



## **Marketing Consulting versus SEO Consulting with Theme Zoom Technology**

Hi folks,

Are you an SEO firm or a marketing consulting firm?

Are you both?

Sue and I have noticed a lot of confusion for consulting shops that are made up of 1 or 2 partners and/or staff members.

In the following video I briefly explain the difference between a technical SEO audit and an “online business advisor” audit (sometimes this is called a marketing consulting audit).

[SEO Consulting versus Marketing/Business Consulting Video](#)

Many firms/agencies will customize their own reporting and unique processes. Some SEO firms will provide unique audits for free. It is very common to provide a “mini” report to enhance a prospect’s interest in becoming a client.

As promised, here is the technical SEO audit versus Marketing audit report.

### **Marketing versus SEO: Which type of consultant are you?**

You will probably find yourself in one of the following situations:

1. Your organization offers both SEO and Marketing consulting services.
2. Your organization offers some type of a blend between these two disciplines.
3. You own a “brick and mortar” online business and are not a consultant.

Regardless of your personal situation, there are major tips laid out in this document that will help you add value to your client’s bottom line. If you are a brick and mortar business, these guidelines will help you qualify your SEO and/or marketing consultants before hiring them. A penny saved is a penny earned.

In any case, the methods outlined here will help you increase the close rate of

your general prospects and increase your ability to ask the right questions.

### **The Consulting Audit: Who Are You?**

It is important to consider both types of audits when presenting your products and services to would-be-clients.

In order to determine which sorts of questions and reports are appropriate for you to ask a prospect, its best to start at the very beginning.

First, become clear yourself about which type of products and service your company is currently offering. Ask yourself the following question:

1. What products and services are you selling?
2. What are the benefits of these products and services?

These may sound like obvious questions but Sue and I have trained many students to become online business advisors. They frequently stumble when you ask them these simple questions.

If you are experiencing a similar identity crisis, you may want to begin by understanding the *SEO audit*.

Here are some bullet points to help you discern the difference between an SEO shop and a full service “Marketing” firm:

#### **The SEO Shop**

- If you read and write in “HTML” code you are probably an SEO shop or web design agency. If you have never heard the acronym “HTML”, you are probably not a technical SEO firm
- If you read meta tags and meta descriptions you are probably working in either web design or technical SEO, or both.
- If one of the benefits of your services are “high rankings” on the search engines such as Google, you are probably an SEO shop. If you have never considered the importance of search engine ranking and website conversion, you are definitely *not* an SEO firm.

#### **The Marketing Firm:**

- If you commonly use acronyms like “LTV” (life time value of the customer) or “USP” (unique selling position), you are probably a *marketing*

*consultant.*

- If you have people in your organization who talk about increasing the *size*, *frequency* and *number* of sales transactions, you are probably a *marketing consultant*.
- If you are taking a high level view of someone's overall marketing message and strategy, you are probably not limited to SEO.
- If you are taking into account vertical and horizontal market research you are probably a *marketing consultant* or a *market research firm*.
- If you segment the vertical markets of your client in order to strategically inject your client's USP and marketing message, you are probably a highly skilled *marketing consultant*.

## **SEO Marketing Consulting Blend**

We prefer to offer a blend of both types of services in order to optimize the sales process and extend the life time value of our own customers.

We have discovered that it is usually better to offer your prospect or customer a "global view" of their online market circumstance. It is almost never a sustainable business model to help a client focus only on the ranking position of a single keyword. This is why it is so useful (and addictive) to provide a blend of both types of services when you want to "wow!" a client. You want to show your client a large segment of their market with all of the corresponding keywords and associated values. (We use Krakken in combination with TLKT in order to do this).

## **Good "Top-Down" Consultants Are Hard to Find**

All of this being said, it is fairly uncommon for the average SEO consultant to present the online search engine game from the perspective of "market share". It is difficult to find a consultant, skilled in SEO, who will also help you focus on long term online business strategies.

