

THE DIGITAL MARKETING NOTEBOOK

By Thabani Mfandaizwa
2020



Introduction

Technological convergence and the multiplication of devices has resulted to an opening up of new sophisticated ways of thinking about digital marketing and have pushed the boundaries towards a new concept of a virtual, user centred, more measurable, ubiquitous and interactive marketing model.

Research indicates that most marketers are still thinking in terms of product, place, promotion and price, known as McCarthy's variables or 4Ps model of marketing, which seems to shadow the role of the consumer in the marketing process. The 4Ps model is more if not only production-focused marketing paradigm.

This gave rise to counter models like Lauterborn's user centred 4Cs marketing model. He changes the 4Ps of the marketing mix to the 4Cs that turn product into **customer solution**, price into **cost to the customer**, place into **convenience** and promotion into **communication**. This is a new perspective for operational marketing that will be of special relevance for the digital world.

The notebook will try to outline how digital marketing can be used to approach marketing in this customer centred model.

Also note that in this day marketing is no longer not only focused exclusively on consumers but it's also bringing different audiences and stakeholders on the marketing table.

For the case of this notebook, I submit that today's buyers are tech savvy and world wide web maniacs.

By the end of the notebook it must be clear that digital marketing drive a significantly higher return on investment than traditional marketing philosophies. Marketers that are not using digital marketing currently, are missing out on valuable leads and revenue.

The notebook outlines a brief "what, how and why" on the crucial (according to the writer) components and functions of digital marketing .

What Is Digital Marketing?

Some marketers defined it as the application and projection of traditional marketing, its tools and strategies, on the world wide web. However, the multi functionality and complexity of the worldwide web and its appropriation for marketing have fostered the development of marketing models and philosophies that are not practical anywhere on offline marketing platforms .

Online digital marketing has brought a new phenomenon that brings together customisation and mass distribution of marketing and sales material to accomplish marketing plan goals.

Digital marketing success is centred on the application of the three R's of advertising which are, ***reach, relevance, and return on investment (ROI)***.

Digital Marketing Strategy

“If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail!”
~by Benjamin Franklin

More than half of the brands either don't have a clearly defined digital marketing strategy or haven't integrated it into their corporate marketing culture yet. Although some marketing campaigns may succeed without a formally laid out strategy, it's usually a recipe for failure.

According to Investopedia, a digital marketing strategy is a business's overall game plan for reaching prospective consumers and turning them into customers of the products or services the business provides.

Strong marketing strategies are built on the foundation of proper market research and marketing plan, defining the business's value propositions and key brand messaging.

First explain the goals you want to achieve with your marketing efforts when constructing a digital marketing strategy. Outline what you want to achieve, who you want to reach, and what you want to sell.

Critical components of a marketing strategy

Start by defining your long term goals which are the core of your marketing strategy.

Questions that will help define business objectives include:

- How much market share do you need to capture?
- How much revenue do you expect to yield?
- What's the audience size you're planning to reach?

Be specific when setting these objectives and where possible quantify them in common respective units to allow monitoring, control and performance measurements.

"SMART" Goals

SMART stands for **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound.

As you won't reach your overall business objectives soon after you set them, your SMART goals will be the stepping stones you'll need to complete to achieve your initial objectives.

For instance, if your long-term objective is to double size your audience within 2 years, your SMART objectives might be the following:

Launch Twitter chats with niche experts and gain +1,000 followers by the end of the quarter.

Publish 5 survey-based studies (viral content) during the first year.

Increase the blog's organic traffic from email by 10% per month by the end of the first year.

Target audience

How can your product or service solve your customers' problems? To answer this question you need to know your target customer first.

Lots of business owners make a common mistake thinking they know their audience well enough without the need to spend time conducting market research. With so many marketing approaches existing today, identifying your customers' locations and age groups is not enough.

To build an effective marketing strategy, you need to conduct in-depth research of your target market:

Step 1: Compile data on your current customers. Talk to your sales department, check website analytics, leverage your experience of communicating with clients, etc.

Step 2: Social media analytics. What are your audience's demographics? Who are the most active users? Use social media analytics tools to discover who interacts with your social media accounts.

Step 3: Research your competition. Although you won't be able to collect detailed data on your competitors' customers and followers, you can discover which markets they're targeting and whether their efforts are effective.

Step 4: Define your audience's pain points. To make your statement appealing enough, you need to understand the problems your customers are trying to solve.

Step 5: Revisit your audience research regularly.

When identifying the target market, the research must be focused on buyer personas.

A buyer persona is a semi-fictional representation of your ideal customer based on market research and real data about your existing customers.

In other words, a buyer persona is a fictional character created based on the key characteristics of your target audience.

Your buyer persona's profile should be as detailed as possible and contain information that will later help you adjust your marketing campaigns. Different brands use different approaches to building the portrait of their ideal customer, but the following data is a must:

Location, Language, Age group, Gender, Interests, Job title, Hierarchical position, Education, Income, Relationship status, Pain points, etc.

Different buyer personas are necessary when dealing with a segmented market.

Brand message

It is a reflection of the spirit and selling proposition of your company that stands you out and add value to your brand. This serves to highlight the benefits your brand offers and claim the thing that differentiates you from any other competing brands on the market. In most cases the brand message plays a crucial role in determining whether you close sales or otherwise.

Brand messaging must not be confused with slogans as one and the same thing but rather see slogans as a component of the brand message. Brand message tends to be the unwritten message that customers decode from your marketing and use of your product or service.

It's rather a full messaging framework that will affect all your marketing activities and be present in every piece of content you produce. Everything you create, both internally and externally, should be able to map back to this messaging.

Buyer's journey

It refers to the way your customer moves through, from experiencing symptoms of their problem to deciding it's your brand that can solve it. It's marketing wisdom to align your marketing efforts with your respective buyer's journey to capture your prospects' attention and stay relevant.

