



WHITE PAPER:  
BEING FOUND IN WEB SEARCHES VIA NATURAL LANGUAGE SEO

*Why it's now time for the  
marketing department to  
have a say in corporate  
web site management*

**Network PR**  
Sydney, Australia



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background	2
The Emergence of a New Mass Media	4
Introduction	5
The Size and Scope of This New Media Channel	6
The Roll of Search Engines	7
Using This New Media	9
If it's Media, Then How Does it Work?	10
Paid Vs Unpaid SEO	11
Where Are The Marketing Dollars Going?	13
How to Use This Media to Reach Your Audience	14
SEO and its Importance	15
Natural Language Searching is a Three-Step Process	16
It's a Campaign, not a Project	19
Results of Implementing Natural Language SEO	20
Conclusion	21
About the Authors	22



## BACKGROUND

*Consumers are, for the first time, openly telling whole industries what they are looking for.*



People talk about how much more power is in the hands of the consumer than ever before. And manifestations of this abound in areas of internet banking, online shopping and the emergence of Internet TV.

It is also manifesting itself in the way that consumers are taking control of the web, demanding and receiving more and richer content, delivered to them where and when they want it. For many of them, the web is seen as their media of choice, with research from the Pew Internet and American Life project showing that more people in the US now use the web as their primary source of news and information.

This quantum shift in the way the web is used, from static web pages that had to be advertised to be found, to a dynamic media channel where anyone can now be a publisher, has reached the point where organisations will need to pass 'ownership' of their web content and publishing strategies from the IT department to the marketing department.

The catalyst for this has been the maturation of search engines and their universal appeal to B2B and B2C web searchers. Consumers are, for the first time, openly telling whole industries what they are looking for in the form of the key words they use in their searches.

Never before has business been able to know exactly what their customers and potential customers are looking for. Yet few businesses are in a position, or have sufficient understanding, to satisfy these requests for information - simply because their web sites have either been technically created in ways that make them difficult for search engines to find, or their IT departments make it difficult for other departments to upload and publish highly optimised content to their web site.

To date, most Australian companies wanting to undertake any form of Search Engine Marketing (SEM) have looked at ways of gaining prominence in rankings that *avoid*, rather than *address* the nature of their web sites. This has involved the easy advertising or direct marketing routes of Pay Per Click (PPC) and sponsored link campaigns. Australian figures from Frost & Sullivan's *The Australian Paid Search Industry 2006*, show that 80 percent of all Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is currently being undertaken as paid-for results. But whilst these campaigns are easy to buy and easy to measure, they are at odds with current web-use research.

Recent Australian research undertaken by *Australian Online Search Habits 2006* found that 85 percent of Australian searchers prefer natural language results. This is in line with recent global research from organisations such as Bulldog Reporter's PR University and MarketingProfs.com which report that 80 percent of searchers prefer results that are delivered via natural (sometimes referred to as 'organic') language optimisation.

In the USA, businesses have been implementing more natural language SEO initiatives to address this clear consumer preference for search results that are delivered by the search engine's algorithm rather than the search engine company's

advertising department.

Australian businesses need to address this situation if they want to satisfy the needs of local consumers who are now searching in the same ways as their overseas counterparts. In many instances this will mean businesses reviewing their web strategy must have a close look at what they are publishing, why they are publishing it, the audiences they are trying to reach and who within the organisation has control of the site itself.

This White Paper outlines how, with the web now acting as a true media channel, companies need to understand that although the power is certainly in the hands of the consumer (or searcher) the ability to satisfy their requests (searches) in credible and relevant ways lies in marketing disciplines and activities rather than technology.

The corporate web baton needs to be handed on.



## THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW MASS MEDIA



## INTRODUCTION

In the mid 1990s the world wide web was of such immaturity that web access and email access were offered separately. Few organisations had a web site and of those that did, content ranged from static pages giving little more than contact details at worst to 'brochure-ware' at best.

