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All Along the Digital Watchtower

By Lee Traupel

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It's no secret interactive (web-based) marketing has arrived. The IDC research group just released a study in late June of this year indicating 99.9% of a survey of executives and entrepreneurs said they currently conduct online marketing activities, or, are in the process of implementing or initiating some form of interactive marketing. The problem or challenge that many of these executives (marketing, management, etc.) and entrepreneurs (marketing, principals, etc.) have is how do they measure their online presence?

Most interactive marketing types, whether they are agencies working for/with clients or in-house personnel, typically just measure a company's return for a specific process or period of time. Many never think to actively monitor what a company's competitive position is vis-à-vis Search Engines or Directory Listings, the number of links they have pointing back to their web site or what type of "net buzz" is being generated (positive or negative) via the Usenet/Newsgroup community. In short, its digital warfare and the fog of war is obscuring the battle lines.

Entrepreneurial competitive intelligence sounds like a real mouthful, or much more than it is. Basically it's using off-the-shelf tools (software or ASP services) to understand what your page 1-3 keyword rankings are versus:

your direct competitors via the top tier Search Engines (Google, AltaVista, Excite, AOL/NetFind, HotBot, Netscape, Magellan, Lycos, Web Crawler)

how and where your company is listed via the blue chip Directories (Yahoo, LookSmart, Open Directory)

what's your link popularity (number of links pointing back to a web site) and/or

how many Usenet/Newsgroup posts are being made about your company, products or services

Usenet/Newsgroups can in fact be an extremely valuable resource for unearthing competitive intelligence about a direct competitor's products or services; "Usenet/Newsgroup mining" certainly works well for United, IBM, Microsoft and many other corporations.

These digital touch points fill in competitive intelligence gaps and you don't need to have an advertising budget in the 4–6–figure range complemented with a large staff to consistently monitor your competitive position. You can do much of this by hand, and/or use free tools offered by many of the search engines or portals (small plug: we offer a free and low cost Competitive Intelligence service via our web site).

But, be forewarned, if you don't use some technology to leverage yourself, it can take a great deal of time to assess these metrics, but well worth the effort. In the end, you will know what your online market presence is and be armed with actionable business intelligence that enables you to understand how to maximize your marketing dollars by knowing where you need more of an online presence. And,

most importantly as Sun Tzu once said, "if you know your enemy and yourself, you will win every battle." Sound advice from a master tactician who had no idea his pearls of wisdom would be shaping the digital age!

Lee Traupel has 20 plus years of business development and marketing experience – he is the founder of Intellective Communications, Inc.,

a results–driven marketing services

company providing proprietary services to clients encompassing startups to public companies.  
Lee@intellective.com

## **Digital Film Processing is Really the Only Option for Truly Quality Prints**

**By Dave Gonzalez**

### **Digital Film Processing is Really the Only Option for Truly Quality Prints by Dave Gonzalez**

Digital photography has taken off like wildfire these days, primarily due to its ease and quality in its digital film processing. With a good digital camera, it's as though you're using the very best Kodak film for every single one of your digital photos. Moreover, digital film processing can be done from the comfort of your own home with the right digital film processing software or with digital photo developing online.

The most standard form of digital film processing is digital photos of 4x5 film processing. By using this size, you can make sure to get the very best in cost and quality, as many digital cameras are designed to function their very best at that level. Moreover, if cost is your primary concern, then you'll enjoy the advantage that comes with bulk digital photo developing for all of your parties and other important occasions where many people will be wanting copies.

## All Along the Digital Watchtower

Just like a standard camera with film, digital cameras use a lens and a shutter, except instead recording your image on film, it is captured electronically by way of a sensor, which converts it into a digital file. This file is saved on a memory device, which is frequently removable. This way, you can choose where you'd like to keep your pictures, and specifically what sort of digital film processing is best for you.

For example, some of your digital photos may be fine if they're kept in digital form on your computer, but others, such as wedding photos, may require better quality digital film processing. This allows you to print your digital pictures on regular paper, photo quality paper, use a home digital film processing printer, or even take it for the professionals to manage, as you would regular film.

When it is your regular digital photography that you'll be digital film processing, however, you'll love the great benefits of having your digital photo quickly, easily, and accurately.

Dave Gonzalez <http://www.digital-film-developing.com/>

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