Questions when defining buyer's journey:

- ☐ How would you describe the problem that you wish to help your customers to address?
- ☐ How experienced are they when they start defining their problem?
- ☐ How can you educate them on the subject?
- ☐ Where do they usually go to find the solution?
- ☐ Which sources do they trust the most in such cases?
- ☐ What are the most common options/alternatives they are most likely to find during their research?

After answering such questions, you'll be able to provide and optimize content that will be useful for your prospective customers at different stages of the buyer's journey.

Competitor analysis

A strategic assessment on how your competitors acquire customers, their strengths and weaknesses.

Identify your competition.

Check their websites, Brand message, What promotions are they offering? What is their value proposition?, How do they communicate with their customers?

Scan your competitors' social media accounts. What differentiates their marketing campaigns? Search for mentions of your competitors online to find out what other people talk about them.

Use competitor analysis tools. With platforms like **SEMrush** and **Ahrefs**, you can find out what your competitors are doing with their SEO. Which keywords generate the maximum traffic for your competitors? What keywords did they miss? Where do they get links? You can also go with **SimilarWeb** to get an idea of which channels your competitors use to reach their marketing goals.

Check their top-performing content. Platforms like Buzzsumo let you track activity around your competitors' content marketing efforts

Business Models used to Estimate Payments in Online Digital Advertising

Some of the online advertising models available include the following:

- **CPM** (cost per mille [1000]). It takes into account the number of times an ad is shown on the screen, also known as impressions. The CPM indicates the cost of 1000 online impressions of the ad. This system is basically used for branding campaigns, and the process of brand equity is the most economic option of all.

- **CPC** (cost per click). This is related to the interactions of the user with the ad through clicks. They are used to divert traffic to a website, paying only when the user clicks on the ad and is redirected to a Web (therefore the

name PPC, Pay Per Click). CPC does not guarantee sales, but it ensures traffic and is less volatile than CPM.

- **CPL** (cost per lead) refers to a contract based on quality contacts without implying direct sales. In particular, CPL is the price that is paid for each user who completes the objective or lead. Such leads vary depending on the marketing goals of the company; a lead can be to fill-in a Web form, becoming a follower of the company on social media or to disseminate content on the site.

- **CPA** (cost per acquisition) is hiring ads per sales; that is, payment is done for each action that has generated a customer. In the mobile environment, this is also referred to as CPI (cost per install) and indicates the applications installed after interacting with the ad. In this case, the installation of an **RPP**, even if it is free, becomes a purchase.

FORMS OF ONLINE DIGITAL MARKETING

There are plenty of forms digital marketing in this technology era but I believe that the most cost effective and efficient are,

- ① Search engine optimization(SEO)
- ② Ecommerce
- ③ Pay-per-click advertising (PPC)
- ④ Content marketing
- ⑤ Social media marketing
- ⑥ Email marketing

NB: Most of today digital marketing efforts have a combination of 2 or more of those digital marketing forms. For example one may be doing content marketing in complementary with social media marketing.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

It refers to the process of manipulating the back-end of your website and content in its web community in a way that makes your site more visible and easy to read to search engines. Doing this right will cause search engines to display your website as one of the top results after a related search query on the search engine results page(SERP).

SEO utilises unpaid traffic which is also known as "natural" or "organic" results rather than "direct traffic" or "paid traffic".

Unpaid traffic comes from different kinds of searches, such as image search , video search, academic search , news search, and industry-specific vertical search engines.

Good SEOs expand your relevance and visibility on the search engines. You'll reach and engage more potential customers.

Forms of SEO

1. On-Page SEO Optimization

It deals with those elements that website administrator's have total control over. On-page SEO deals with the deeper levels of your site's HTML makeup.

On Page SEO practices include the strategic manipulation of the following components of your website or page:

1. Title tag ;

- *Limit your title tags to 55-60 characters (including spaces)*
- *Put your targeted keywords in the title tag of each page on your site*
- *Push the keyword closer to the beginning of the title (ONLY if it sounds natural)*
- *Don't stuff your keywords*
- *Include brand at the end of the title tag, separated by a pipe bar (|) For instance: "BlackEight Media SEO | Digital Third Coast"*

2. Meta Description;

The meta description on your website interprets and communicate with search engines about what each page is about. It also helps human visitors to quickly have a brief understanding on what the page is about.

3. Headings;

These are usually the largest words in font size on the page, and for that reason, search engines give them a little more weight than your other page copy. Work your target keywords into the headings of each web page but make sure you accurately reflect your page's great content. H1s must be limited to one per page, all other headers are H2 or H3.

4. Internal links;

Relevant anchor text must be clickable as a hyperlink (usually indicated by blue font color and underline). Page content must include 1 to 3 relevant internal links.

5. Schema markup;

It refers to the structuring of data in ways that helps Google and other search engines better understand the contents of a page. Google also uses certain types of structured data to display "rich results" on SERPs such as step-by-step instructions with an image carousel. These rich results often appear at or near the top of SERPs and generally have higher click-through-rates than normal organic listings.

*Google prefers structured data to use schema.org vocabulary, and recommends using **JSON-LD** format. . There are a variety of ways to add structured data to your website (plugins, Google Tag Manager, etc.). Get a professional involved if you're not able to write code.*

6. URL Structure;

Insert keywords into your URLs where they fit strategically. However, do not go changing all of your current URLs just so that they have keywords in them. Old URLs should not be changed, unless you plan on redirecting your old ones to your new ones.

- *Label your directories and folders in a way that makes sense for users*
- *Don't repeat keywords in your URL more than once.*

Keywords are helpful, but overdoing it affects user experience. Keep URLs as short as possible

7. Mobile devices friendliness;

*In recent years, Google has prioritized mobile page loading speed as a key site ranking metric. Website design needs to consider the mobile user experience. One way to check and optimize website layout for mobile is to generate a **Mobile Usability Report** which identifies any issues your website may have.*

8. Page Content;

The content on your pages needs to be useful and relevant to your targeted user population. If they search for something too specific to find your page, they need to be able to find what they're looking for. It needs to be easy to read and provide value to the end user. Google has various ways to measure if your content is useful.

