

Digital Cowboys' Ep #1

Intro

Welcome to The Digital Cowboys Episode 1. We discuss everything digital marketing and growth hacking for small businesses, startups and entrepreneurs. So, if you want that competitive edge, then saddle up because Cameron Francis and Sam Roshan are about to drop the value bombs.

Cameron Francis: Welcome ladies and gentlemen to the first episode of the digital cowboys podcast. The podcast is for small to medium business owners, webmasters, entrepreneurs, startups. Just giving them value on how they can improve their online and digital presence.

Sam Roshan: In this episode, we're actually going to be looking at or having a conversation and sharing some of the tools that we have used as a creative agency that has really helped us grow our own business but also all of our clients'.

Cameron Francis: This isn't just tools on digital marketing, these are tools that we've used for our business. Yeah, so we've been working on ETRAFFIC for about five years and we started from just a two-man operation in a backyard. Nope. Lounge room.

Sam Roshan: Lounge room. Lounge room. Not a backyard. I remember I used to bring you milk and coffee.

Cameron Francis: Yes you did! That was very nice... Into now a 50 plus person global agency. So, we're not just talking about digital marketing tools but talking about all tools in general. And what we'll do, Roshan, we'll get you to start with your number 1 tool.

SEMRush

Sam Roshan: You probably gonna disagree with me because I know your favorite tool. But one of my favorite tools and I think that's something that all businesses should be using - anyone who's actually doing digital marketing, I guess so anyone who has a website is SEMRush.

SEMRush is a fantastic tool that gives you a lot of insights about your own and possibly your competitor's traffic trend. What presence they have online. What kind of organic [traffic] or even, if they're running ads. You can actually find a lot of insights to your industry online.

Cameron Francis: I love SEMRush. I think that the data that they provide from a competitor

standpoint is incredible. That's why I would usually use SEMRush for competitor analytics and getting data. Let me give you a good example of how I would use it.

So, if you have a potential customer that is coming on board, I would put the data in and see what the traffic trend was over the last 1 to 4 years. See if they have been hit by any algorithm changes. I can also use the tool to see who their competitors are, what these competitors are ranking for, what they're targeting and what traffic they are generating.

Sam Roshan: Other than those things you've mentioned, something else I've found is that when you put in a website address of a competitor, you'll be able to find out what phrases they are being ranked for. You'll also be able to find out which of their URLs have been indexed.

You can then proceed to review those URLs, one at a time, to see what the titles are like, what headings they've got, and what sort of content they have. This should help you determine what you need to do if you want to get a similar kind of presence. You will know what keyword phrases, content, and service offerings you need to put out there.

Cameron Francis: One of the things I like to do is go to SEMRush.com, expand the menu, and select specific pages to see what percentage of organic traffic goes to what pages. This should give you an idea of what pages you should be creating and what keywords and phrases you need to be mapping to those pages.. The good thing is that you'll already know what the traffic potential is.

Sam Roshan: Very cool. There is so much that SEMRush offers. There is another service that SEMRush is offering where you can actually compare your digital campaigns with your competitors' campaigns. Select domain vs. domain from the left hand menu, put in your domain address, and put the competitor's domain address. In fact, you can have up to three competitor domains.

You'll be able to then see whether you're getting presence for similar phrases. This should give you an outlook of your competitive ability.

Francis: Remember that we're not at all affiliated with SEMRush. But go check them out. We've done a couple of guest posts on the tool, detailing how to get around the site and what insight you can glean.

Google Search Console

Francis: If we're talking digital marketing tools, my number one is the Google Webmaster Tool or now known as Search Console. I love everything about the Google Search Console. Actually, no. I don't love the fact that it only shows you data for the last three months. This means you need some other tools if you want to store anything.

But some of the features that I really like to use on Google Search Console include looking at clicks. You're also able to see your impressions. Impressions simply means the number of times your website appears on Google results for any searches. Click through rate and you can see your average ranking. If you go a step further, you're able to break each one of these metrics by page. Even a step further than that, you can go to a particular page of your website, and go through to queries. You'll see every single keyword that has been searched over the last 90 days that have triggered your website to appear in Google results. That's just incredible! I use the tool four or five times a day.

Sam Roshan: Yeah. So, this is analytics 101 for anyone who has a website or who runs a digital business. The Search Console is Google's insight to your digital assets. It not only shows you how much traffic you're getting, how many impressions you're getting, who searches your sites, and what keywords you're getting impressions for, but it also gives you insight into errors that could be popping up on your site.

