

## 14.5: Online Media and Retail

### Learning Objectives

- Discuss the various online media elements used by retailers

It's likely very easy to conflate on-line activity with e-commerce, thinking only of the web as a place to transact, not necessarily as a channel through which marketers advertise and promote. Yet, it's important to step back from e-commerce efforts and evaluate on-line search as a tool that helps consumers interact with firms and their brands. Equally important, when these are owned assets, i.e. the web properties of the firms and brands themselves, they become even more important messaging vehicles. That is, marketers are responsible for creating, curating and managing content, so that it has the most value and resonance for shoppers.

For example, digital marketing, including both Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is used to connect sellers with potential buyers. As you may have read in [Multi-Channel Retailing](#), SEO requires web development, optimization and maintenance to ensure the on-line visibility of a firm's website in natural or organic search. SEM, for its part, is a form of paid advertising that increases the visibility of a firm's website in search engine results, i.e. through Google or Bing. Firms bid on key words to ensure that when searches using those keywords are made, their website appears among the search results. But, regardless, the goal of each is to deliver curious and/ or interested shoppers to owned websites, where marketers have placed relevant content in multiple media—copy, photography, animation or video.

But, not all on-line activity takes place on owned media assets like company and brand websites. Instead, consumers and shoppers might find themselves on independent sites, which offer ratings & reviews. Or, they might traffic blogs or video blogs, where influencers give their assessment of brands and products. This can have particular impact, if critiques are negative or the influencer has a broad following, which amplifies the issue for the firm.

That said, on-line properties can be helpful elements of the IMC mix. In particular, marketers should look for opportunities to leverage their owned platforms, given their control over content management. However, this works only if the firm is making the appropriate investments to ensure SEO and to support SEM.

### Practice Questions

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...sessments/9309>

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