Aim for at least 500 words of copy. Although there is no exact formula for how many words a page should have, Google seems to prefer when a page has a lot of great content surrounding your targeted keywords

Copy must be unique to each page, not duplicated from other pages on your site, and should directly address your visitors' search queries.

Only when it fits naturally, push the keyword closer to the beginning of the title.

9. User experience;

Google is working on a new ranking signal which we are expecting to come out in 2021 that prioritizes websites with positive user experiences.

*The 'page experience signal' will consist of **Core Web Vitals**, plus mobile-friendliness, safe-browsing, HTTPS security, and intrusive interstitial guidelines.*

According to Google, "optimizing for these factors makes the web more delightful for users across all web browsers and surfaces, and helps sites evolve towards user expectations on mobile.

*** Core Web Vitals;**

A common set of signals that are deemed to be the most "critical" to all user's web experiences.

The purpose of these signals is to quantify the user experience with a website, from page visual stability and load time, to interactive experiences.

Core Web Vitals covers the following;

- **Largest Contentful Paint (LCP)** - measures perceived page loading speed and marks the point at which the majority of the page content has downloaded.
- **First Input Delay** - quantifies user experience of a user's initial engagement with a page.

- **Cumulative Layout Shift** - quantifies the amount of layout shift on visible page content and measures visual stability of a page. It's usually caused by images without dimensions, dynamically injected content, web fonts causing FOIT/FOUT, and other embeds added without dimensions.

To check your LCP score, access your Google PageSpeed Insights and **make sure your page hits LCP within 2.5 seconds** by removing unnecessary third-party scripts that may be running, upgrading your web host, activating "lazy loading" so page elements load only as users scroll down the page, and remove any large page elements that may be slowing it down.

One of the simplest ways to optimize cumulative layout shift is to add height and width dimensions to each new site element. Also, avoid adding new content above existing content on a page unless it responds to user interaction.

11. Social tags:

Having your content shared on social tells Google that people find your content relevant, helpful and reputable. Not every page on your site is share-worthy, but you can optimize the pages that are with these tips.

- Make sure you have Open Graph tags and Twitter Cards installed
- Make it easy with links like "share this on facebook and use of social share buttons for each post.

12. Fast loading webpages (Page Load Speed):

Google wants to help its users find what they're looking for as quickly as possible to provide the best user experience. Therefore, optimizing your pages to load faster helps your site rank higher in the search results.

Google has a tool called **Page Speed Insights** that will analyze your site on both mobile and desktop. and then suggest tips to optimize page speed. There are also several quick fixes to eliminate whatever is bogging your site down and slowing your page load time.

Key site speed factors to consider includes the following :

- Minimizing HTTP requests
- Making sure server response time is <200ms
- Setting browser caching to at least a week or longer
- Enabling Gzip compression
- Having image sizes under 100kb (.jpg, .png, .gif)
- Placing all CSS in an external style sheet
- Minifying all JS, CSS and HTML
- Prioritizing above the fold content loading

13. Image names and Alt tags:

Content management systems allows you to add something called “alt text” to all images on your website. This text isn’t visible to the average visitor . It is used by screen reader software to help blind internet users understand the content of your images. Search engines crawl images in a similar way, so inserting some relevant keywords while accurately describing the image will help search engines understand your page’s content.

Writing an alt attribute for each image keeps your website in compliance with WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines). Keep the following things in mind when writing alt text:

- *Thoroughly describe the image in 8-10 words*
- *Include your targeted keyword where it sounds most natural*
- *Include, if relevant, a geo-locator (e.g., Johannesburg)*

2. Off-Page SEO Optimization

It deals with increasing the presence and authority of your domain on the web community by getting legitimate and relevant links from other websites.

This is the reason why webmasters like Wikipedia ranks for pretty much everything under the sun.

There’s a score called **“Domain Authority”** that calculates how authoritative your website is compared to other sites.

The biggest off-page SEO factor is the number and quality of backlinks to your website. Some of the ways you can build links to your website are:

- Creating awesome content that people want to link to because it is valuable.
- Social media shares of your content that ultimately generate links.
- Outreach e-mails to influencers in your industry that ultimately link to you.
- Guest blogging on sites related to yours. These guest posts will have links back to your site.

While link quantity is still important, content creators and SEO professionals are know that link quality is now more important than link quantity , and as such, creating shareable content is the first step to earning valuable links and improving your off-page SEO.

Make sure you’re playing in the same sandbox with your competitors . Buying links used to be the way of link building; however, Google is now penalizing domains for buying links to manipulate page rankings. You can also be penalized for submitting your links to link directories whose sole purpose is to increase your domain authority. Again, quality wins out over quantity when it comes to link building.

SEO Conclusion

On-page and off-page SEO work together to improve your domain's search engine rankings as complementary factors. Just like building a house (Website), you want to set a strong foundation (On-page SEO) first before building the walls and roof (Off-page SEO).

Balancing the two will help make your website “bilingual” so that your users can understand it as well as the search engine robots- and that’s how your rankings start to improve.

ECOMMERCE

E-commerce refers to the development of transactions between companies and/or individuals on Internet, mainly for buying and selling products and services, using applications such as e-mail, instant messages, shopping carts or Web services, to name a few.

The progressive penetration of Internet and its possibilities have multiplied online trade relationships. This trend started in 1970 with the transfer of funds, with the arrival of the World Wide Web, and it became an opportunity for traditional companies and the beginning of businesses operating only online.

The boom of mobile devices, smartphones in particular, has opened the doors to mobile commerce (m-commerce), i.e. electronic commerce using a mobile device

Ecommerce is an increasingly wider and more diverse phenomenon; therefore,

classifications are difficult. In any case, the most widely used classification of ecommerce is based on the nature of its transactions looking at the relationship between companies and/or between them and their final customers.

