Final Research Paper
The Knot Analysis

Miranda Haanen
Comm 204 Tactics II
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
November 30, 2017

Table of Contents

Introduction

Social network optimization is an art form in the sense that if used effectively it can offer companies a chance to show case their websites promptly. When a potential consumer or prospect searches for certain key words, the goal is to have the company's page come up on the first page, and even better, to show up within the first handful of links. As a public relations practitioner it will be my job to inform my client on the best key words to use for their website.

The Client

The client is a personal wedding planning website designed to make it easy for young couples, particularly who are on a budget and desire to find creative ways, to execute their dream wedding. The website is called The Knot. On this website a potential client can find blog postings, wedding dresses for sale, and a variety of organizational tools. The website has potential to help a variety of couples plan their wedding exactly how they imagined it and without skipping any important steps. It is important that potential customers are able to find the website. This is done by having effective key words. This website in particular has several key words that have very high search engine optimization.

Body

Analysis of Keywords

The search engine I used is Google. The top key words that were mentioned a lot on the site are personal wedding planner (first page, third link), wedding reception (first page, second link), personalized ceremony (first page, fourth link), guest list management (first page, second link), and lastly wedding color palette (first page, first link). All of these are very useful key words because when planning a wedding these topics bring up common questions future brides and grooms might be asking. When asking these questions, clients are likely to use the key words

listed above. All five words are examples of top key words found on the Google search engine. I did come across and additional three key words that should be included in their website because they are likely to be searched by potential clients.

Keyword Suggestions

I would suggest three keywords to my client. These keywords include: wedding décor on a budget (first page, 9th link), get started (no link), and wedding design (second page, first link). I suggest these key words to the client because decorations are important to someone who is planning a wedding. Searching for "wedding décor on a budget" will take someone to blogs that give advice on how to plan a wedding within your means. The "get started" keyword is important because multiple links on the webpage have a "get started" button. This feature allows users to create a website for their wedding as well as utilize tools such as creating a guest list. By finding this tool quickly, more people will be able to utilize these services when planning their wedding. "Wedding design" is a keyword worth adding to the website because this will lead people to information about possible color schemes and theme ideas.

SEO Graph

In addition to these keywords, every client has a range of connections or relations that fall within the four quadrants of Public Relations. The SEO graph below illustrates all of the connections, on both levels one and two, that The Knot has within its network. For example, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and Twitter are on the first level. These connections connect to second level relations, such as Flickr and Google Plus. The first level connections are used the most by the client. The next section will classify each of these connections as one of the four quadrants of Public Relations: community, business, social, or government relations.
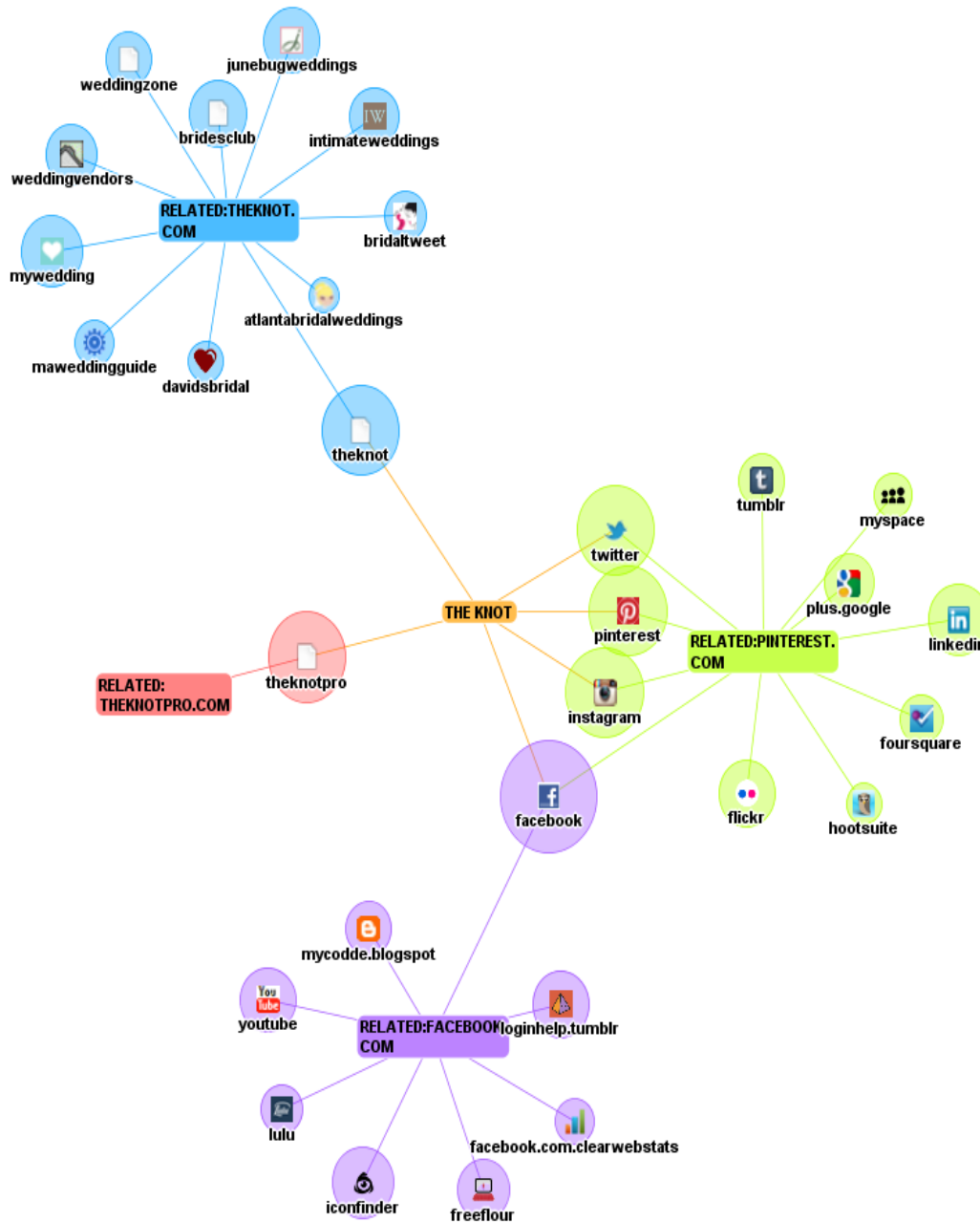
Analysis of Social Networks