*This clearly places the web squarely in the role of media channel.*

Today, the web is being spoken of in terms of a mass media channel. A recent survey commissioned by The Online Publishers Association in the US and undertaken by Ball State University, described the web as a "mass media", supporting that claim with findings that show that "the web takes up between 20 and 25 percent of consumers' overall *media* time". It also showed that "web users tend to have greater buying power than television users".

This clearly places the web squarely in the role of media channel. In just over ten years the web has matured from an unstructured, poorly populated 'directory' to an information channel that rivals the reach of television. And television stations are aware of this, even to the point where, in Australia, Channel 9 and Channel 7 have taken financial interests in popular sites.



## THE SIZE AND SCOPE OF THIS NEW MEDIA CHANNEL

*... the web is fast becoming the media of choice for more and more Australians.*



A US study by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, found that the internet is increasingly becoming a primary source of news for Americans, outpacing local and national newspapers.

When asked where they got their news from, 43 percent of respondents said the internet, greater than the 38 percent who said local newspapers and the 17 percent who said national newspapers.

The Australian Galaxy Research findings show that when it comes to news and current affairs, 66 percent of people with access to an internet connection (approximately 65 percent of the population) turned to the internet, a far higher figure than those for TV (23 percent), radio (7 percent) and newspapers (3 percent). Although this survey was undertaken among people with an internet connection, there is a clear message in the results; from a purely 'news source' viewpoint, the web is fast becoming the media of choice for more and more Australians.

However, a true media channel has more than news, it has opinion in the form of columnists, it provides information and entertainment, it has feedback in the form of letters to the editor and it has the power to change people's perceptions and behaviours, especially in relation to purchasing behaviour.

The web as a media channel is also showing signs of such power over brands. A Dieringer Group survey in the US showed that even as far back as 2002, 40 million consumers changed their mind about brands as a result of online information. The survey result indicated that "Information obtained on the web and personal online experience is modifying brand opinions and purchasing behaviour, regardless of whether the final purchase is made online or offline."

In a clear call to local marketers, Forrester Research's study, *"The State of Consumers and Technology: Benchmark 2006"*, looked at similar behaviour patterns and highlighted just how key audiences are using the web as their means of researching purchase decisions as well as their propensity to actually purchase online.

Some of the top consumer search categories highlighted in the Galaxy Research findings include personal electronics (90 percent), furniture and appliances (72 percent), financial services and insurance (70 percent) and health and pharmaceuticals (60 percent).

The richness and diversity of product and news content on the web, the ability to publish your own opinions, the ability to join in forums to share experiences, the vast array of sites offering everything from a home loan to a holiday, makes the web arguably the most extensive media resource the world has ever seen.

With such an array of information available, users have turned to search engines as the means of locating the information that is relevant to them. Search engines are being used as the media editors, deciding what is, and what is not, relevant to an enquiry. And today's search engines are far removed from their early forebears.



## THE ROLE OF SEARCH ENGINES

*It is a mixture of paid and unpaid content... much the same as advertising and editorial in print media.*



When people first started searching for information on the web there were no search engines. You had to know the URL of the organisation whose site you wanted to visit. It was a slow, laborious process. That changed in the very early 1990s with the introduction of a search directory called Archie. Archie, and its contemporaries Veronica and Jughead attempted to organise information on the web via manual indexing.

These early tools were developed more to find relevant sites than relevant content, simply because at that time there was little content of any worth on web sites. However as more and more meaningful content populated the web, what people could search for became much broader. The content was out there, but with search engines such as Archie, it was hard to find.

The first version of search engines displaying any similarities to those of today were probably Excite and AltaVista which launched in 1994.

This represented the 'coming of age' for search engines, with many of this generation's engines employing various forms of 'natural language' searching to achieve greater relevance in the results presented.

Today, search engines and the entities that own them are both popular and profitable, with many of their features and attributes mirroring much of the traditional publishing world. More importantly, many search engines and sites are indeed owned by media. In Australia this manifests itself as ninemsn and Yahoo7.