Ecommerce Functions and Techniques

Targeting customers, personas " markets.

Have a clear understanding of who you're targeting , what characteristics define them and where they're located, this shields you from running inefficient campaigns that waste money targeting low-converting, unqualified individuals.

Make sure you know their demographics, Purchasing power, etc.

Situation analysis.

A thorough assessment of the current state of the business, the competition and the overall marketing plan.

Leave no stone unturned. A better understanding of your current situation will lead to better decision making, and eventually, better results.

Pricing & Positioning Strategy.

Ensure your pricing and positioning provides real value to your target audience.

Distribution & Fulfillment plan.

Have a clear understanding of the distribution and order fulfillment requirements involved in the sell of your good or product.

This might be packing and shipping yourself, overseeing a small team, or leveraging a third party fulfillment shop, you have to make sure they are cost effective and efficient to meet the demand of your upcoming marketing push.

Determining your sales & lead generation strategy.

Imagine a sales funnel graphic that shows your buyer's journey from **Awareness** to **Interest** to **Desire** to **Action**.

At the top of funnel, there is the brand awareness building strategies that don't often produce immediate conversions – like posting organic social content or programmatic display ads .

And at the bottom, you'll see Google search network advertisements, Instagram retargeting ads, and direct email communication.

As a marketer, you'll want to consider the primary purpose of every campaign strategy you employ and where it fits in your funnel.

Technology & reporting softwares.

- Make sure that the technology that you use is able to track the effectiveness of my marketing endeavours.
- Must be capable to determine the status of KPIs.
- It must assist the team accurately determine the ROI of respective marketing actions.

Conversions.

The turning of leads into actual sales.

We strongly recommend rolling out those campaigns first to generate sales and positive momentum.

Joint Ventures & Partnerships -

Complementary brands can foster success through partnerships . You can co-create content that exposes both brands to each other's email list. Or bundle a curated holiday gift package across several brands. The opportunities are endless, and when the brands align, both brands benefit.

AOV - It refers to the average order value. Tier your discount codes to incentive larger purchases or offer expedited shipping for orders 50% higher than your current AOV.

Referrals - Make provisions and incentives that allow current customers the opportunity to refer a friend. They become your brand ambassadors whilst trying to reap more incentives and/or points.

Apart from the quality of the product that the description and the picture on the online shop match the product, companies must be very careful with the shipping options, especially in the case of physical products. In online sales, transportation and the delivery of the product become the only phases where the customer has physical contact with the company, and therefore, a bad experience with the courier or deficient packaging can ruin the purchase experience.

Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate marketing is an online sales strategy that lets a product owner promote sales by allowing others (Affiliates) targeting the same audience to earn a commission when they recommend the product to others. At the same time, it makes it possible for affiliates to earn money on product sales without creating products of their own.

Simply put, affiliate marketing involves referring a product or service by sharing it on a blog, social media platforms, or website. The affiliate earns a commission each time someone makes a purchase through the unique link associated with their recommendation.

In essence, it means taking the traditional commission sales & marketing model to the internet. Amazon was a pioneer in this type of marketing, in 1996, it allowed other websites to sell their books in exchange for a percentage of the unit sold.

Affiliate networks –they are the mediating platforms between advertisers and affiliates. They provide them with applications and tools to make follow ups on sales. Affiliate networks also act as regulators of trade relations between merchants and affiliates. In South Africa such networks include Bid or Buy, Mantality, 4aKid, etc. The affiliate network is supported by a commission that the merchant pays the affiliate

For the merchant, the advantages are that they only pay if the target is

accomplished and it can reach its potential clients through the hundreds of Webs promoting them. However, some affiliate networks require a monthly fee and even an entry fee which may prove to be uneconomic for small to medium sized merchants.

Retargeting or Remarketing

Retargeting is an online marketing strategy that seeks to re-engage those users who might have previously shown interest in a product or service on a website or online shop but did not manage to finish the purchase or action required.

Google refers to this strategy as remarketing” and uses it in their display ads network.

Retargeting works as follows: The user visits a product X on an online shop. Without finishing the purchase, they leave the website and continue browsing the Web. When they access another site, the user will find adverts on product X, adverts that will “follow them” during browsing and—in case they click—will bring the user back to the initial online shop (A).

Retargeting is part of “behavioural marketing” and is supposed to yield high ROI and profitability for ecommerce marketers.

Ecommerce Glossary

- **A/B test:** through this technique, organisations show two different versions of the same content to understand which one is more widely accepted. A/B tests are common in e-commerce and online marketing and they must be done with just one change every time the test is performed.

- **Shopping cart abandonment:** this is the moment a potential customer gives up before finalising the purchasing process on an online shop.

- **API:** a set of operations and instructions released by software to interact with it and access higher quantity of data and options.

- **Backoffice:** administration of the backoffice of an online shop. This is mainly geared towards catalogue and stock management to optimise the browsing process and purchase of a product on the said shop.

- **Call to action:** this is an initiative to create interest among users and encourage them to participate or react before a particular stimulus.

- **CAPTCHA:** Turing test inserted on a website, generally on a form, to check whether the data are being fed by a person or a machine. It is useful to avoid spam.

- **Shopping cart:** a key tool of an online shop showing the products a user has selected for their purchase, their price and taxes, as well as the final cost for the user.

- **Cash flow:** same as for traditional businesses, e-commerce needs to look at its cash flow or the difference between receipts and payments of a company in a particular period.

- **CMS:** Content management system that allows, in a simple way, to organise, treat and publish on a website. This is also used for the online product catalogue and, generally, for any content on the online shop.

- **Cookies:** website information stored in the browser enabling better understanding of the user through their browsing (habits, interests, etc.). This is key for retargeting strategies.

