



Ahead Of The Web Marketing Services

Search Engine Optimization Specialists

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NEWS RELEASE

NEW WESTMINSTER, April 16, 2004:

A local company is preparing for the demise of the Yellow Pages.

For decades consumers have turned to the yellow page directories as their first choice for researching household purchases. But now it seems that huge numbers of Canadian consumers are letting their ‘fingers do the walking’ on their computer keyboards instead of their phonebooks.

In a major release today, StatsCan identifies a “big gain” for E-Commerce and says that Canadians are using the Internet for commerce more than ever before (2003 online consumer sales rose 51% to \$5.5 billion, while B2B sales rose 35% to \$13.1 billion¹). Another release at the end of 2003 found that Canadians are increasingly using the Internet for researching their household purchase decisions, for everything from automobiles, to travel, to moving companies and personal services. An estimated 4.5 million households, according to StatsCan, “used the Internet to support purchasing decisions, either by window shopping or by placing online orders.”²

Jade Burnside, President of *Ahead Of The Web Marketing Services*, says this trend signals the end of an era for the traditional yellow page directories. “Static, paper-bound directories can’t compete with the continuously updated real-time results being provided by search engines like Google. Consumers are recognizing this and are voting with their purchasing dollars” Now many businesses are scrambling to stake their claim in the search engines because that’s where the consumers are going.

Households in British Columbia were Canada's second largest market for electronic commerce next to Ontario. These statistics are compelling, even for businesses that have websites but don’t actually sell online – in addition to online spending, over 800,000 households made walk-in or telephone purchases from vendors they had found by researching online.

Getting listed in the search engines has become as important to a business’ success as being listed in the phone book – and may soon surpass it. Having a website won’t help at all if it’s listed as result number 300 in Google behind all of its competitors.

Ahead of the Web helps companies get listed on that all-important first page of results in Google. The New Westminister based company provides ‘Search Engine Optimization’ for websites, which is a process of fine-tuning the text and other elements of the site to make it more ‘readable’ and attractive to Internet search engines. If the search engines like what they read on the site, they reward it by listing it high in the search results – ideally on the first page.

Businesses can really benefit by diversifying their marketing eggs into different baskets. The experience of Ahead of the Web’s clients has shown that they can reduce their expenditure on yellow page directories and still increase their overall sales simply by focusing more on marketing their websites. Burnside illustrates this point by noting that “we have clients that have gone from being virtually dependent on yellow book listings 6 years ago to the point where 85% of their sales now come through their website.”

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¹ Source StatsCan April 16, 2004 - <http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/040416/d040416a.htm>

² Source StatsCan December 11, 2003 - <http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/031211/d031211b.htm>