To best see the manifestation of the media nature of the web, take the world's leading search engine, Google, as an example. Dissecting a Google results page (used by 76 percent of Australian searchers, according to online competitive intelligence company Hitwise) you discover that it is a mixture of paid and unpaid content... much the same as advertising and editorial in print media.

As with traditional media, there are two ways that you can gain space on a Google page, you can go through the advertising department (PPC and SEM) or through the editorial department in the form of the search engine's algorithm.

And it will be the individual searchers, and what they are actually looking for, that will have a profound impact on which of the two paths (advertising or editorial), or indeed what combination of each, an organisation takes when assessing its SEO options.

A 2006 survey by Henley Centre and AOL found that more people believe search engine results have higher importance when considering a product or service than personal recommendations or information found in traditional media.

73 percent of respondents listed search engines as being important compared to 67 percent for personal recommendations, 34 percent for television and print media.

In answer to a similar question posed by Galaxy Research, 79 percent of Australian respondents said they used the internet as a daily source of information, 68 percent used television, and newspaper usage was 33 percent.

Search engines are fast becoming the 'editor-of-choice' for the majority of people around the world, including Australia.

The growing sophistication of usage of search engines is also impacting on many 'power brands' which up until now have been able, through their sheer brand awareness and appeal, to encourage people straight to their site to buy their products.

An example of this would be airlines. Australia's national carrier, Qantas, is such a brand and makes buying an airfare or holiday online fast, simple and easy. But as consumers continue to realise the power they now have, many potential travellers are looking elsewhere to see what other airfare or holiday deals may be on the web.

While such a power brand is able to retain its awareness and appeal, it is safe to assume that its online business will remain strong. However, once the importance of a brand becomes outweighed by other factors such as cost, flight schedules or new competitors, even power brands will have to do more with search engine optimisation to ensure customers continue to reach their site.



**USING THIS NEW MEDIA**



## IF IT'S MEDIA, THEN HOW DOES IT WORK?

*You need to identify just who, on the web, makes up the publishers, editors and audiences.*

Traditional media comprises three main roles, being:

<b>EDITORS</b>	These are people controlling the content. They can source that content from journalists, media releases, industry commentators, or readers/viewers/listeners.
<b>PUBLISHERS</b>	These are the people who finance the particular publication or broadcaster with an expectation of making money. Publishers usually employ the editors.
<b>AUDIENCES</b>	The readers, listeners and viewers. Their preferences are vast, covering everything from general news, to special interest information and sheer entertainment.

To understand and use the web as a media channel you need to think about it in media terms. You need to identify just who, on the web, makes up the publishers, editors and audiences. Figure 1 illustrates this point.

	NEWSPAPERS	TV/RADIO	WEB
PUBLISHER	Media Company	Media Company	Your Company
EDITOR	Person	Person	Search Engine
AUDIENCE	Reader	Viewer/Listener	Searcher

Figure 1

As can be seen, the nature and ownership of the individual roles change considerably on the web. Anyone can be a publisher. A piece of technology (and the people behind it) is the editor. These are significant and obvious changes in roles. However there are also significant, but far less obvious, changes in the role of the audience that must be appreciated.

No-one knows what the content of a newspaper or magazine may be until they open and read it. And no-one knows the content of a television or radio broadcast is until they turn on and tune in. In each case they know that some content may be relevant to them, but they don't know exactly how much or of what nature that may be.

When that same person turns to the web for information, they know exactly what they are looking for, and ask for it in exact terms. These terms are called 'keywords' and form a part of how a search engine works and, more importantly, a significant part of how organisations must work if their information is to be found on the web.



## PAID VS UNPAID SEO

*Major search engine providers face the same conundrum as traditional media.*

Major search engine providers face the same conundrum as traditional media; how to provide credible, relevant content while still being able to make money. Print media does this by balancing editorial content of credibility and relevance with paid advertising for revenue.

The advertising content in print media also gives organisations the ability to publish information that may not be seen as newsworthy by an editor, but is information of significant importance for the organisation to impart to an audience. This could be anything from a two-day retail sale to an on-going corporate awareness campaign.

