



# The ROI of **SEO Organic Content**



## Executive Summary

eZdia conducted a controlled organic content test with a large and mature eCommerce site. The site generates about 1 million visits and about 25 thousand orders every week. The test rewrote the content for about 300 pages and then measured the incremental return on content spend (ROCS). The hypothesis was that keyword rich content designed to attract, engage and convert visitors would generate a higher ROI than other acquisition channels like Paid Search.

### The results were stunning

- The ROI of Organic Content was 3x higher than return on Paid Search
- For every \$1 invested in content, the client is on pace to generate an incremental \$60 in revenue from organic search.



“The results were stunning”



## Organic Content Defined

While most eCommerce sites use manufacturer supplied content, unfortunately without original content, the organic search benefits are limited.

### Organic Content is written with the following goals:

#### Keyword Optimized:

While some optimize exclusively for average monthly search volume (AMS), eZdia's Organic Content for eCommerce uses keyword value or cost-per-click (CPC) to help find the keywords that are most likely to result in an order.

#### Competitive Content:

Organic Content is designed to stand out to Google and other search engines. It's designed to be the best result for any given search query and that often means adding both content and keyword depth to deliver a better search result.

#### Objection Handling:

Organic Content is designed to go beyond simple features and benefits and should incorporate strategies to identify and overcome common customer objections.

## Test Design

This test was conducted in late 2019 and early 2020. The product selection process began by identifying a set of Product Categories and then randomly assigning different categories to either the Test Group or the Control Group.

Once identified, the Test Group got a content enhancement of about 200 unique words of content plus updates to the titles, headings and meta descriptions.

eZdia developed content for every category page and then select product pages within each category. By contrast, the Control Group's content was frozen for the duration of the test. The Control Group is used to measure all the other changes in the business from seasonality to marketing and sales campaigns. Any growth in the Control Group was subsequently subtracted from the Test Group's success in order to isolate the incremental return on content spend (ROCS).

After creating and publishing the data, it was then time to wait. Google and other search engines don't typically reward new content immediately. There is no exact time frame for how long it takes to see organic search results, but it's not unusual for it to take 3 to 6 months for the performance to mature.



## KPIs

ROCS, like its Paid Search equivalent called Return on Ad Spend (ROAS), is a measure of return on investment. The most important metric is revenue, on ROCS is used to measure the ROI of Organic Content. While the test tracked incremental success for transactions and organic traffic, the focus was on optimizing for revenue.

Keyword tracking was not used in this test since it's difficult to measure total revenue using keyword rank tracking.

As the table below demonstrates, we established a stable “before” period in late 2019 and then analyzed the test pages by measuring the average revenue (\$) per page per day. We then compared this same measure for the 2020 “after” period. The lift is the difference between Before and After and the Net Lift is the Test Lift minus the Control Lift.

### Incremental Return

Analytics Data	Before	After	Lift
Test	\$ / Page / Day	\$ / Page / Day	▲
Control	\$ / Page / Day	\$ / Page / Day	▲

**Net Lift** = Test Lift - Control Lift

**ROCS** = (Net Lift \* Expected Life) / Content Cost

*Formula used to measure return on content spend (ROCS)*



## Result

The test group generated about \$6.25 in incremental revenue per page per day plus we saw lifts in orders, visits and the conversion rate when compared to the control group. While \$6.25 is a modest number, over the same two-year horizon that's in excess of an incremental \$4,500 per SKU.

The ROCS topped out just north of 60x and that compares to the client's Paid Search ROAS goal of 20x. In other words, for every dollar spent on content, the client expects to generate \$60 in incremental revenue above and beyond what they generate from their other demand generation programs.

But the news didn't end there. We looked at the same Test and Control pages to understand their Paid Search results during these same time periods. Here we saw a significant lift in conversion rate for the advertised products that received new content compared to those that did not.



## Conclusions

Most people believe that SEO is their most profitable channel, but few have employed scientific methodology to isolate the profits. Unlike technical SEO which improves the readability of a site, original Organic Content is used to compete with other eCommerce sites competing for the same customers.

In this example, the client concluded that Organic Search was indeed its most profitable acquisition channel.

## About eZdia

eZdia provides content creation services for eCommerce and specializes in search engine marketing strategies for eCommerce sites. eZdia's services include content research, content validation and content creation services designed to acquire, engage and convert visitors into customers.

eZdia's clients include Amazon, Walmart, Lowe's, Zappos and many other large eCommerce sites.