Storage Company Boxes Out Local Competitors

CHALLENGE
Prompted by its national competitors’ presence on the Internet and Google™ Maps, executives at The Store House Company knew their company needed to show up in local customers’ Internet searches, too. Having an online presence is key to bringing in new customers as well as servicing current customers, says Michael Tolva, director of operations at The Store House Company.

Tolva especially wanted The Store House Company to appear on Google Maps. “I was getting annoyed that our competition was always showing up on that map, and I wanted to figure out how to get our company there,” he says. Tolva also wanted to do something about his advertising budget, which included spending $1,000 a month on one online yellow pages ad for which he couldn’t assess performance.

ACTION
Tolva added The Store House Company to Google Places in the summer of 2009. “It was incredibly easy. It took less than 15 minutes,” he says. Best of all, the Place Page and tracking tools are free.

Google Places has helped increase traffic to The Store House Company’s website as potential customers review the company’s location and pricing information. Most self-storage facility customers aren’t casual Internet browsers, “so when I get 10 clicks, that’s 10 real customers,” Tolva says. Also, since most self-storage customers pay monthly rent, The Store House Company wanted to help customers find the company online and pay their bills more easily.

RESULTS
Before launching its presence on Google Places, The Store House Company received about 400 click-throughs a month from search engines to the site. Now it averages 2,500.

As for the online yellow pages ad, “Google Places is a lot cheaper, and it’s much more trackable,” Tolva says. In fact, Google Places has become The Store House Company’s most effective form of marketing, Tolva says. He updates it weekly, posting specials and updating photos.

“If you are worried about being found online and making sure you come up on Google, this is the absolute best way to do it,” he says. “With Google Places, you have a more direct way to advertise your business. It’s better than trying to have the most optimized website out there.”

SITUATION
• National competitors
• Limited search engine leads
• Costly marketing ads with limited measurability

OUTCOME
• Improved Internet presence
• 2,500 site clicks per month from real leads
• Reduced expenditures on non-performing marketing