforcing it and hammering it in later is crucial.
4. **Cost Control.** Unfortunately, a lot of branding efforts are so costly that financial professionals have to pull the plug before they can get the necessary repetition. And, frankly, with some branding efforts, there isn't an effective cost control measure in place.

The OPPORTUNITY

The four items laid out above are rarely ALL met with any branding effort. However, there exists an opportunity today that meets those key points and all advisors should explore.

And...it's easy.

Unless you've lived under a rock for 15 years, you've heard of a little company called Google. They dominate the internet search world. Recent reports I've read suggest they have 75-80% market share amongst all search engines. Their brand is so powerful it's used as a noun **and** a verb...and the word was made up. **Google provides an incredible opportunity for marketers...**and there is one that I'd like to spend some time on today.

A quick lesson – Google makes money through advertisers paying for “clicks” on their websites. I won't bore you with all of the details on this, but when Google came onto the scene, they introduced an entirely new, **multi-billion dollar** industry geared specifically at search engine marketing. Search engine marketing experts are popping up all over the place. In many instances, newspaper media outlets have added search engine marketing/media consultancy as a saving grace to their dying print business. It's big. **Real big.**

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At any rate, let's get refocused on the opportunity. A couple years back, Google introduced a new program within their search engine marketing platform. It's called Retargeting/Remarketing. It's a marketers dream.

I'll explain it in a "non-financial world" application.

Let's say you are looking to go on a vacation in Hawaii. You search "Hawaiian vacations" and stumble into a website called "Vacation Hawaii" that specializes in vacations in Maui. You search around on the site, punch in some dates and get some pricing ideas. Let's just say you aren't quite ready to purchase that day. You go on with your normal routine on the internet. Next thing you know, you see advertisements from the "Vacation Hawaii" site all over your internet experience. Everywhere you go, you see banner ads promoting this site. That wasn't just a coincidence. You were **retargeted** by that site.

Retail businesses like this know that they have a short window of time to acquire you as a customer. They'll likely retarget you for anywhere from a week to a month. It really depends upon the type of purchase. The best part...**It doesn't cost that company a dime until you "re-click" on their site. They continue to grow their brand and remind you about their company and offer without spending a single red cent.**

Think about the value of this for your practice.

Every person who visits your site (or multiple sites) is likely someone that you might want to do business with. Moreover, it could be an existing client with whom you would like to continue to remain "top of mind." (Think referrals). By implementing a retargeting strategy, you can continue to put your brand, message, and offers in front of them. And you'll only pay when your ad is clicked. Cost for clicks will vary, but you can usually figure around a dollar or two. In addition, the average "click through rate" for a campaign like this is around .05%. So think about it like this: your brand, logo, message, or offer will be shown 2,000 times for a buck or two. That branding is much better served going to those people that have visited your site than to some random people who likely don't meet your target client profile (say, at a softball field or something).



Let's quickly go through how this fits into each of the four items I mentioned above.

1. **Message to market match.** Your message can be as simple as your logo and slogan, or it can be a special offering to those people (a report, etc.). And the market is YOUR target clients and prospects.
2. **Pay for performance.** With this program, you only pay for traffic that is driven to your site. More importantly, you don't pay for those that are **shown the ad, but decide not to click**. To be honest, this will be most of the people...but your branding and advertising is still shown to them, regardless of whether they click. This is cost effective branding.
3. **Reinforce your brand in multiple ways.** The idea behind Google's retargeting campaign is to reinforce your brand and market to those prospects and clients that have already raised their hands. You can continue to market to visitors of your site for months on end. This isn't magical...Google places what is known as a "cookie" on the person's computer, and it is married up with a code that is embedded within your site. You decide how long you want the cookie to stay there, thus determining the length of the retargeting campaign to each visitor.
4. **Cost Control.** You have complete control over how much you want to spend on this campaign. You can set daily maximums on how much you are willing to pay. Additionally, you can set a maximum on how much you are willing to pay per click. Keep in mind, Google goes through an auction process to determine which ads are shown. The less you are willing to bid, the lower your number of impressions will be. There is a bit of science to this part of the program.

The FLAW

I believe in full transparency. There is one flaw that exists with the Google retargeting initiative. It is reliant on you having traffic to your site. Translation – if you don't have a site, or don't get much traffic to your site, **you're dead on arrival**. Driving traffic to your site is a topic for another day.

Our firm spends countless hours each month working with advisor's websites – everything from search engine optimization to analyzing the analytics of site traffic. If retargeting is something you want to explore, we invite you to have a conversation with us about how we can help.

The NEXT Step

On a regular basis, we fly advisors in from across the country to take a peek under the hood at what we do. We have only scratched the surface in this report. **We invite you to take the next step and contact us. We can be reached directly at 888-444-0125. As a good first step, I'd invite you to contact one of our Relationship VP's.** If we both feel it would be valuable to have you fly in and learn more about us, then we'll pick up the tab so you can "kick the tires" on our operation. If what you've heard sounds intriguing, give us a call at 888-444-0125.

In the meantime, happy Googling!

Thanks for taking the time today to read this report. I hope it was helpful.

Mark Mersman

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P.S. If you think this is something you want to integrate right away, don't delay. We'll get into a discussion on the step-by-step process to implement this simple strategy.

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