- **Checkout:** guided process of finalising a purchase that converts the content of the shopping cart into a real sale.

- **Display network:** it is Google's affiliate network with over two million websites available.

- **Dropshipping:** type of retail sales in which the retailer does not have the actual stock of the product and issues the purchase order to the supplier once the shopping process is over. This is especially relevant for an online shop environment because it saves stocking costs.

- **Eye tracking:** technique and instrument to eye track the areas of the screen users pay special attention to, as well as their reading line.

- **Lead or Conversion:** each of the concrete goals set by the company. Usually, a lead is equivalent to a sale, but this is not necessarily so; they can be linked to a database of subscribers and prescribers.

- ***Payment gateway:*** it triggers payment processing.
- ***Payment processing:*** it allows for payment management

PAY PER CLICK (PPC)

As previously mentioned PPC is a paid online advertising model in which advertisers pay a fee each time their ad is clicked. Ads and content created are bid on specific search phrases on the online auction algorithm. This allows them to display their ads on the search engine results page.

Every time an ad is clicked, sending the visitor to a landing page or the website, a small fee is charged.

The different types of PPC ads include, *search ads, local search ads, display ads and remarketing*. These ads can show up on web pages, social media platforms, web pages and mobile apps. They usually look similar to the content that builds the site they appear on. For example, the ads on social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter have the same format as organic posts but are marked with **“Sponsored” or “Promoted”**.

In Pay-Per-Click advertising, ads are subject to a bidding system known as the Ad Auction. It's an automated process followed by major search engines to determine the validity and relevance of the ads that appear on their search engines results page.

At the auction, advertisers bid on keywords that relates to their business and web content. These are search words and phrases they want to “trigger,” or display, their ads.

For example, if your business sells personal computers in Pretoria, you will want to bid on the keyword, “best computers in South Africa.”

"When ever someone enters that query on the search engine your respective Ad's shows up.

There are keyword search tools to find relevant keywords with the right volume and the average cost per click.

Once we have the relevant keywords, we create an ad and set it up in the search engine platform preferably Google search engine . Add the keywords that you want to trigger your Ads.

Set the bids for how high up in the ad section of the search results their ad will show. Apart from bid price, the advertising platform also looks at factors such as quality score and ad extensions to determine which ad is suited for the highest position. For example, the quality score sums up the quality of your ad based on ad relevance, landing page experience and click-through-rate.

When a user submits the search query, there's a complex algorithmic calculation done by the search engine which is based on the Ad Auction. The results of these calculations determine the ads that are displayed, their order and by which advertiser.

Benefits of PPC advertising:

**PPC is measurable and trackable. You can see how your campaigns are performing, including impressions, clicks, and conversions, the traffic you're receiving and how the results correlate to your budget*

**It provides a better understanding of the behavior and search patterns of the customers*

**Unlike SEO, PPC allows you to quickly set up campaigns, create ads and find new customers and prospects*

**You get budget flexibility. You can set*

up your ad budget and choose how much you want to spend. For example, if you see positive results, you can scale up quickly

**You get a wealth of targeting options, whether you want to target keywords through search ads or focus on a specific demographic on the display network*

**Your ads work on all platforms, including mobile and desktop devices.*

Using Google Adwords

Google AdWords is the PPC advertising model for google.com. It is the most cost effective PPC application compared with others at this point on the digital marketing timeline. To optimize your Google AdWords account and get more leads, you can follow the steps below:

- Focus on long-tail keywords that are performing well and remove all the underperforming keywords from your campaign
- Keep adding negative keywords by using the keyword search term report
- Use the keyword research tool to find new, high-performing keywords
- To make the keywords eligible, change the match types or adjust the bids
- Ensure that your campaign and ad group is structured well. The more focused your ad groups are the better they'll perform

- Keep reviewing and testing new ads. Ensure that you highlight your value proposition, include a clear call to action and use relevant terms that will make users want to click your ad
- Constantly test and optimize your landing pages, ads and anything else to improve conversion rate
- Use Ad extensions such as address, phone number, product types, services available etc.
- Use conversion tracking to know how successful a campaign is

How to get a low CPC in Google Adwords

CPC refers the cost per click on your digital advert. Finding new ways to lower your CPC for the keywords in your campaigns enables you to stay competitive, cost effective and efficiency in online advertising efforts.

Here are a few tips to lower your CPC:

- ▶ Lower your bids. While this may result in your ad position dropping a bit, you could afford more clicks with the same budget and also be able to show more ads during that time.
- ▶ Find new keyword variations, ideally long-tail keywords that have low competition and moderate to high search volumes.
- ▶ Change your match types. For example, if you see that your

exact match keywords are more expensive than the broad match modifiers, you might decide to change your keywords from Exact to BMM to lower your CPC

- ▶ Ensure that your ads are relevant to your keywords. To do this, you must include keywords from the ad group into the ad's headline and description
- ▶ A/B test different landing pages

How to improve CTR in Adwords

Click Through Rate is the ratio that enumerates people who see your advert and are clicking it. A high CTR means that your ad is helpful and relevant to the viewers. It's also an important component of Ad Rank.

To improve the CTR of your ads, you can try the following;

- ▶ putting in special offers in your headline such as "Hurry for 60% Off + Free Shipping"
- ▶ Add the main keyword in your headline and display URL
- ▶ Use ad extensions such as third-party reviews and rankings to increase visibility
- ▶ Use special symbols to help your ad stand out
- ▶ Add a clear call to action in your ad copy

To ensure the success of PPC campaigns, businesses must find the perfect balance between cost and visibility to ensure maximum results from the campaign. To ensure that each advertising dollar is used effectively, create a unique campaign for your business, depending on your market position, industry, size, and area of operation and constantly. This involves publishing rich and relevant content on your social media profiles, listening to and engaging your followers, analyzing your results, and running social media advertisements.

In this digital generation, the major social media applications are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, and Snapchat.