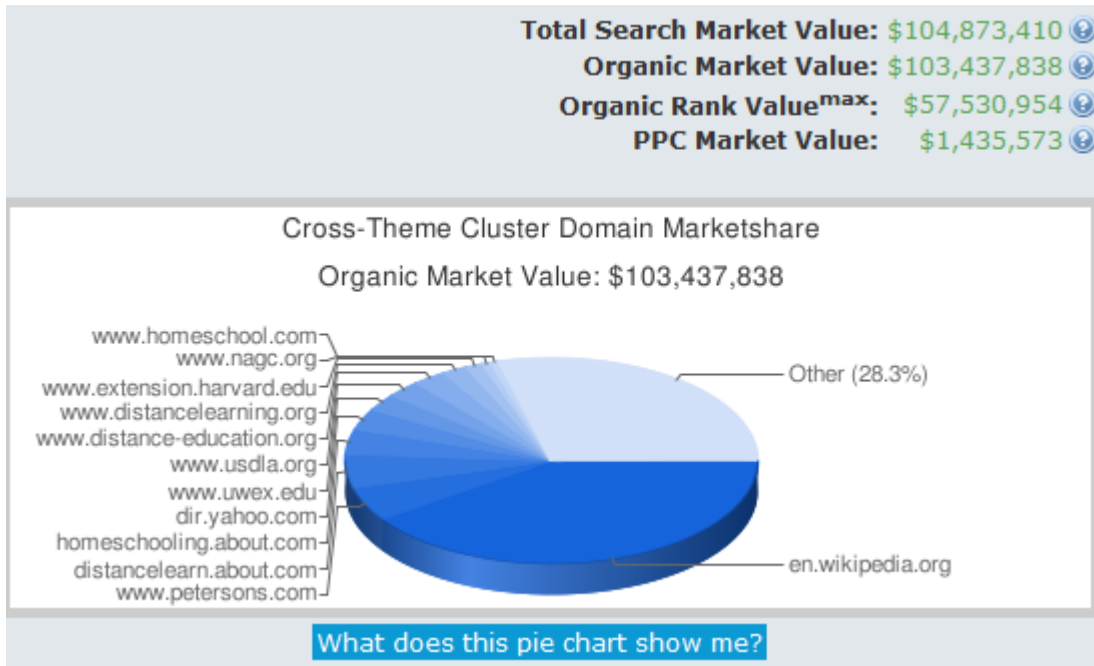
Fortunately, these types of consultants do exist. We help create them.

We lovingly call this rare breed of online business advisors Krakken Crunchers.

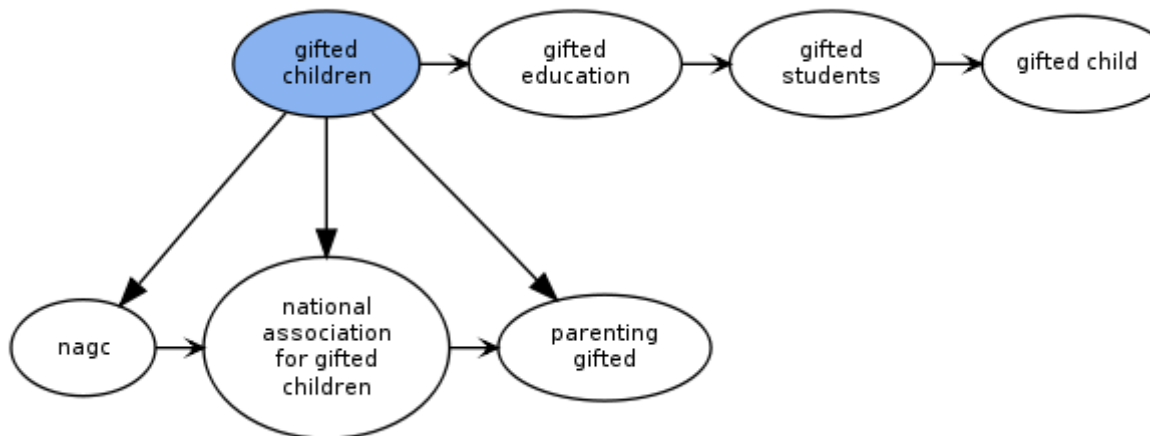
[Krakken Crunchers PDF](#)

One of the ways the above average consultant provides "market share" and

“global strategy” to a client is via Krakken’s “cross-theme cluster domain market share” graph.



