Pica8 Gets Targeted B2B Leads from Quality Content, SEO Expertise and LinkedIn Advertising

Combining quality website content with search engine optimization (SEO) can produce remarkable results – and ultimately more leads for clients. That's the upshot of a recent B2B lead-generation project Saratoga B2B Group successfully implemented for Pica8, a client in the enterprise networking space.

A combination of 15 new, SEO-optimized web pages targeting Pica8 strategic competencies, a new white paper, and targeted LinkedIn Sponsored Content ad campaigns delivered 60 highly qualified leads in the first month – and counting. Following is a summary of what went into the project and the results it delivered.

PICA8 BACKGROUND

Pica8 makes an "open" network operating system (NOS) that can be used on white box or brite box switches. These switches are the same as the likes of Cisco and Juniper use to run their own, proprietary software.

Pica8's value proposition is that customers can choose whatever compatible hardware platform their requirements demand, while getting an intelligent modern network that's easier to manage and maintain, and sports the same or better performance as Cisco or Juniper – at a fraction of the cost.

The company was having good success with enterprise customers, including Fortune 50 clients, mostly through word of mouth, but wanted to make a concerted effort to get the word out to a wider audience. Jeff Paine, VP of Marketing for Pica8, agreed to sign on for a pilot test with Saratoga B2B Group aimed at generating more website traffic from organic Google searches and, ultimately, more leads.

The pilot project proved successful and was expanded to include a LinkedIn Sponsored Content ad campaign that is currently generating a steady stream of high-quality leads for Pica8.

"With no proven playbook on how to definitively generate leads, we felt it was important to place multiple bets on the table and work with a company that was quick to respond to the data," said Jeff Paine, SVP of marketing for Pica8. "In this way we can double down on the program elements that outperformed the others, and we're more than pleased with the results to date."

SEO RESEARCH INFORMS CONTENT CREATION

The project began with extensive competitive analysis and SEO research utilizing data from more than half a dozen specialized marketing resources. Based on keyword research, search results analysis, and online competitive analysis, Saratoga B2B found what appeared to be strong end-user search intent for a number of core themes that had significant search volume. Competitive research

CLIENT PROFILE

COMPANY: PICA8, INC.

INDUSTRY: IT - NETWORKING

Business: Pica8 makes the PICOS network operating system, an open, Linux-based NOS that runs on white box or brite box network switches.

CHALLENGE:

Generate more qualified leads from Fortune 1000 companies, to build on successful word-of-mouth sales to enterprises, including Fortune 50.

SOLUTION:

- SEO and competitive research to find keywords and keyword phrases with adequate search volume for which Pica8 could rank well in Google SERPs
- Create new SEO-optimized website content related to those keywords
- Produce new white paper to be used in LinkedIn ad campaign
- Create multiple LinkedIn ads for a series of A/B tests

RESULTS:

- Several new pages ranking on p.1 in Google SERPs, driving significant new traffic to Pica8 site
- Steady month-to-month increase in website traffic from organic search
- 60 qualified leads from LinkedIn campaign in first month
- Continued refinements producing a steady stream of higher quality leads

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About one month from the date the pages were indexed by Google, several began ranking on page 1 of Google search

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determined Pica8 could potentially compete for page 1 search rankings.

Working with Paine and his technical team, Saratoga B2B created 15 new "glossary" pages for Pica8, each defining a technical term relevant to its core business. The pages all relate to one or more of eight core themes that are central to Pica8's solution. Saratoga B2B incorporated keywords and keyword phrases into the new pages in a naturally flowing, readable manner – this was not keyword stuffing. Rather, the pages contain useful, technical content that have the extra advantage of being "SEO friendly."

About one month from the date the pages were indexed by Google, several began ranking on page 1 of Google search for small monthly volume search query variations. Over the following weeks the pages began to rank for additional search queries, some with larger monthly search volumes.

After about two months, several of the new pages were driving significant new traffic to the Pica8 site for search

queries the company did not rank well for in the past but which relate directly to its core business. That traffic has increased steadily month by month.