There are also a range of social media management tools that help businesses consolidate, plan and schedule campaigns to get the most out of the social media platforms listed above.

Initially social media marketing was solely on digital marketers sharing their content on social media to generate traffic to their websites and hoping to convert them to sales.

Today social media has matured far beyond being just a place to broadcast content and engage potential customers.

Social media applications now offers a lot of marketing functions. Nowadays it's possible for businesses to assess what users are saying about their brands by monitoring social media conversations and responses to

analyze and improve keywords and locations.

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

relevant mentions (***social media listening and engagement***).

Digital marketers must know how their products and promotions are performing on social media by analyzing their reach, engagement, and sales on social media with analytic tools like social media analytics.

Marketers that wishes to reach a specific set of audience at larger scale must run highly-targeted social media ads.

5 Core Pillars of Social Media Marketing

1. Strategy

The first step in SMM is to think about your social media strategy. This is a strategic evaluation on ***"What are your goals? How can social media help you achieve your business goals ?"***

Some businesses use social media for increasing their brand awareness , others use it for driving website traffic and sales. Social media can also help you generate engagement around your brand, create a community, and serve as a customer support channel for your customers.

Which social media platforms do you want to focus on?

The major social media platforms of this day includes; Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, and Snapchat. There are also smaller and up-and-coming platforms, such as Tumblr, Tik Tok, and Anchor, and social messaging platforms, such as Messenger, WhatsApp, and WeChat.

It is widely advised to pick and work with a few platforms that you know that your target audience.

What type of content do you want to share? Is it images, videos, or links? Is it educational or entertaining content?

Create a marketing persona which will help create a blue print on the type of content you are going to be working with. It must tell what type of content, whether images, videos, audios, text or links. It also must define purpose and intentions of the content. That is whether the content is going to be educational, informational or entertainment. The strategy does not have to be constant but should be dynamic, changing in time to match up with performance, competition and digital market trends.

2. Planning and Publishing

Although publishing on social media is as simple as sharing a blog post or how you would share on your personal Facebook profile, it is professional and effective that you plan your content ahead of time instead of creating and publishing content spontaneously. Ensure that you maximize your reach on social media and you may need to

sponsor content to have a specific desired reach in terms of geography and demographics. Publish great content that your audience relates to and likes, at the right timing and frequency.

There are now a variety of social media scheduling tools, such as ***Buffer Publish***. Such tools help you publish your content at your preferred period intervals automatically.

3. Listening and Engagement

People will comment on your social media posts, tag you in their social media posts, or message you directly.

People might even talk about your brand on social media without letting you know. Monitor social media conversations about your brand. If it's a positive comment, you get a chance to surprise and delight them. Otherwise, you can offer support and correct a situation before it gets worse.

You can manually check all your notifications across all the social media platforms but this isn't efficient and you won't see posts that didn't tag your business's social media profile. You can instead use social media listening and engagement tools that aggregates all your social media mentions and messages, including posts that didn't tag your business's social media profile.

In this day and era, we are living much of our lives on internet mostly social media, it is more strategic and convenient than ever to meet our customers where they are.

Users and customers expect to feel the brands they associate with to be associated with them on their digital social life too.

Engagement is of more importance in social media marketing through lending a helping hand or when things go awry, keeping the conversation going when problems are solved.

4. *Analytics*

Evaluation on how your social media marketing campaigns are performing. This allows social media marketers to analyze their audience reaches as a function of time, ad campaigns, content etc. Note and address positive and negative mentions that you get. It is of strategic importance that you observe the number of people who used your brand's hashtag on their social media posts. Although social media platforms provide a basic insight of such data, you can also make use of the modern comprehensive external social media analytics tools.

The more engagement you offer online, the higher the possibility of translating it into possible sales, or somebody walking through your doors, or checking out your website and maybe making a purchase.

5. *Advertising*

Social media advertisements allow you to reach a wider audience that is not limited only to the followers and subscribers that you have. Social media advertising platforms are so powerful nowadays that you can specify exactly who to display your ads to. You can create target audiences based on their

geography, demographics, interests, behaviour, etc.

Social Media Marketing Tips

● ***Social Media Content Planning*** – Developing a social media marketing plan is essential. Consider keyword research and competitive research to help brainstorm content ideas that will interest your target audience.

● ***Great Social Content*** – Just like other digital marketing mediums social media marketing success is dependent on publishing outstanding and relevant content. Make sure you post regularly and offer truly valuable information that your ideal customers will find helpful and interesting. The content that you share on your social networks can include social media images, videos, infographics, how-to guides and more.

● ***A Consistent Brand Image*** – While each platform has its own unique environment and digital culture, your business's core identity and image should stay consistent.

● ***Sharing Curated Links*** – While using social media for marketing is a great way to leverage your own unique, original content to gain followers, fans, and devotees, it's also an opportunity to link to outside articles as well. If other sources provide great, valuable information you think your target audience will enjoy, don't be shy about linking to them. Curating and linking to outside sources improves trust and reliability, and you may even get some links in return.

●**Tracking Competitors** – Social Media Marketers need to have an understanding on what their competitors are doing on social media and their strategies. They provide valuable data for keyword research and other social media marketing insight. If your competitors are using a certain social media marketing channel or technique that seems to be working for them, considering doing the same thing, but do it better.

Using Facebook

Facebook's casual, friendly environment requires an active social media marketing strategy. Start by creating a Facebook Business Fan Page. You will want to pay careful attention to layout, as the visual component is a key aspect of the Facebook experience.

Facebook is a place people go to relax and chat with friends, so keep your tone light and friendly. And remember, organic reach on Facebook can be extremely limited, so consider a cost-effective Facebook ad strategy, which can have a big impact on your organic Facebook presence as well!

Using Pinterest

Pinterest is one of the fastest growing social media marketing trends. Pinterest's image-centered platform is ideal for retail, but anyone can benefit from using Pinterest for social media purposes or sales-driving ads.