The main connections related to the client are Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and Twitter. These connections are considered community relations. My analysis defines Facebook as a community relation because The Knot's Facebook page is centered around a group of people sharing similar ideas through article postings, quick reads, and blogs. The viewers are able to

interact with the page and share posts on their personal Facebook as well. This builds the community even further because more people see the page and that helps to grow interest. Facebook is a community relations tool that provides relatable information, similar to the actual website, but is provided on a popular social networking site. According to closeness centrality concept, Facebook is on the first level of closeness to the client's relations. I would consider Facebook as the hub because it is connected to over seven other nodes in the SEO graph. All four community relations have some connection to the nodes: Flickr, Tumblr, MySpace, Google Plus, LinkedIn, FourSquare, and Hootsuite. These nodes belong to the eigenvector centrality group, which means they are considered 'friends of friends.' It is not important for The Knot to be directly connected to these nodes, but it is important to be aware of their usage. Facebook is, however, directly connected to Pinterest and every other node related to that.

Pinterest is another example of a community relations; however, it is a lot more visual for the viewers. Users can share wedding dress photos and other ideas that inspire wedding plans. Instagram is also a visual media relation. My analysis defines Pinterest and Instagram as a community relation because the people of that community are able to search for the same or similar images and they all have one common goal; they want to find wedding ideas and start planning their dream wedding. If the viewer can see that the photo from Instagram or Pinterest is somehow related to The Knot website, they are more likely to go to the actual site and the possibility of the person making an account increases.

Twitter, another well-known social networking site, is the fourth community relations. My analysis defines Twitter as a community relation because it reaches the wedding planning community. Twitter can also be viewed as a business relation.

Twitter allows businesses to interact with their audiences very quickly. The status updates are very short in length and can capture attention rapidly because the content is not overwhelming for the reader. My analysis defines Twitter as a business relation because it is a tool used to manage the brand of the client. An increase in brand awareness is one component that helps to grow a business. For example, Twitter is also used to drive traffic to the site. The Knot company can quickly attract someone to their website by using this feature. Another example of a business relation is David's Bridal.

Business Relations Example

David's Bridal is a popular wedding and bridesmaid dress boutique located throughout the United States. My analysis defines David's Bridal as a business relation because The Knot has this business as a public. A lot of the same products and blog postings can be found on both of the sites. Since David's Bridal has a physical location and The Knot is more web based, the credibility is increased for The Knot site. Once viewers realize the strong connection these two have, they will have increased awareness about the unique tools The Knot offers. For example, inside of David Bridal's stores, stylists can ask costumers if they have a wedding planner, and then offer a way for the bride to plan their wedding themselves. After all, The Knot provides everything the future bride and groom needs to execute the best wedding possible.