What is unique about the Krakken application is that it shows how the domains above collectively “own” the unique *theme keyword cluster* carefully prepared by the consultant. This allows the client to understand who their competitors really are across a wide array of keywords and concepts, not just a single keyword at a time:



This “global keyword strategy” is especially useful if you are going to offer your client a blend of SEO and direct response marketing. We have been observing “single keyword SEO” getting almost entirely downplayed in favor of direct

response and social marketing. Theme cluster analysis needs to be in the arsenal of any marketing consultant who hopes to survive the onslaught of new “cheap” online marketing methods. The keywords and insights gained by preparing a Krakken “theme cluster business DNA” translate easily into any sort of online marketing method. Keywords are a constant in the ever changing, fast-paced world of online promotion. Regardless of which sort of online marketing you use, it is almost always useful to understand how a market is segmented and which keyword clusters are the most profitable.

Social media applications and other forms of “new media” are partially to thank for this dramatic shift away from technical SEO and the focus on search engine rankings.



We are not saying that SEO is going away. The skills required to run a profitable SEO shop are simply expanding to meet the needs of the widening scope of Interactive Marketing. It is good to be aware that your SEO skills may require an upgrade with additional services and long term considerations. Customers are demanding more of the “big picture” when it comes to buying SEO and marketing services. They expect the consultant to have more knowledge and more online intelligence tools. Krakken is one of those tools that generally helps you to “Wow!” your client and establish trust.

To help your client gain overwhelming advantages and long-term success over their competition in any market, it is essential that you lobby both for your client’s USP (Unique Selling Position) as well as their technical SEO success. This “blended service” requires cross training.

Here are some tips about how your organization may want to upgrade your services based on the Krakken 12 philosophy. This philosophy is outlined in order to help you and your client to address the 12 missed online opportunities.

### [The 12 Missed Online Opportunities](#)

But first things first.

Before I outline the SEO and marketing consulting audits, let's take a look at how you should view your clients in the first place.

#### **How to Select the Right SEO/Marketing Consulting Client:**

One of the main things I learned from marketing consultant Jay Abraham was that you sometimes need to fire your clients.

You heard it right.

Fire them if you don't like them or they don't pay you on time.

There will come a time during the course of your business education when it suddenly becomes clear that less than 10% of your customers are providing you with 90% of your painless residual income.

The keyword here is "painless."

The fact that 90% of your effortless income often comes from less than 10% of your clients and customers is widely known. Any good marketing consultant will investigate and reveal your "best customer numbers" when they present you with the marketing audit.

Additionally, a good marketing consultant may also demonstrate that the client who pays you the most amount of money is often the client who demands the least amount of emotional energy. (Talk to the Theme Zoom help desk if you want proof).

#### **Jay Abraham**

Jay Abraham taught us that you need to "fire" the rest of the clients who do not meet the criteria that these "best" clients represent.

How do you fire the energy draining clients who never pay you on time?

*Raise your price.*

There are many anecdotal stories I could tell you of people who have taken Abraham's advice literally. At first they were terrified that they would lose all of their other clients. Invariably what happens when this method is intelligently applied is that the clients that you *like* will stay with you and the clients that drop away are people that are eating up all of your time anyway.

Is there such a thing as a bad client or less desirable prospect for your marketing and SEO services?

You better believe it! If you do not believe this, you will probably fail as a consultant.

### **The Emperor Wears No Profits**

Is it possible for your prospect or client to be in an "unprofitable business?"