The difference with paying for results through the use of search engines is that the 'advertisement' has to be relevant, and this poses problems for the search engine companies. What constitutes relevance when it is something crafted to be paid for rather than being found to be relevant via the search engine company's own algorithm?

Search engine companies do vet paid results for relevance, but there is little question about them being as relevant to a searcher as a natural language result. For instance, someone searching for a hotel in Queensland may well find paid results for bikinis and car hire, and this of course is pure advertising.

There is no longer any doubt that the web in use, design and business model, is a true media channel, and therefore traditional methods and resources should be employed to use this channel to its maximum potential.

Advertising and media agencies are already taking control of paid results through the use of Search Engine Marketing (SEM) and Pay Per Click (PPC) campaigns. Frost & Sullivan, in its *'The Australian Paid Search Industry 2006'* report found that there were already 40 SEM companies and agencies operating in this market and that there were over 13,500 PPC advertisers active in the country. However, the increase in the numbers of people both selling and purchasing PPC solutions is matched however by an increase in problems.

As an example, in June 2006, following a successful class action suit in the US, Yahoo was forced to compensate PPC advertisers who had been exposed to fraudulent click-throughs as far back as January 2004. The following month, in a similar class action suit, Google's settlement offer was accepted by a US State judge.

Yet despite large fines and settlements, the major problem with either of the paid models is not the financial risk. Rather it is one of result 'relevance', and it's only going to get worse.

For the web searcher, the increasing role played by advertising's involvement in search results is only going to further increase the credibility gap between natural language results and paid results. In traditional media, editorial content gained through public relations activities is acknowledged as having five times the credibility of a paid advertisement. For web searchers wanting specific results, this 5x factor is likely to increase dramatically.

The answer therefore for organisations wanting to have their products and services found, and in having them considered as credible and relevant results, is to master the challenges of employing natural language search engine optimisation.



## WHERE ARE THE MARKETING DOLLARS GOING?

*Between 70 percent and 80 percent of all clicks are coming from natural language search results*



According to MarketingSherpa, the size of the total global search market has risen from US\$3.5 billion in 2004 to US\$6.1 billion in 2005 with natural language SEO accounting for 12 percent of that figure - up from 7% of the 2004 figure.

According to Frost & Sullivan, the Australian paid search industry was valued at \$124 million in 2005 and is predicted to grow to \$380 million in 2009. The current spend on PPC campaigns represents 20 percent of the total online advertising market.

Experience in the US with web search behaviour indicates that while the majority of the search market budget is going to PPC and SEM solutions, between 70 percent and 80 percent of all clicks are coming from natural language search results.

Recent summits and conferences undertaken by such organisations as Bulldog Reporter's PR University and MarketingProfs.com, involving SEO industry professionals, all indicate that there is a definite shift to natural language SEO given its far greater level of click results and perceived credibility.

This credibility factor was echoed by the findings of Galaxy Research, with Australian respondents emphatically saying that natural language search results were vastly preferred to paid listings. 92 percent of respondents said natural language results were 'more likely to be relevant', 88 percent claimed they were 'more likely to be trusted' with 88 percent also saying they were 'more likely to influence those searching'.

In the US, people even view paid links negatively, with eMarketer reporting 29 percent of people being 'annoyed' by them and 66 percent distrusting them.

It appears that the simplicity of the paid solutions makes these products an easy sell. Natural language SEO on the other hand often requires changes in the way an organisation's web site is built, managed and updated. However, making those changes is essential if search result success is to be achieved.



## HOW TO USE THIS MEDIA TO REACH YOUR AUDIENCE



## SEO AND ITS IMPORTANCE

### *Audiences distinguish between advertisements, advertorials and editorial.*

As with all media, audiences distinguish between advertisements, advertorials and editorial, associating different levels of credibility to each. The major difference that occurs with web audiences is that they know what they are looking for. It is not like opening the morning newspaper or the consumer lifestyle magazine to see what's in it. Web searchers use specific words and phrases to find, as quickly as possible, what they are looking for.

