

# When It Comes To The Internet, Democrats Know Dick!

Democratic Presidential Hopefuls All Blunder At Online Marketing,  
Says Web Visibility Guru Stephen Gorgey

Orlando, Oct. 15 – The Democrats hoping to be their party’s nominee to face President Bush in 2004 need to take some lessons from direct marketers in how to use the Internet to get their message out.

“It is amazing how badly each of these national figures are blundering when it comes to reaching potential supporters via the Internet,” said Web visibility consultant Stephen Gorgey, president of Strategic Internet Consulting. “Each of them is making mistakes that any successful e-marketer would know to avoid.”

Gorgey advises online marketers in techniques to attract more shoppers and convert them to buyers. He released his study of the Democratic hopefuls’ websites at the DMA 86th Annual Conference & Exhibition. Strategic Internet Consulting is in Booth **1052**

“Dick Gephardt’s site is unintentionally hilarious if you understand how to optimize a site to attract traffic from Web search engines. That’s a vital skill, because search engines are how the vast majority of traffic is generated today,” said Gorgey.

“Strangely, the site is not optimized to attract visitors who search for ‘Gephardt,’ but instead is set up to attract people who search for ‘Dick,’” Gorgey said.

“The Gephardt site also makes basic mistakes found on many of the other Democratic sites. For example, it buries important information seven folders deep, when search engines typically look only three folders deep.

“Also, a quick look with the ‘view source’ option of a web browser shows that the Gephardt site uses the names of other Democratic contenders to attract visitors, which is a violation of Internet etiquette,” Gorgey said. (Using a competitor’s brand name to attract traffic to a commercial site would normally trigger a lawsuit, he noted.)

With a visibility ranking of 1.2% (that is, the likelihood of the site showing up in the first three pages of a search engine’s listing), [www.DickGephardt2004.com](http://www.DickGephardt2004.com) is not easy to find. But it is ahead of the sites for Wesley Clark ([www.clark04.com](http://www.clark04.com)), John Edwards ([www.JohnEdwards2004.com](http://www.JohnEdwards2004.com)), Rev. Al Sharpton ([www.SharptonExplore2004.com](http://www.SharptonExplore2004.com)) and



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Bob Graham ([www.GrahamForPresident.com](http://www.GrahamForPresident.com)), each of which scored a zero. (That may partially explain Graham's decision a few days ago to pull out of the race.)

The Wesley Clark site uses Java scripts extensively. These enable cool-looking effects, but present a barrier to search engines, Gorgey noted. John Kerry's website uses no meta tags (hidden text used to assist search engine "spiders," or automated browsing software. Instead, the spot that should contain descriptive meta tags reads, "add keywords here." "I guess if you searched for 'add keywords here,' the Kerry site would show up very well," Gorgey said jokingly.

Carole Moseley Braun's site, [www.CarolForPresident.com](http://www.CarolForPresident.com), scores 3.1%, poor by the standards of a commercial website but about in the middle of the Democratic pack. Joseph Lieberman's site, [www.Joe2004.com](http://www.Joe2004.com), and the Dennis Kucinich site, [www.Kucinich.net](http://www.Kucinich.net), are well above 5%. The Kucinich site uses no keyword tags and has many broken links, including a link to the candidate's own speeches. Lieberman's site buries information many folders deep and uses excessive Java script.

Howard Dean has jumped ahead of other Democratic contenders in part because of his use of the Internet The [www.DeanForAmerica.com](http://www.DeanForAmerica.com) site scores a healthy 26%. But it is littered with broken links, and fails to use descriptive tags effectively.

"Dean has an enormous potential advantage over his competitors, but his own website is working against him," Gorgey said. "A few hours spent correctly optimizing the site could easily double the traffic he attracts. What he's done online is the equivalent of opening a campaign headquarters on a side street nobody drives on, not putting up a sign, and keeping the front door locked."

Strategic Internet Consulting. ([www.TargetLogics.com](http://www.TargetLogics.com)), based in Glendale, California, provides website profitability analysis and enhancement to online marketing companies. The firm uses proprietary techniques to improve a site's search engine visibility, and to maximize the likelihood that visitors will make a purchase. The company received a Golden Addy Award for its Internet marketing work, which during the last 12 months resulted in a 50% average increase in customer traffic to the sites of Strategic Internet Consulting clients.

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