In other words, is there such a thing as a "bad" business to be in?

Absolutely!

Let's look at a couple of scenarios where it may be required for you to tell the truth even when it hurts, fire a client, or prevent a prospect from becoming a client to begin with.

#### **Scenario 1: Nice person, bad "marketing consultant" client.**

Jay Abraham is never afraid to tell people if they are in a lousy business or an unprofitable business model. He will sometimes advise people to junk the entire model when it cannot be fixed or "repositioned" with a different USP.

"You have a hobby, not a business", he says. People often thank him later.

#### **The brother-in-law effect**

Your prospective client can be the sweetest person in the world and you may even feel that you would love to work with them. But if they are in a bad business and it is difficult for them to make any money themselves, you are probably wasting your time.

Why?

Because you will work too hard managing their expectations and justifying the cost of your service! I call this type of client a "white-knuckler."

A "white-knuckler" who has not properly researched a business before "buying or building it" will usually drive you up a wall. Choosing to get involved with such a

client is common for consultant's who are just starting out. (I call this *the brother-in-law effect*, because almost every new consultant will waste time at least once trying to help family member in an unprofitable situation who has simply made bad business decisions.)

Your time is better placed somewhere outside of your own friends and family, unless you have a highly successful family of entrepreneurs. Another *possible* reason to help your "brother-in-law" is when you want to use a high-risk client as a *case study* to demonstrate the power of your marketing methods.

### **Is Taking a Piece of the Action: More Trouble than it's Worth?**

Another popular maneuver for a professional "marketing consultant" is to own a piece of the prospective clients business instead of getting paid.

Amateur marketing consultants will often believe that this means trying to own a piece of any business no matter how unprofitable.

Since they have never run a successful business themselves, they obviously have no idea when it is appropriate to create a joint venture.

Why JV with an unprofitable business in a bad market when you can just as easily own a piece of a profitable business in a good market?

We suggest that you embrace the luxury of telling the truth to a prospect about his bad business model, even if it hurts and even if it cannot be repositioned.

They will thank you later and may even return with a better business model. They will remember you for giving them solid business advice.

### **Bad Business Model Story with a Silver Lining**

A successful mentor, high-level marketing consultant and friend of mine relayed his own personal story of a bad business model.

He and some partners had the idea to create an MLM around the jewelry market. He was financially funded in the high six-figure range by an outside investor. He launched the MLM.

For those of you who know MLM, you may not know that it is extremely complex to make sure that everyone in your "downline" continues to get paid. Million dollar software has been design to make this possible.

It is helpful and crucial for the products and services sold in an MLM model to remain stable when it comes to the cost of production. Wildly fluctuating prices in costs of materials can make it very difficult for an MLM to survive.

Did you know this?

Neither did my friend.

His MLM venture was in jewelry which includes silver and gold. Silver and gold tend to fluctuate constantly. So unstable were the prices in fact, that it was one of the contributing factors that lead to the demise of this “MLM business experiment.”

He had to pull the plug on himself to the tune of 7 figures.

I believe that this is one of the life experiences that has made him such a good consultant now.

Hindsight is 20/20.

What is the moral to this story?

Research, research, research.

Run your idea by several experts before you jump in.

Let's move on to scenario 2.

### **Scenario 2: Nice business, bad SEO client.**

There are prospective clients who are not worth your time, not because they are in a terrible business, but because they simply cannot afford your services.

Your perceived value is harder to justify to them because of the “size” of their typical transaction.

Hopefully you already know that the only (legal) way to make more money in business is to increase the size, frequency or number of transactions.

When it comes to making money at SEO, because of the technical nature of your services- you may want to consider working for businesses that have larger transaction values. Of course this depends on your level of SEO skill. Organizations with higher transaction values will often be in more competitive markets.

But as Kevin Wilke pointed out to us, there is a “sweet spot” when deciding to take on an SEO client, and in our mutual opinion it is based on local search values. Here is the diagram of my conversation with Kevin Wilke:

## [The Local Search Quadrant](#)

Let me clarify something.