Therefore relevance becomes a key factor when viewing search results.

Research indicates that natural language results are far more valuable to a searcher than paid or sponsored results. In fact a recent study undertaken by Penn State School of Information Sciences and Technology showed an extremely strong preference for natural language search results. The researchers found that on more than 80 percent of the searches, the study participants went first to the natural language results, and that sponsored links were viewed first only 6 percent of the time.

Despite the fact that the researchers had created the identical content for both the natural language and sponsored link results, participants rated 52 percent of the natural language results as relevant against 42 percent for the identical content in the sponsored results!

Google and other major search engines segregate paid results into a separate area of the page, clearly identifying them by position as not being a result found through natural language searching. This segregation of editorial and advertising results is one of the reasons why Google is the world's most popular search engine.

Again, this mimics to a large degree the ways in which traditional media is viewed by the public at large. Most national and metropolitan dailies are read mainly for news and views. Their advertising content is more corporate in nature with few retail offers. Magazines on the other hand tend to carry advertising and advertorials of a more retail nature and readers respond to both the editorial and advertising.

It appears that search engine companies may be headed in this same direction, with some being used predominantly for news and information, and some being used more in a lifestyle oriented manner. However, regardless which search engine is used by a searcher, it is still the results coming from natural language searches that have the greatest relevance and credibility for the searcher.



## NATURAL LANGUAGE SEARCHING IS A THREE-STEP PROCESS

*In public relations terms, this is no different to the practice of issues management.*



Because a natural language approach to web search ranking is akin to the editorial approach required for gaining editorial coverage in traditional media channels, for success on the web it is essential that the same process is followed.

This requires a three-step approach involving:

- Discovery - media, market and audience research
- Optimisation - content structure and language style
- Publishing - strategy, techniques and technology

### **Discovery**

As markets and individual products develop, so too do the words people use when searching. The keywords used today may well be different in three to six months time. The imperative here is to have a process that enables an organisation to continually refresh what the current keywords are over time. All language is fluid, and none more so than the language associated with consumer electronics or enterprise technology.

For example, three years ago, keywords associated with digital cameras would not have included the words and phrases 'Single Lens Reflex' or 'Bluetooth' or 'WiFi'. These are newer words important to searchers following the development of the technology underpinning digital cameras and market awareness of the importance of these factors in their search parameters.

In public relations terms, this is no different to the practice of issues management - tracking an issue and ensuring that the materials you pitch to media are in line with the current development of the issue.

### **Optimisation**

Where a public relations agency will optimise a press release by ensuring that key corporate or product messages and, where possible, third-party endorsements are contained within it, copy for web publishing needs to be addressed from a similar optimisation perspective.

This requires an understanding of how search engines work. For instance, the inclusion of a keyword in the body copy of an article will have less affect on a search engine's ranking than that same keyword in a heading.

External links to an individual page or an entire site also become important, playing another critical role in the article being able to be ranked highly by most search engines which view these links as third-party endorsements.

For organisations with an active public relations program, this will often mean that separate media releases need to be produced for the new web media channel. However, there is nothing new in this. Public relations departments and agencies are already crafting different material for the same release going out to print, radio and

*Such organisations are  
doomed to localised  
web searching  
anonymity.*

television media. Print media require details behind the story or issue, radio needs currency, contention or immediacy, and television requires a message presented as a three-second sound bite. Web media material is just one more repurposing of your messaging content.

### **Publishing**

Publishing optimised content on the web requires technology. But so too does taking a photo that will accompany a press release to metropolitan media, or the production of a Video News Release (VNR) for television or simply sending a media release by email in the form of an HTML file.

As long as organisations demystify the web, and think of it in terms of just another media channel, then effectively publishing optimised content via the web can be a reality.

In practice however, this reality can be something that is limited by the control of others.

Because the marketing department of an organisation wanting to be found on search engines is, as discussed earlier, effectively the media publisher, the situation often arises where the IT department (think printing room of a newspaper) in reality holds the power.