Pinterest allows businesses to showcase their product offerings while also developing brand personality with

eye-catching, unique pinboards. When developing your Pinterest strategy, remember that the social network's primary audience is female. If that's your demographic, you need a presence on Pinterest!

Using Twitter

Twitter is the social media marketing tool that lets you broadcast your updates across the web. Follow tweeters in your industry or related fields, and you should gain a steady stream of followers in return.

Mix up your official tweets about specials, discounts, and news with fun, brand building tweets. Be sure to retweet when a customer has something nice to say about you, and to answer people's questions whenever asked. Using Twitter as a social media marketing tool revolves around dialog and communication, so be sure to interact as much as possible to nurture and build your following.

Using LinkedIn

LinkedIn is one of the more professional social media marketing sites. LinkedIn Groups is a great venue for entering into a professional dialog with people in similar industries and provides a place to share content with like minded individuals and organizations. It's also great for posting jobs and general employee networking.

Encourage customers or clients to give your business a recommendation on your LinkedIn profile. Recommendations makes your business appear more credible and

reliable for new customers. The Questions section of LinkedIn provides answers helping you get established as a thought leader and earns trust.

Using YouTube

YouTube is the best platform for creating and sharing video content. Many businesses try to create video content with the aim of having their video “go viral,” but in reality those chances are pretty slim. Instead, focus on creating useful, instructive “how-to” videos which are related to the goods or services that you are selling. These how-to videos also have the added benefit of ranking on the video search results of Google.

Make sure to put referral links in the video and description tag below the video posts which directs your viewers to your respective website, social media handle, online shop, etc.

Location-Based Social Media Tools

Social media platforms like Yelp and FourSquare are great for brick and mortar businesses looking to implement marketing on social media. Register on these sites to claim your location spot, and then consider extra incentives such as check-in rewards or special discounts. Remember, these visitors will have their phones in hand, so they will be able to write and post reviews. A lot of good reviews can significantly help sway prospective visitors to come in and build your business!

Using Reddit

Reddit, or similar social media platforms such as Stumble Upon or Digg, are ideal for sharing compelling content. With over 2 billion page views a month, Reddit has incredible social media marketing potential, but marketers should be warned that only truly unique, interesting content will be welcomed. Posting on Reddit is playing with fire, submit spammy or overtly sales-focused content and your business could get berated by this extremely tech-savvy community.

Majority of the reddit community is young, geeky, liberal, and internet obsessed. If you have content you believe the Reddit community would enjoy, you could reap tremendous benefits and earn valuable traffic.

Using social media in marketing does more than improve site traffic and help businesses reach more customers; it provides a valuable venue for better understanding and learning from your target audiences.

CONTENT MARKETING

“Buyers took control when information became ubiquitous on the Web. No longer dependent upon marketing for information on trends or new ways to solve problems, and equally no longer dependent on Sales to navigate the pros and cons of solutions they were considering, buyers threw off the shackles and rewrote the rules,” by Christine Crandall, Forbes, 1.

Content needs to reach your audience in a way that feels natural that is also known as inbound. A common way of doing this is by creating a narrative for your content. In doing so, your content will feel more authentic, engaging, and relevant to your audience.

What is content marketing?

Content marketing is the process of planning, creating, distributing, sharing, and publishing content to reach your target audience. It can boost factors like brand awareness, sales, reach, interactions, and loyalty.

Deliver a constant flow of relevant, high quality information, and your prospects will be grateful. They'll feel like you're looking out for their interests. They'll feel connected. The company that delivers quality content is the one they're going to trust. And in today's opt-in marketplace, building trust is necessary before a sale takes place.

Additionally, great content locates you on the Internet. Search engine algorithms have been transformed to reward websites that provide great information, and actually punish old SEO tricks.

Types of Content Marketing

There are many types of content marketing that you may choose to incorporate in your strategy – here are some of the most common:

1. Social Media Content Marketing

With over 3.6 billion global social media users, it's easy to understand why so many businesses invest in social media marketing. There are a number of platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Snapchat) to work with and several ways you can create and share content on each of them (e.g. photos, live videos, pre-recorded videos, stories).

2. Infographic Content Marketing

Infographics display content, information, and data in an easy-to-understand, graphic format. With a mix of simple wording, short statements, and clear images, infographics are a great way to effectively communicate your content. They work well if you're trying to distill an educational and/ or complex topic down so all audience members can understand it.

3. Blog Content Marketing

Blogs are a powerful type of inbound content and allow for a lot of creativity in terms of their purpose and topic. With a blog, you can do things like promote other internal and external content and blog articles via links, add social share buttons, and incorporate product information.

4. Podcast Content Marketing

In a 2020 survey, it was found that 37% of U.S. adults listened to a podcast within the last month. For this reason, many businesses and media outlets have begun creating and sharing their own podcasts.

Podcasts allow for a lot of creativity as they can be about any topic of choice. Additionally, you determine other factors related to the podcast such as cadence of episodes, who's on the podcast, where you advertise the podcast, and how long episodes are.

5. Video Content Marketing

According to HubSpot research, over 50% of consumers say they want to see videos from the brands they interact with. Additionally, video marketing can boost conversions, improve ROI, and help you build relationships with audience members. You may choose to share your video content on social media platforms, landing pages, or on a co-marketer's website.

6. Paid Ad Content Marketing

Paid ads can help you reach a broad audience and allow you to position yourself in all of the places you want to be seen – paid ads are especially beneficial when paired with inbound marketing. There are many places you can share paid ads including on social media, landing pages, banners, and sponsored content.

Your customers, leads, and audience members want valuable content from your business. And that content needs to reach audience members in a way that feels natural and organic versus being disruptive.

By honing in on effective content marketing, you can do just that – and as a result, increase conversions, improve brand awareness, boost revenue, establish yourself as an industry leader, and more.