We are not suggesting that Hair Dressers are in a “Bad” business (like scenario 1 in the Local Search Quadrant Chart above).

I am suggesting that taking a hair dresser on as a client for local search engine optimization is probably “Bad” for your SEO business.

The reason?

The size of the transaction for an average hair dresser is fairly low with no big backend sales.

How much does a haircut cost? (Usually between 10 and 50 dollars)

Furthermore, the average person tends to find a hairdresser via word of mouth, not from a search engine. In the first local search client Quadrant, I consider a local hairdresser a bad SEO prospect, not a bad person running a bad business.

The exception to this rule may be a national hairdresser “association” website or directory in control of the “Hairdressers Association of America”. A larger association may be worthy of your time.

What you are looking for in a prospect is a way to earn cash for delivering “decent” results by organizations who can consistently pay you and who’s expectations are reasonable. This means they are not calling you or your staff every 3 hours on the phone.

### **Do Not Be Discourteous!**

I should not have to tell you this, but just in case I have not been clear . . . I am *not* telling you to be discourteous to a potential client or prospect if they are not qualified to be your client.

Nobody likes an arrogant consultant, and arrogance will always come around to bite you. Some call this the law of karma. What comes around goes around. If you are nasty to someone, they will almost always pass the bad experience they had with your company on to someone else.

*“Boy, that guy was such a jerk to me on the phone. I wouldn’t bother buying anything from him.”*

This is an example of bad karma caused by giving someone the feeling that they are not worth your time. This is especially bad in the era of social media buzz,

which can bring your company to its knees very quickly.

My philosophy is that the more people we can help and assist along the path of life, no matter how qualified they are currently as our prospect, the more good will come back to us.

This seems simple, but how do we apply this in business?

Here are a couple of “Good Karma” protocols that you may want to include in your business model when sorting out prospects:

### **Good Karma Protocol # 1: *Refer Them to Someone Else***

You will usually be able to qualify a prospect within 3 minutes. If it takes you longer than this to qualify your prospect, you need to learn how to ask the right question. My friend Claude Diamond (the lease purchase real estate guru) taught me to have an egg timer next to the telephone. Egg timers have three minutes worth of sand:



If you are unable to qualify the prospect in three minutes, you will want to have some other suggestions of where they can go for help. In SEO and/or marketing consulting there may be several reasons why your prospect is not qualified. Have a list of associates to whom you can refer these non-qualified people:

- Projects for smaller businesses (Unless you offer this)
- Local Search. (Unless you offer this)
- Offline Marketing. (Unless you offer this)
- Social Media. (Unless you offer this)
- Etc.

It is also possible to earn referral fees when sending your non-qualified prospects to your other qualified associates. Don't get too hung up on receiving a referral fee and making it difficult to help out another consultant. Good karma is good karma. Referrals often go two ways. Make sure that you recommend excellent consultants in the areas that you do not cover. If you refer someone to a bad consultant it is worse karma than if you had done nothing at all. It is for this reason that you must have high standards.

## **Good Karma Protocol # 2: *Educate them before you dismiss them.***

I can't tell you how many times I have helped educate someone and heard back from them months or even years later.

You may offer them a free PDF. You may give them a video, or have them subscribe to your newsletter.

You do not always know how much of an impact you have on the world when you are interacting with it. I think if more marketers appreciated how much of an impact they make on people's lives, they would add more value to their interactions.

I have had several non-qualified prospects become silent students. These students return to me years later as high paying customers and clients.

The first time this happened I saw it as a coincidence.

The fifth time it happened I saw it as a science.

My suggestion is to always give something to the people that call you even if they are not qualified. Give them a gift of some kind, regardless of their qualifications.

## **The Initial Marketing Audit (Audition): How to Choose a Client**

We have already talked about good people in bad business models and how to be straight with them. We have also talked about good people with businesses that may not be ideal recurring SEO clients.

