

Case Study

Client: Ambit Energy (www.ambitenergy.com)

Case Study Term: October 2010 – April 2011

Background

Ambit Energy was rated the fastest growing private company in the United States by Inc. 500 in 2010. Ambit Energy is a retail energy provider in deregulated states such as Texas, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and New York. Sales had primarily been fostered by outside independent sales consultants but Ambit had a goal of increasing higher margin sales through their website and call center. Seeking to take advantage of the momentum driven by the PR from the Inc. 500 recognition, Ambit set out to find a new online marketing agency.

Having had a poor experience with their previous agency, Ambit needed a team with the knowledge, experience, and technology necessary to perform for a \$1 billion company. Ambit knew they needed an integrated online marketing solution that included SEO, PPC, Online Reputation Management, and Social Media. IMI created a successful partnership with Ambit's national PR team in order to do just that.

The Goals

- To use SEO and PPC to increase traffic and lead generation through AmbitEnergy.com
- To use Online Reputation Management and Social Media to push denigrating content off the first page of Google

The Strategy

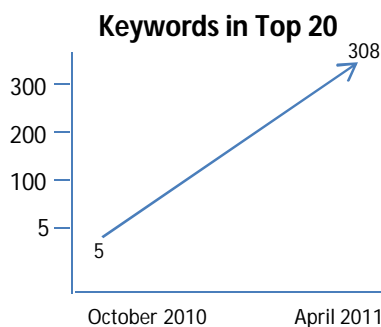
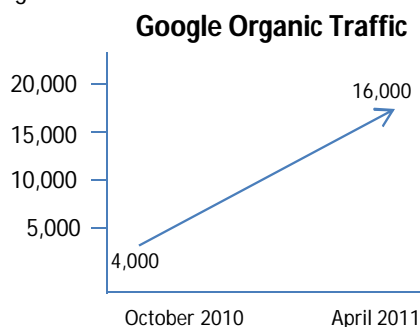
When designing the strategy, the IMI team performed in-depth research and spent many hours in discovery sessions with the client and their PR team. We performed competitive analysis, completed a diagnostic analysis to determine SEO website improvements, and did keyword research for SEO and PPC. IMI also began monitoring negative content about the Ambit brand and researching the websites such as Scam.com that ranked on the first page of Google for brand terms and executive names. The full strategy included the following:

>> **SEO DIAGNOSTIC ANALYSIS**
 >> **ONLINE REPUTATION MANAGEMENT**
 >> **USABILITY AND CONVERSION TESTING**

>> **SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION**
 >> **PAY PER CLICK ADVERTISING**
 >> **SOCIAL MEDIA CONSULTING**

The Results

During the initial six months IMI wanted to improve the website for optimization, increase keyword rankings, and drastically increase Google organic traffic. The focus of the PPC was to collect data, increase traffic and web conversions, and decrease CTR's and CPA. For ORM, IMI' goal was to remove at least half of the negative results. We exceeded our goals and removed all but one.



PPC Highlights

While gradually increasing the budget, IMI has been able to maintain the target CTRs while decreasing the CPC by 50%.



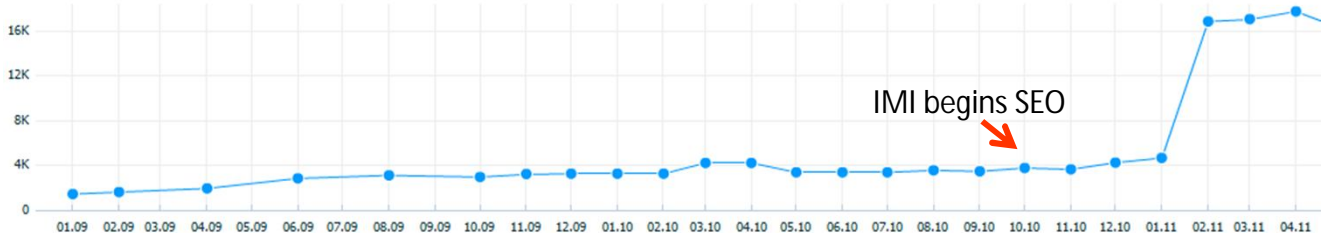
How We Put it All Together

Phase One: *Research and Discovery*

Through many face to face meetings and conference calls with the client and their PR team, IMI gathered the appropriate data to design a roll out plan for the online marketing strategy.

Phase Two: *Launch SEO and PPC Campaigns*

After performing detailed keyword research and Keyword Effectiveness Index analysis, IMI created targeted keyword lists for both the SEO and PPC campaigns. The SEO campaign was focusing on increasing rankings and traffic for non-branded keywords. Ambit only had a handful of branded keywords ranking on the first page of Google. In the first six months that has increased to over 300 keywords ranking in the top 20 in Google. This has caused monthly organic traffic to quadruple going from approximately 4,000 monthly visitors to over 16,000.



The PPC campaign used an aggressive approach with a combination of both broad and exact match. We performed keyword expansion and broke out the campaign into several targeted ad groups. We were able to gradually increase the CTR's while cutting the CPC by 50%.

Phase Three: *Launch Online Reputation Management and Social Media Campaigns*

IMI identified a list of keywords for brand related terms as well as the names of key executives within the company. These keyword searches were generating results for denigrating websites such as RipOffReport.com and Scam.com. Through a combination of link building, social media, and content development IMI has successfully pushed all but one of the negative results off the first page of Google. That final result is the most competitive site but is making great progress towards the bottom of the page.

Phase Four: *Usability Analysis, Testing, and Optimization*

To ensure that our online marketing efforts come full circle and generate increases in revenue and profitability, IMI performed an audit and usability analysis of the existing Ambit website. We looked at the calls to action, various registration forms, and conversion funnels. We then provided the client with a detailed deliverable for their web development team with recommendations for improving conversions and the overall user experience. Our ultimate recommendation was that the website needed to be completely redeveloped for long term scalability, which they agreed with.