Analysis of Social Media Sites

With a strong closeness to useful social networking sites, The Knot is able to reach a variety of audiences for multiple needs. Facebook keeps people the audience members connected, Instagram and Pinterest provide a visual appeal that makes sense for the product, and Twitter builds the business' foundation. A professional public relations practitioner would have

to develop some maintenance strategies for a company such as this because the foundation has been set for success.

It is common for a business to utilize social media network sites as a means to connect to their audiences. The Knot, one of the leading personal wedding planning websites, is no different. In fact, they have five main social media sites, which are indicated on their homepage of The Knot website. The social media sites displayed on their website are: Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, and Google Plus.

Each of the social media sites have accumulated a different sized community. Facebook has 636,840 followers, Instagram has 1.3 million followers, Twitter has 244,919 followers, Pinterest has 259,698 followers, and lastly Google Plus has 416,607 followers. Along with these community size differences, each site offers distinct features for the audiences. In addition to this, the company uses some of the sites more than others, which narrows down to a top three social media sites.

The three main social media sites in which the client uses are Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Facebook seems to be the main outlet for the company as far as engaging with their audience through blogs, articles, and wedding ideas. Instagram provides a visual appeal for the audience, typically capturing Twitter offers links to familiar household names, such as Target and Disney, in hopes to capture the attention of broad audience members.

Critique of PR and Engagement: Facebook

After analyzing the social media posts on Facebook it is evident that much of the engagement stems from blog postings. Popular topics include wedding themes, registry ideas, and tips for married couples. The topics are centered around the married life as well as the wedding itself. Audience members are able to share the posts by either sharing it directly to their

personal Facebook accounts or by tagging another person. This level of engagement helps to garner more followers. The frequency of the postings also helps to do this. On average, The Knot posts about 15 times per day. Followers are sure to never miss a post as the information will show on the Facebook feeds throughout all times of the day.

Critique of PR Engagement: Instagram

Although Facebook is a great tool for people to read about wedding ideas and tag friends, there is little company to follower engagement. When someone comments, rarely does The Knot comment back. Commenting back to follower's comments on posts can help to generate more comments, which will continually bump the posting up on the news feed. This will result in more people seeing the posts, thus creating a greater following on Facebook. In addition, Facebook users typically seek out engagement with others, and so followers can build an appreciation for the strong relationship The Knot can build with their audience.

The next social media site included in the top three is Instagram. With over 1 million followers, this site has a strong influence on the company. The visual appeals is most likely the cause of the traffic for the company. The main audience is young women who are hoping to get married or are currently planning their weddings. Instagram is a great tool for them, as many of the photos offer ideas for wedding décor, dress designs, and even memorable proposal moments. This visual aspect makes it easy for followers to engage. Again, the company rarely engages back with their followers; however, on average The Knot posts 4 to 5 times per day on Instagram.

Critique of PR Engagement: Twitter

Twitter is another social media site used on a daily basis. On average the company posts 5 to 7 times per day. Typically, the posts are visual and offer quick reads for the audience.

Twitter does not garner as much attention as Instagram and Facebook do. In addition to this, the engagement level is lower than both Instagram and Facebook.

Pinterest and Google Plus

The two social media sites used the least often is Pinterest and Google Plus. Although Pinterest has many followers, the actual site is not updated on a regular basis. The organization of Pinterest is beneficial for the users because the "pins" are divided into categories such as "new wedding dresses", "wedding food", and "reception inspiration". Pinterest is similar to Instagram in the sense that it is very visual, however there is little to no engagement between the company and the audience. It is still a useful site because followers can gather ideas quickly.

Google Plus, on the other hand, has not been updated since October 2016. The Knot somewhat gave up on the use of this social media, which is understandable because it does not necessarily meet the needs of the company. My suggestion would be to take the Google Plus icon off of the homepage of the website because it is somewhat misleading. The information on Google Plus either needs to be relevant and updated, or not used at all. If the company can find a way to utilize this social media site, such as business relations, then that would benefit the company more so than it is now.

Conclusion

Overall, I believe the main focus of engagement should be on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Some suggestions I have is to respond timely to comments on all social media, and also to get rid of any sites that are not updated regularly. The content The Knot shares is interesting, engaging, and enjoyable for readers, which is a plus. It is important that The Knot continues to generate topic ideas for their audiences so that they can maintain these relationships. With that in mind, it is important for the client to also maintain strong keywords that continually generate

proficient or better search engine optimization. Ultimately, the keywords take the person to the site, and the networks display the contents. All in all, The Knot has a strong following and it should continue to grow by keeping these suggestions in mind.