You will also talk to prospects who are somewhere in between.

Here is the best way to sort them out, depending upon the goals and standards of your firm.

### **Step 1: *Is the prospect local, national, or International?***

If the prospect is a local business only, proceed with caution. Use the [local search prospect quadrant](#) to determine worthiness. There is a lot of money to be made in local search, but I keel hearing the same recycled "local SEO success story" about the same types of clients:

- a) Real Estate Agents
- b) Lawyers

### c) Plastic Surgeons

You will generally tend to acquire higher paying projects for national and International accounts. But you will tend to require a more highly trained staff and a higher level of SEO skills to land these accounts.

#### **Step 2: Find out the size of the company and if you will get paid.**

One of my associates will only take on clients who own businesses in the 5 to 20 million dollars per year range. On the other hand my other friend likes to land much larger clients (10 to 100 million per year or greater). Regardless of the size of the business, both of these guys are very good at determining the following things:

a) How much money is the prospect's business worth? A cheap way to do this is by using Hoovers.com or Infousa.com.

b) If the prospect's business is making money, you must be skilled at finding out if the "gatekeeper" who signs your checks will pay you in a timely fashion. Do they have a good reputation for paying their consultants? This is a little tricky, but with a little detective work, you should be able to find someone who has worked for this prospect previously. It does not necessarily need to be someone in your own trade or field, but this is helpful.

#### **Step 3: Quickly determine if you are dealing with an SEO client, a Marketing client or a blend of the two.**

This initial assessment will largely be determined and limited by . . .

a) . . . the scope of your own services offered. (You can't provide services that you don't have).

b) . . . the environment or promotional space from which you acquired the prospect inquiry. (In other words, find out how the prospect found out about your company and/or services).

c) . . . the Theme Zoom marketing positioning audit called: [\*The Four Questions: How to Avoid Guaranteed Business Startup Failure on the Internet\*](#)

If your firm does not offer marketing consulting it is probably a very good idea to create a partnership with someone who does. We discussed this above in the section called Good Karma Protocol # 1: *Refer Them to Someone Else*.

This will increase your credibility as a business advisor and help you create trust

and rapport with clients at a high level.

If you do not offer SEO services you need to find an SEO firm that you can trust. We recommend that the [SEO firm be Krakken™ certified](#) in order to support your market research and segmentation at a high level. This is a sure way to “wow” clients, win friends and influence people.

For those of you who already use the pre-audit questionnaire [The Four Questions: How to Avoid Guaranteed Business Startup Failure on the Internet](#), you will know that there are four questions that you need to ask about your prospects current positioning. This will quickly help you and your prospect determine how their business is positioned in the market place. This quick audit will also help you build trust and immediate rapport before moving on to signing larger SEO and/or marketing consulting contracts. Here is a short summary of the 4 basic questions:

1. Is your potential-client's product or service a vitamin or a pain killer? *A vitamin product/service is “nice to have” while a painkiller is “gotta have it.”*
2. Does your potential-client's product or service form around an irrational passion?
3. Are people actively searching for your potential-client's product or service? *You should use Krakken or TLKT in order to spot check your client's main products and services.*
4. Are there few or no choices for your potential-client's customers when it comes to buying or investigating your potential-client's products or services?

Once this audit is completed, you are ready to move on to a paid audit.

You may want to use [Gladius](#), the free Krakken sample keyword research tool as part of your initial “4 Question” discussion. This allows you to discover the top 3-4 keywords the client is currently targeting and generate an engaging conversation and/or report with little effort on your part.

Some people will offer the 4 Questions audit for free and charge for other audits. Others will require a fee for both kinds of audits. You need to decide for your own business model how you choose to engage the prospect during the initial stages. Whichever you decide, it is very helpful to generate a Krakken VOMA for both types of clients (both SEO and Marketing.)

To do this, you need to read Theme Zoom architect Sue Bell's document called [How to Close Client Sales using Krakken!](#)

Russell Wright and the Theme Zoom Team