PHASE 2: LINKEDIN REMARKETING

For one of the original eight topics, "leaf spine networking," Saratoga B2B created three pages with variations on the theme. Those pages began doing extremely well in terms of Google Search Engine Results Pages (SERP), with two of them earning page 1 results for a swath of queries. To take advantage of the robust interest in this topic, Saratoga B2B wrote a white paper that explored the leaf-spine topic in more depth.

The purpose of the paper was two-fold. First, in a vendor-neutral fashion, it demonstrated Pica8 was taking a market-leading position on the topic, using the leaf-spine network architecture in an entirely new way. Second, the paper would be used as premium content to generate new leads from IT pros and decision-makers.

One avenue for lead generation was LinkedIn Sponsored Content, with a remarketing Matched Audience campaign. Pica8 already had LinkedIn's Insight JavaScript tag on its pages, which enables LinkedIn to track anyone with a LinkedIn profile who visits the Pica8 site. This was key to the LinkedIn advertising efforts.

LinkedIn requires 300 of its members to have visited a site within the past 90 days for its Matched Audience ad program to kick in. (Any members that visited within 90 days prior to the campaign launch count toward that threshold.) After that, each time a LinkedIn user visits the Pica8 site, the next time that same user visits LinkedIn, the user may see an ad for Pica8.

Saratoga B2B created a series of eight ads, each using the

A TRIED AND TRUE PROCESS FOR ⊙ DELIVERING TARGETED LEADS

Create SEO-optimized website content	LinkedIn Sponsored Content Ads	Deliver Leads to Sales Team
Research opportunities to rank well in organic search for relevant keywords/themes	Produce a compelling piece of useful premium content, such as a white paper, to use as a draw in the ads	Deliver high-quality leads to sales team
Conduct competitive analysis as a feasibility reality check	Create multiple LinkedIn ads, for A/B testing	Integrate with Salesforce.com, HubSpot, Marketo, etc. if desired
Create new SEO-optimized website content, aligned with actual user search queries	Segment the core audience by geography, title, and company to obtain highly targeted, sales leads	Hit quota, get bonus, take a nice vacation

> "It's clear Saratoga's principals understand technology, which means we don't have to spend a lot of time editing or re-writing copy. Add to that their SEO expertise and you have a rare combination, from my experience."
>
> **Jeff Paine, VP of Marketing, Pica8**

Over time, working with Paine and Sheffield, Saratoga B2B adjusted the audience parameters – mainly by geography, title and company size – to get even better leads.

MORE THAN ONE VIABLE APPROACH

While the idea of adding new web pages worked well for Pica8, a variation would to be add new content to one or more existing website pages. This would still require background research to identify themes for additional content, which would be created with SEO in mind. It would also require a new piece of premium content for use in a LinkedIn advertising campaign, whether a Sponsored Content offer, InMail or Text Ad program.

For other companies, initial SEO and competitive research may indicate the site already has strong content that's generating a sizable amount of traffic. In such a case, all you'd need to do is create a new piece of premium content to use as the offer on LinkedIn. (Or, maybe you already have a suitable piece of content, in which case Saratoga B2B can manage the LinkedIn campaign for you.)

CONCLUSION

Saratoga B2B continues to work with Pica8 to refine and improve the LinkedIn program. Because Pica8 has LinkedIn's Insight JavaScript tag on its website, it's assured of a continued stream of high-quality prospects going forward for the LinkedIn Sponsored Content campaign.

At the same time, Saratoga B2B will continue to explore other avenues for getting the word out about Pica8 and open, white box networking. It's a great fit given Saratoga B2B's deep experience in the IT field, and its proven ability to produce SEO-optimized content that resonates with an IT audience.

new leaf-spine white paper as an offer. The ads used the same background image, but different copy. By rotating the ads, it was possible to determine which had the best performance, and adjust the rotation accordingly.

Using LinkedIn's Lead Generation Form functionality, the campaign quickly began generating high-quality leads. Saratoga B2B reports the results at least weekly to Pica8, with bullet points describing what is driving the results.

"Saratoga B2B's lead-gen reports are so clear even a sales guy can read them – and sales people don't like to read," says Tom Sheffield, Sales & Marketing Director for Pica8. "All the bullet points address questions I would've asked and provide outstanding feedback."