These are usually crawling errors. What errors have Google crawlers found on the site? You can then proceed and trace those. Fixing crawling errors is going to allow the bots or the crawlers to crawl the site more easily.

Cameron Francis: Yes, absolutely. So, if you have issues on the website that may be preventing it from getting visibility or getting ranked, it will tell you what they are and you'll know how to fix them. It's like Google is telling you what's wrong and why you're not getting visibility.

It covers everything from links, to technical errors, server issues, and so on. They are basically telling you what to fix. You don't have to hire big agencies and spend loads of money getting these issues fixed, unless you don't know how to do it.

But even if that's the case, at least you can hold the agencies accountable because the information is right there in front of you.

Sam Roshan: So, if you have a website and are trying to run a good digital strategy, make sure that Google Search Console is one of your favorites.

Google Analytics

Roshan: Another tool that I really like other than the Search Console is Google Analytics itself. Google Analytics gives you a lot of data around actual site traffic. You'll be able to learn about the behavior of your new visitors versus returning visitors. You'll also be able to see your bounce rate which essentially means the number of visitors who don't convert.

It's a very good data analytics tool that will help you determine how useful your website is to your audience, what kind of traffic you're getting, and the amount of time visitors are spending

on your site and on individual pages throughout the site.

And obviously there is a lot more involved in that. So, you need to spend some time on the tool if you're not already doing that. Play around with the tool and see how you can utilize it as well as how you can implement the data that you've got from your analytics.

Francis: Google Analytics is fantastic. I mean, it does give you a lot of granular data that you can break down and that you can utilize. I don't use it as much as I use Search Console. But a lot of the consultants here do use Analytics.

I like the fact that it gives you up to date stats on how many visitors have come through for that particular day. And from the visitors that came through, you can see which pages they visited, how long they stayed on those pages, where they came from, and so on. And, if you set up your Analytics correctly, you can even track conversion rates or goals.

I am not very experienced in setting it up. How do you go about it?

Roshan: Setting up goals on analytics is, when you build a website, you structure it so that each page has its purpose. There will be some sort of a Call to Action; whether that's people downloading a whitepaper or filling out a form, or even submitting their email address to your email subscription. You can set these up as goals where Google Analytics can track when people are coming in, how many of them are actually subscribing, how many of them are filling in the forms, how many of them have visited a specific page that you want them to go through. You can set these goals and then evaluate whether the strategies that you've put in place are working.

Infusionsoft CRM

Francis: Another tool that I would use and I'd like to recommend is a mixture between marketing automation, email automation, sales automation and customer relations. It's a CRM called *infusionsoft*.

Everything about this tool is spectacular. We use it to manage all our potential customers and all of their customers have been able to integrate Infusionsoft with their accounting platforms. All of their customers have their billing information all attached to it.

Every time we have an interaction with the customer we know what exactly is happening or is being said and it diarise the whole history for any particular customer. That is from the customers' standpoint. But everything before that, so marketing automation, so we're able to create strategic campaigns depending on who that user exactly is.

So whether they came from social media; whether they are interested in an eBook; whether they are putting in an enquiry. Whatever it is, we are able to create the narrative or the path

they follow all the way through to the desired outcome. This is something that has really helped to streamline a lot of our operations.

A lot of these CRMs are really expensive. This isn't too cheap either. We pay \$400-\$600 a month. However, the value that we get from this tool and the amount of time we have been able to save from all of the automation that we've been doing, I cannot recommend it higher for anyone.

Sam Roshan: So, I know how much you love Infusionsoft, and it's a fantastic tool. From the experience that I have had and some of the feedback from our clients, the support might not be the best.

Cameron Francis: It's because you they are in America. And, I get that. This explains why it might not be for any business. In order to customise the software you need to have developers. We have 12 or 13 developers that can integrate it. Not every business has that at their disposal.

That's why you need an agency or a company like ETRAFFIC in order to integrate it properly. But once it's done it saves a lot of time.

Sam Roshan: Yeah. I guess if it is done right then it's a great tool especially because for such a cost-efficient software you basically get the whole thing; from email marketing to customer relationship management and so forth.

You can automate so many of your processes where if it was any other CRM system you'd have problems. For instance, there are a few CRMs that I don't want to mention their names where every time you want to add features or modules, you have to pay for it.

