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VAT No: CHE-101.090.265 MWST

PRESS RELEASE

First phase results of a new SIINDA Landscape Study of the online presence of 350,000 European SMEs shows serious deficiencies and opportunities for improvement.

Summary: The Search and Information Industry Association (SIINDA) has completed the first phase of its research study on the quality of online presence for over 350,000 Small and Medium Sized businesses (SMBs) in Germany, Belgium, Ireland, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Switzerland and Malta. The study provides insights on how SMBs are performing on key attributes for a successful online presence. Results will be presented at the SIINDA LOCALCOMM conference in London April 10-12, 2019

Thalwil, Switzerland, February 13th, 2019: The Search and Information Industry Associate (SIINDA) has partnered with its members and Silktide to conduct one of the largest and most detailed studies on the online presence of Small and Medium sized businesses (SMBs) in Europe.

Covering eight countries and over 350,000 businesses, the study analyses 100 data points covering Website build quality, Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) factors and Social Media presence. These factors all impact the “discoverability” of SMBs and their engagement with new and existing customers. In today’s world that means being visible where customers are searching. With the dominance of Google search, Facebook, Amazon and Apple it is vital that businesses have properly built and optimised websites and that their presence on social media is meaningful.

Key Findings

- **More than 37% of websites analysed are not optimised for mobile phones or tablets.** As searches on non-desktop devices increase, many businesses are providing a poor user experience and losing customers. Research by Google shows 50% of people said that even if they liked a business, they would use them less often if the site was not mobile-friendly. (Think with Google, Sept 2012). In addition, ranking on search engines is negatively impacted when a site is not mobile optimised.
- **Only 38% of sites had any sort of analytics tool to understand visitor behaviour on their site.** This indicates that businesses are not engaging with their website to understand who their visitors are, where their visitors are coming from, what they are looking for and how they are navigating the site. This is a missed opportunity to identify ways to engage and capture new customers
- **46% of websites have not been updated within a year.** This indicates that many businesses are not fully engaging with their website as a “living” marketing tool providing by updates, offers or new product / service information. This can be a handicap when trying to improve their ranking on search engines as “active” websites with frequently refreshed, relevant content is viewed more positively.
- **81% of businesses did not link their website to their Social Media accounts (i.e. Facebook, Twitter or Instagram).** Social Media is the second most used source of information on businesses behind search engines and is a valuable tool for SMEs to provide more frequent updates as well as a source for reviews and customer feedback.
- **Only 8% of websites utilise video.** Research by Animoto in 2015 identified that four times as many customers would rather watch a video about a product than read about it. Google reinforced that idea in 2016 identifying that almost 50% of internet users look for videos related to a product or service before visiting a store. SMBs need to make more use of video on their websites to attach and convert new customers.



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- **Website load times on mobile devices are slow, averaging 8.9 seconds.** Long load times on mobile devices provide a poor user experience and increases the likelihood of losing that visitor. The probability of a customer abandoning a website increases by 25% when load times approach 5 seconds and 50% when it approaches 10 seconds (Think With Google, Feb 2018).

“The results show that SMEs need to engage more actively with their online properties to improve their chances to attracting and converting potential customers,” said Kimberli Lewis, SIINDA Managing Director. “Online marketing requires constant involvement by a business and it is not a passive tool especially with the constant changes in search algorithms.”

The study provides SIINDA members and other Digital Agencies with benchmark data to measure and evaluate their SMB clients’ online presence and identify ways they can win in the local market.

Kimberli Lewis, Managing Director and Board Member of SIINDA said “As one of the top growing non-profit digital associations in Europe, SIINDA want to ensure that we are a thought leader in the digital market and at the same time provide agencies, technology companies and our members with useful market research which can help them implement actionable plans. Our European study is out first of many studies we will do in 2019 and we have also just expanded the study to the Middle East and Africa”

Rentato Bottini, Director Business Development Silktime said, “The Study provides detailed insight across over 100 different Digital Marketing data points including what Content Management System, Analytics and even vendor. Combining this insight with industry sector and geographic information, digital marketing providers can benchmark performance effectively and build robust segmentation models targeting those SMBs needing the most help.”

With the dominance in online marketing of Facebook, Google, Apple, and Amazon and the constant development of new, disruptive technologies, small business owners need support and guidance more than ever from “trusted advisors” and experts who can help them remain effective in an ever-changing business environment. This is especially important as SMBs often do not have the time to educate themselves nor the time to actively manage their digital marketing presence.

This study will be presented in detail at the **SIINDA LOCALCOMM conference** in London on April 10-12, 2019 [SIINDA LOCALCOMM 2019](#), along with other actionable and thought-provoking content for Digital Agencies and Publishers from industry leading professionals. The results for the Middle East study will be revealed on March 6-7 in Dubai at [SIINDA LOCAL COMM MEA](#). You can also hear a discussion on the study on VoiceAmerica Business station under [The Digital Presence of SMB's](#), airing February 19 and available in podcast form thereafter.



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About SIINDA

SIINDA is the **Search & Information Industry Association**, a leading European based non-profit association bringing together companies in the search (digital, mobile, print, vertical directories, location based services and platforms), information, data, on-demand and telecommunication sectors.

SIINDA membership includes conferences, market research, white papers, training and other services. For information on membership go to [SIINDA](http://SIINDA.com).

About Silktide

Silktide is a web intelligence company headquartered in the UK. We make software to help people understand and improve their websites. To learn more about their products and services go to [SILKTIDE](http://SILKTIDE.com).

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