An example would be the Australian office of a multinational organisation that has no input in, or control over, updating the content of a primarily global corporate website. Or, in purely local terms, an Australian organisation whose website and its content management system (CMS) is managed jealously and judiciously by its IT department.

Such organisations are doomed to localised web searching anonymity. Why? Partly because Australian web searchers predominantly search for Australian pages only, and partly because keywords can change by geographic region.

Consider that in the footwear industry, thongs in Australia are flip-flops in the UK and Europe and that an Esky in Australia is a Chilly-Bin in New Zealand and you will begin to understand the importance of local control over the CMS if you are to use the web effectively as a media channel.

That however is just a small part that technology plays in gaining a high ranking on search engines. Many other factors also come into play. The major search engines today include in their proprietary ranking algorithms the number of other web pages that link to your site. To them, this is a measure of credibility that elevates a site to a position of high relevance and therefore ranking.

Because search engine companies are, in themselves, technology-based, technology tricks are most likely to be counterproductive in the ranking processes.

In early February 2006, Google reduced BMW's German ranking to zero following the car giant's attempt to influence its ranking results using technology 'inappropriately'. BMW's web site contained large amounts of JavaScript code (unreadable by Google) and the company created what are known as 'doorway pages'. Content for these pages was heavily populated with the keywords most used in searching for used cars.

The problem was that when a searcher clicked on the results link, the link didn't go to the doorway page, but straight to BMW's web site. This activity was deemed by Google to be unfair, as the ranked doorway page could not be accessed by the searcher.

Therefore extreme diligence should be placed upon just how much technology is employed, and in what ways, in an attempt to gain a higher search ranking result.

The techniques and technology required for effective natural language SEO can be seen in Figure 2



Figure 2



## IT'S A CAMPAIGN, NOT A PROJECT

*Search engine algorithms are continually refined to bring relevance to search results.*

Many people address SEO from a project perspective however, whilst the initial development of any SEO is a project in itself, the *Discovery*, *Optimise* and *Publish* phases have to be repeated as an on-going campaign.

There is little point in publishing optimised content developed through research into keywords if you don't then measure the results and refine the content to achieve even greater ranking success.

As discussed earlier, keywords change with the introduction of new products and technologies into the marketplace, and you need to be aware of these changes if you wish to maintain a high ranking on search engines.

Two other factors impact on how you rank on search engines are the volume of information being published on the web and the way search engine algorithms are continually refined to bring relevance to search results. Both of these will impact on your ability to rank highly and must be addressed as part of your on-going SEO efforts.



However, this is a normal part of PR activities in all other media... monitoring and measuring campaign success, reassessing issues and trends surrounding your product, and then publishing further materials that reflect these changes. It is logical therefore to include these practices when dealing with the web as a media channel.



## RESULTS OF IMPLEMENTING NATURAL LANGUAGE SEO

*Southwest Airlines claims that organic SEO directly resulted in US\$80,000 in ticket sales.*

The following are two examples of the results that can be achieved by the use of natural language SEO. The first is from the US and shows what can be achieved when it is used as a tactical tool for a short-term media campaign. The second is Australian and demonstrates how consistently high search rankings can be gained and maintained over time for a corporate web site.

In early 2004, Southwest Airlines (the largest domestic carrier in the US) embarked on a natural language SEO implementation specifically tailored around a cheap fare to Philadelphia that the company was about to announce.

They followed a stepped process that involved keyword research, content optimisation, a hyperlink strategy and a new media distribution plan. Southwest Airlines produced and distributed optimised media materials in October 2004 and the company claims that it directly resulted in US\$80,000 in ticket sales and coverage in more than a dozen media outlets

Locally, Network PR (the author of this white paper) and its technology partner applied the strategy, process and technology described in this document to its own corporate web site, [www.networkpr.com.au](http://www.networkpr.com.au), in 2005.

