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## Online Marketing Effectiveness

JUNE 12, 2009

Search is first.

What is the best way to generate sales online

While the answer may vary slightly depend of the ad budget, a [Forbes](#) study says mark sizes should start with search.

Forty-eight percent of marketers said that : optimization (SEO) was the best method fo conversions online. More than one-half of n \$1 million agreed.

### Most Effective Online Marketing Tactic for Generating Conversions According to US\* Senior-Level Marketing Executives, by Budget Size, February-March 2009 (% of respondents)

	\$1 million+ (n=49)	All respondents (n=112)
SEO	53%	48%
E-mail and e-newsletter	39%	46%
Pay-per-click/search	43%	32%
Behavioral targeting	27%	21%
Site or page sponsorship	14%	20%
Viral marketing	12%	15%
Ad networks	10%	12%
Pay-per-impression ads on digital publications	14%	10%
Video ads	10%	6%
Other	2%	3%

Note: \*respondents were primarily based in the US  
Source: [Forbes](#), "2009 Ad Effectiveness Survey," June 1, 2009

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The next-most-effective conversion tactic for smaller marketers was e-mail and e-newsletters, followed by pay-per-click and search ads, behavioral targeting and page sponsorships.

For larger marketers, the list of effective online tactics was nearly the same, except search and e-mail were flipped. Pay-per-impression ads were also more effective for larger marketers (presumably because they have the funds to experiment in an expensive medium).

To build, maintain or change brand perceptions required different tactics, however.

For both small- and large-budget marketers, site or page sponsorship and SEO were considered the most effective ways to build a brand

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online.

**Most Effective Online Marketing Tactic for Affecting Brand Perceptions According to US\* Senior-Level Marketing Executives, by Budget Size, February-March 2009 (% of respondents)**

	\$1 million+ (n=49)	All respondents (n=112)
Site or page sponsorship	37%	43%
SEO	29%	32%
E-mail and e-newsletter	18%	30%
Pay-per-impression ads on digital publications	29%	25%
Viral marketing	27%	25%
Behavioral targeting	22%	21%
Video ads	24%	18%
Ad networks	16%	14%
Pay-per-click/search	14%	14%
Other	4%	2%

Note: \*respondents were primarily based in the US  
Source: Forbes, "2009 Ad Effectiveness Survey," June 1, 2009

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Pay-per-impression ads came next on the list for big spenders, while the more budget-constricted focused on e-mail newsletters, pay-per-impression and viral marketing.

Perhaps in anticipation of the end of the recession (see [A Short-Term Marketing Focus](#)), marketers are changing their spending priorities in the six months after March 2009 to feature more viral marketing, SEO, behavioral targeting and pay-per-click.

**Change in Online Marketing Budget Allocation in the Next Six Months According to US\* Senior-Level Marketing Executives, by Tactic, February-March 2009 (% of respondents)**

	Higher percentage	Same percentage	Lower percentage
Viral marketing	42%	44%	14%
SEO	40%	52%	8%
Behavioral targeting	31%	57%	11%
Pay-per-click/search	29%	57%	31%
Video ads	26%	45%	29%
Pay-per-impression ads on digital publications	26%	40%	35%
Sponsorship of site, publication or page	23%	46%	31%
E-mail and e-newsletter	22%	49%	29%
Ad networks	13%	33%	53%

Note: n=112; numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding;  
\*respondents were primarily based in the US  
Source: Forbes, "2009 Ad Effectiveness Survey," June 1, 2009

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Overall, 57% of respondents said they still spend less than 25% of their marketing budgets online.

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