

**The Maids<sup>®</sup>**

Referred for a reason.

**IS SEO WORTH IT  
FOR FRANCHISES?**

**Do Independent Franchise Marketing  
Efforts Cannibalize Corporate Marketing Efforts?**

# CASE STUDY

## SEO FOR FRANCHISES



## Do Independent Franchise Marketing Efforts Cannibalize Corporate Marketing Efforts?

### THE PROBLEM

The Maids of Southern Montgomery County, Maryland was the #1 ranked branch out of all The Maids franchises in North America for four years in a row for their high quality cleaning services. For years, the company relied on its franchise listing on The Maids' corporate website (maids.com) to generate local leads.

To increase their online presence and capture even more local leads, our client was interested in creating and marketing a website of their own. However, they were worried that doing so would simply cannibalize the leads that consistently came in through the corporate efforts.



### THE SOLUTION

#### Know Where Your Leads Are Coming From

Before any work was done, we knew the first step would be to set up phone call tracking for The Maids corporate so we could accurately determine how many total leads (phone calls and contact form submissions) were coming from corporate. Our goal was to look at the whole picture and increase the total volume of leads—not just swap one source of leads for another. And without properly tracking everything on the front end, we would never be able to answer that question.

#### Maximizing Online Real Estate

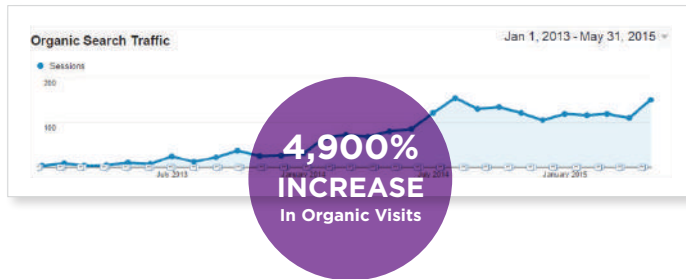
We built a new website for our client in December 2012 (maidsinmd.com). It was important that the new site followed The Maids corporate brand standards, was easy to navigate, and was built on a universal platform (WordPress).

In January 2013, we started doing ongoing SEO work for the franchise. As with most brand new websites, it took a little longer to get the organic traffic off the ground. In our first month, the new site received a measly 3 organic visits!

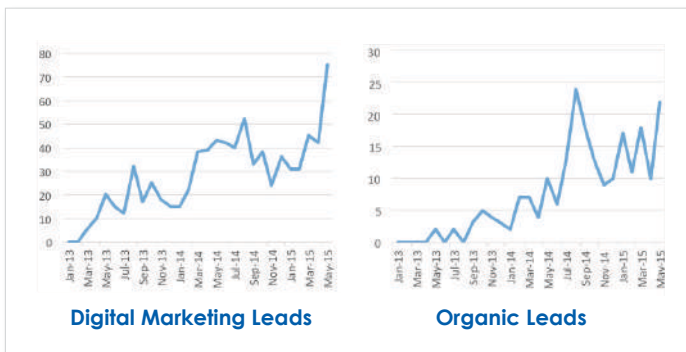
In the meantime, we set up a pay per click (PPC) campaign to send some additional qualified visits to the new website while waiting for the SEO to pick up. Even after we started to gain some organic traction, we left the PPC campaign on. The idea here was to maximize the franchise's online real estate—improving the likelihood of someone clicking on their ad, organic listing, or even corporate listing!

### THE RESULTS

SEO is a long term strategy, but it eventually took off! From January 2013 through May 2015, **organic visits to the website increased 4,900%**.



Leads have increased as well and are currently at an all-time high. We went from having 0 digital marketing (PPC and SEO) leads a month to 75. Organic leads continue to become a bigger source of leads, as well.



So now for the important question—did the SEO/PPC work that we were doing simply cannibalize the leads that would have come through corporate’s efforts? There was a slight decrease in leads from The Maids corporate (some cannibalization), but the increase in digital marketing leads from our efforts was so significant, that NET leads were up 30% YOY, when comparing 2014 to 2013.

Leads	2013	2014	% Change
<b>Maids Corporate</b>	341	250	<b>-27%</b>
<b>Digital Marketing</b>	177	422	<b>+138%</b>
<b>Total</b>	518	672	<b>+30%</b>

### TAKEAWAY

This case study shows that franchises can be successful through digital marketing efforts, even when their corporate group has its own strategies. Of course, the only way you can tell is if you **TRACK EVERYTHING. Better data = better results.**

In addition, if you want more leads from the web, it’s important to maximize your online real estate. Today, an absolute minimal presence online means being on the following sites (or types of sites):

- **Google** (first page presence for your top -500 most relevant keywords)
- **Google+ Local** (Google Places for Business, Google Maps, etc.)
- **Google AdWords** (paid ads DO NOT significantly cannibalize clicks from the organic listings)
- **Bing & Yahoo** (first page presence for your top keywords and paid ads)
- **Facebook, LinkedIn & Twitter**

### ABOUT BLUE CORONA

Learn more about how we can help you create a highly-effective online presence, accurately track your advertising results, and use content marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC), web design, and conversion rate optimization to get more leads and sales for your business from the web.

*Founded in 2008, Blue Corona is a data-driven online marketing company that helps businesses accurately measure and track their advertising efforts to generate more leads and sales from the web. For each client, Blue Corona implements in-bound internet marketing strategies such as pay per click (PPC) advertising, search engine optimization (SEO), online lead generation, ad tracking, conversion rate optimization, and website redesigns. Blue Corona was ranked on the Inc. 500 list in 2012 and again on the Inc. 5000 list for 2013 and 2014. The company has offices in both Gaithersburg, MD and Charlotte, N.C.*

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