Cameron Francis: That's totally right. We need a ten or so users and every time we want to add something, say we want to add Gmail integration, we have to pay \$25 more per month per person.

Roshan: For a small business, you want to run everything as lean as possible. So, such kinds of CRM providers don't make much sense.

MailChimp and Campaign Monitor

Roshan: So, you mentioned email marketing. Two of the best tools for email marketing that I would recommend, those that we use for some of our clients, are MailChimp or Campaign Monitor. These two are tremendous tools that you can integrate with your website to help you capture data. You can also use the two to automate your emails based on the type of clientele that you have and the journey that you want to take them through.

Francis: I think that the most important word that you said there was "*automated*." Once you set this up, when someone subscribes to a training series on your website, you can set it up a

month, two months, a year, in advance and you're essentially creating that narrative, you're creating the conversation and the touch points to brand your company before they are ready to buy, so that when they are ready to buy, you're the logical choice.

Not everyone will be ready to buy on the first time they visit your website. Only about 5% to 10% are usually ready to buy on the first visit. For the 90% that don't, you need a way or a strategy to keep your brand at the front of their minds so that when they are ready to make a purchase, they see you as the best company to buy from.

BaseCamp

Francis: I wanted to talk about some of the tools that we have used as a company to really scale up. Project management is part of what we do. Every client that we work with, we have to create a project management portal for. We have to track all internal conversations.

This usually creates one problem – organisation. Sometimes emails even get lost. Sometimes files are too big to store. And, sometimes emails get deleted. To solve these problems, we usually turn to the number one tool in this company – BaseCamp!

Sam Roshan: Very few times have I seen you this excited.

Cameron Francis: I am not excited. It's the truth. For some reason, someone suggested that we try and use another tool and we went down and started using *Teamwork*. It was very expensive considering the number of people we had to migrate and the number of accounts we were dealing with. It wasn't just the right move. It was just too complicated.

BaseCamp, on the other hand, is simple, easy, beginners can use it, and it stores all of the information right there where you want it. I cannot recommend this more highly for businesses. It is by the far the number one tool that we use.

Sam Roshan: I couldn't agree more. The best thing about BaseCamp is that once you upload a project, you can add team members and you can also add your clients if you want to have other external parties involved. All communication can be accomplished through the tool and it supports all types of files.

With regards to availability, as long as you have a stable internet connection, the uploaded files can be downloaded with ease. There is even the BaseCamp mobile app that you can download and use. If you download the app, you'll be able to see notifications and smoothly communicate with the rest of your team. It's just fantastic.

Workplace by Facebook

Cameron Francis: Another tool that we want to bring your attention to is *workplace*. We know that a lot of people don't yet know about workplace. It's actually still new on the market,

having been started in the last quarter of 2016.

But basically, workplace is a tool provided by Facebook for businesses. You can download workplace today and start using it. The interface is almost similar to everyday Facebook. The difference is that you can create multiple chat rooms where you can have conversations between you and your team. Workplace also makes it possible to go social on the projects you're working on.

Francis: One thing that makes the tool quite powerful is that fact most people are already used to Facebook. We all know where to find the various features on Facebook. We are comfortable navigating all of the different sections. When you integrate that with your business, minus all of the other noise, it's just magnificent.

It gets even better if you have virtual employees in other countries. Using workplace will allow you to come much closer together as one because you're on the same page all the time.

Sam Roshan: As a global company, one of the things we take very seriously is family togetherness. At all times, we want to have a feel of what each of our members in other parts of the world is doing on a day to day basis.

If there is a particular event, we sometimes use the live video feed feature where we sit down with an iPad and record the whole event live. This allows everyone else, no matter where they are, to contribute and comment while the video is going on. So, we can actually have a conversation with the whole team.

Xero

Roshan: Maybe this time you can talk about one of the tools with regards to accounting?

Chan: Oh yeah. But there is only one tool to talk about there. We started using MYOB (Mind Your Own Business) back in 2011. It didn't have much back then. It was just QuickBooks. But it was okay, not user friendly though. It wouldn't integrate with other apps that had.

We got a new accountant recently and she recommended to use Xero. I would highly recommend it to any 21st century business. Your ability to keep on top of your accounts is literally a click away. There is also the mobile app version.

You can see everything from overdue payments from accounts coming in, a breakdown of services, peaks, and troughs. You can even generate financial reports. As long as you've set up the software properly, you can generate these reports at the click of a button.