It immediately began ranking on the first page of Google .au/ searches for well over twenty keyword search phrases including:

- IT PR Australia
- B2B PR Australia
- PR consultants Sydney
- Corporate communications Australia
- Consumer public relations agency

Often the optimisation of our content and the way it is published is seen to have such high relevance by Google's search engine that Network PR appears multiple times on the first page of search results.

Network PR constantly monitors and refreshes the latest search terms so that its rankings remain high, and the company continues to optimise new content, and publishes materials in ways that increase its ability to be found by the editors of this new mass media.



## CONCLUSION

*There is a strong role for public relations to enhance the online visibility of a brand.*



Up until now, companies wishing to rank highly in search engine results have taken either a technology approach or paid for prominence via paid or sponsored listings.

These two routes are being overtaken in terms of cost to the organisation and relevance in the eyes of the searcher.

The web is now being viewed as a mass media channel and, as such, SEO needs to be addressed from a total media perspective rather than as a form of online advertising or marketing.

Results pages of most search engines are displaying a number of similarities to pages in most newspapers and magazines, being a combination of editorial content (natural language search results) and advertising content (PPC and Sponsored content).

The main difference between the web and traditional media is the way in which the audience views each. In traditional media the audience is somewhat passive, reading a newspaper or magazine, or watching television to see if there is anything of interest. With the web, the audience is more active, searching for specific information, using specific words and phrases. Therefore relevance to a specific set of keywords, and how that relevance is presented to the searcher, becomes the Holy Grail of SEO.

Organisations need to examine which path or combination of paths is right for their organisation and its products and services.

While SEM and PPC revenues are growing, natural language searching is now growing at a faster rate, with most web commentators leaning towards natural language methods as being the most effective means of achieving high and credible search result ranking.

The two greatest challenges facing organisations wishing to undertake natural language search engine optimisation are:

- The IT 'culture' that has created and still guards corporate web sites
- Selecting the right partner to implement such a campaign

In selecting a partner to deliver an effective natural language SEO solution, organisations should, for possibly the first time in Australia, look to public relations. The mirroring of so many traditional media attributes by the web, dictates that there is a strong role for innovative public relations agencies, in partnership with technology, to play a role in SEO strategy and execution.



## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Grant Common** is the managing director of Sydney public relations consultancy, Network PR and is the editor of industry newsletter and web resource, PR Influences ([www.prinfluences.com.au](http://www.prinfluences.com.au)).

Grant is a Member or Fellow of professional PR bodies in Australia, New Zealand and the United States, and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

**Geoff Hoddinott** is Network PR's B2B and IT account director. His background is in advertising (creative director) and marketing (freelance), with a leaning towards technology companies, products and services.

Geoff works daily on technology clients and has been a finals judge at the 2005 and 2006 Consensus Australian Software Awards.

**Jenni Beattie** is Network PR's New Media and Research Manager. Prior to joining Network PR, she set up News Ltd's research division to service senior management and introduced online news database technologies to the organisation.

Jenni was also the first local employee of CARMA International, the leading media analysis company, introducing formal media research to organisations such as Coca-Cola, Telstra, BHP, NRMA and AMLC.

## ABOUT NETWORK PR

Network PR is a Sydney-based PR agency which has a specialist unit that applies research-based web content, media, publishing and distribution strategies to give organisations the optimum ranking in 'natural' listings on key search engines.'

**An Executive Summary of Galaxy Research's *Australian Online Search Habits 2006* can be downloaded at [www.networkpr.com.au](http://www.networkpr.com.au)**

Copyright © 2006, Network Communications (Australia) Pty Ltd. All rights reserved. This document is provided for information purposes only and the contents are subject to change without notice. This document is not warranted to be error-free, nor subject to any other warranties or conditions. This document may not be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, for any purpose, without our prior written permission.

Network PR Level 12, 210 Clarence St, Sydney 2000 NSW Australia

T (02) 8268 2200 E [network.syd@networkpr.com.au](mailto:network.syd@networkpr.com.au) W [www.networkpr.com.au](http://www.networkpr.com.au)