Some of the reports you can generate include profit and loss statements all the way through to pre-tax income, performance breakdown on services, and so on. It has saved us a lot of time. If

you don't have it, you should get it right away.

Roshan: It's a very user friendly tool; pretty easy to use too. And it gives you all the data that you need cause it's on the cloud as well

Mouse Flow

Roshan: I just want to mention one more tool that can also prove invaluable to anyone who is doing digital marketing. In digital marketing, you'll need to find ways to optimise each page of your website.

There are multiple tools that you can use to track the behavior of visitors on the website. One that we've found really useful and which has helped us and a majority of our clients is *Mouse Flow*. This tool provides a heat map showing the type of visitors that come to your site, what they are doing, where they are going, and how long they are spending on each page or within the site itself.

Mouse Flow is excellent for recording the behavior of every visitor that ever comes to your website. You can identify what device they used to reach the site – was it a smartphone or a PC? You can also track how long each visitor spent on the site, and how many pages they went through.

As if that's not enough, there is a play button that you can tap to play back if you want to see where the customer went and what they did on the site.

This is really important because it will show you whether or not visitors are finding the information they are looking for. You'll also be able to determine if the content is usable and friendly.

If the visitor stays on the page for a few minutes, then they probably found something valuable and spent some time reading and digesting you content. But, if the visitor keeps scrolling without stopping, then that could be a sign that your content is not useful to them.

If you have CTAs, you can also check if visitors are clicking on it. You can then optimise your pages accordingly.

Google Search Engine Results

Francis: I've got one more and it's a tool I use for a lot of things – the Google search engine result page.

If I am a business, the first thing I am typing in is my business name. This would allow me to see what my potential customers are saying. On the results page, you can see the good, the bad and the ugly and the things you are in control of. You can also take a look at the performance of your products and services and see which of your competitors are appearing for those

searches.

A quick Google search will also tell you if you need title tag changes. When I put my products and services, I can see what those top ranked competitors have used in their titles. Which keywords have they used?

This isn't magical or complicated in any way. This is just looking at the Google search results page.

Another idea is to begin typing your product or service and look at how Google auto-completes the search queries. Autocomplete in Google search usually shows the most commonly searched phrases. It shows what your target customers are typing in the Google search engine. When you have these common search phrases, you're basically thinking like your customers!

Whenever you visit the search results page, you may also want to scroll right to the bottom to see the related phrases people are typing in the search engine.

Roshan: This is something that we actually discussed a couple of days ago. It's very interesting how you can use Google search results to learn so much.

Francis: It's telling you what Google sees as relevant.

Roshan: Maybe in our next podcast we can discuss about the extensions that people use in their browsers.

Sam Roshan: That's brilliant. We'll do that one next.

Google Keyword Planner

Cameron Francis: So, let's just wrap things up. Maybe if you use the Google Keyword Planner you can share with us how it works? I don't use it at all.

Sam Roshan: The Google Keyword Planner is mostly just used for Google AdWords. If you're running any kind of search campaigns, you can use the Keyword Planner to find out how frequently people search for the terms you intend to use in your campaign.

You can check how many times a particular keyword was used over the past 30 days. You can also narrow down your search by location. For instance, you can check how many people are searching the word "plumber" in Melbourne. You'll be able to find that data. With this data, you'll get a few ideas on keyword groupings. Like, you can start looking at a list of phrases and keywords for your campaign.

If you're using Google AdWords, after you have identified your keywords, Google will then tell you what daily budget you need to run a campaign for those keywords in order to have

presence throughout the day. You can also use the information to optimise your website.

Cameron Francis: Totally. Planner is a very good tool and I see a lot of people in the office using it. For me, however, I prefer to stay away from keyword tools. I just use my gut feel, my common sense for what people would search for and then allow the Google search results page to tell me if my thinking is right. From the search results page, I can also see close variations of the keywords I intend to use.

That's what I use. I don't look at keyword volume. I just use what I believe customers will be searching for or what customers would be doing in order to get through to my website.

Conclusion

Cameron Francis: That's it. In the next podcast, maybe I will list down all of the plug-ins in my chrome browser and go through each of them.

In the meantime, if you have any questions that you want us to answer, please send them through to us@digitalcowboys.com.au and we'll make sure that we respond promptly.

Sam Roshan: We hope that you really enjoyed this short podcast. Digital cowboys out!