In this guide, we'll give you a birds-eye-view of content marketing, types of content marketing, content marketing examples, and how to get a strategy going.

Key functions of content marketing.

- Educate your leads and prospects about the products and services you offer.
- Boost conversions
- Build relationships between your customers and business that result in increased loyalty
- Show your audience how your products and services solve their challenges
- Create a sense of community around your brand.

Content marketing involves the following functions,

Audience Identification (ADI)

Understanding your targeted audience is a critical function before launching any content strategy.

It includes designing a persona profile. A great content marketing effort requires that content be audience centric.

The Persona Profile

The persona profile identifies key aspects to come up with a cross section makeup of targeted audience members. Questions that should be answered include:

- What are the demographics of the group?
- What are their daily pressures?
- What are their daily responsibilities?
- What keeps them up at night?
- Why do they buy?
- What are the decision points?

Content Producers Identification (CPI).

Typically before you decide to pursue your content strategy you need to answer the who, how, when and where questions of the content's production. If you're counting on Inhouse Subject Matter Experts, you need to have a support plan.

The Editorial Brief

This helps define the scope of the project to ensure that everyone is literally on the same page.

The editorial brief must clearly define the types of content you'll be creating, the tone, the frequency, and other key information that the content team and

the marketing team need to fully understand. It provides a baseline expectation and helps to ensure that the content effort always matches your brand and business goals.

Editorial Calendar

It's a prioritized list of what, where and when you are publishing.

It is best to produce fresh content as often as possible. Many businesses feel that going from zero to five blog posts and a video every week would be too much for the audience, but research suggests that they're wrong. However, content for content's sake is not the way to win the day.

The Newsroom Concept

The best way to think about the question of when to publish is to embrace the concept of a newsroom. Jerry Wind and Baba Shetty wrote at the Harvard Business Review, part of a newsroom's charter is to be prolific and to create a lot of content. However, it must be quality content. Producing a high volume of quality content is difficult, but that is the goal. A great starting point is to aim for a new article or blog post five days a week. If you fall short, so be it. But make it a stretch goal

The Places to Publish Content

Distribute content through email newsletters and social media channels like LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter and Facebook. It should be sent to journalists and influencers, and included in comments on other articles and discussion groups.

You must make it easy to share the content; including social sharing buttons on your content is a necessity.

Content Marketing Strategy

- ① Set SMART goals.
- ② Determine your KPIs.
- ③ Choose your content channels.
- ④ Decide on the type of content.
- ⑤ Set a budget.
- ⑥ Create and distribute the content.
- ⑦ Analyze and measure results.

1. Set SMART goals.

The first part of your content marketing strategy is to set SMART goals. These should be specific to your business and complement your broader marketing and company goals.

Examples of SMART goals :

- Improve brand awareness
- Boost revenue
- Increase conversions
- Improve brand loyalty
- Increase customer engagement
- Build rapport and trust among prospects and customers
- Attract strategic partners

2. Determine your KPIs

KPIs are your key performance indicators for your SMART goals. They are quantifiable data points that you can use to measure your actual performance against your goal.

3. Decide on the type of content.

The content type decision is mainly dependant on your target audience and buyer personas.

To help you narrow down the right types of content for your targeted audience, you need to answer the following questions:

- What do they need from you?
- What challenges are they looking to overcome?
- Why do they need your product or service?
- How can you help them succeed?
- Where do they spend their time?

If you answer these questions correct I respect of your targeted audience you will come up with the perfect content type to work with.

4. Choose your content channels.

You will need to answer the following questions to come up with perfect choice of content channels.

- Where will you share your content?
- Where will it live and be shared from?

For some of the content types, the channel you need to work with will be obvious. For example, if you're creating Facebook content, your channel will be the social platform itself.

5. Set a budget.

Usually the budget is determined by the type of content you're creating and which channels you're going to be marketing that content on.

Then, ask yourself the following questions to determine your budget:

- Do you need to purchase any software or technology to create the content (such as graphic design software like Adobe Photoshop , a subscription to Canva , a camera to take high-quality photos and videos)?
- Do you need to hire any content marketers or designers (such as artists, writers, editors, designers)?
- Do you need and are you capable to pay for ad space?
- Do you need access to specific tools or resources to enhance or measure your specific type of content?

Make note of how your responses impact your budget, whether that's an increase or decrease in what you may have already estimated.

6. Create and distribute the content.

Create and distribute your content so your audience members can consume it – and possibly convert. To ensure you're consistently producing content and sharing it among your prospects and customers, use a social media calendar or an editorial content calendar. This will help your team stay on top of all of the content being created as well as allow you to schedule it ahead of time.

7. Analyze and measure results.

Lastly, analyze and measure your results so you can make any necessary changes to enhance your content marketing efforts and reach more audience members.

Look at your SMART goals and KPIs to determine the success of your content marketing strategy. Did you achieve your goals and KPIs? Were you close to reaching them, or were you off in your estimations?

EMAIL MARKETING

Email marketing is a form of direct marketing that uses electronic mail as a means of communicating commercial messages to an audience. In its broadest sense, every email sent to a potential or current customer could be considered email marketing.

Legal Framework

The legal framework regulating e-mail marketing is important as it can inhibit some of its features.

On the one hand, legislation protects personal data in order to prevent the illicit transfer of databases. The relevant legislation forces the company to have a register— in some cases physical—of user data and makes the company responsible for the protection of such data.

On the other, each country develops laws to regulate mass mailing, a standard that influences commercial communications or advertising and those of transnational or relational character.

Despite the fact that the legal framework can vary from one country to the other, there are some common elements:

Mailing must have explicit authorisation by the recipient. This authorisation must be prior to the inclusion of the person in the mailing list.

The fact that the message is linked to advertising must be explicit, as well as the identification of the sender on the e-mail, the subject and the heading of

the message.

In the cases of offers, competitions and promotional games, they must be identified as such and be clear and explicit about the conditions and participation on them.

In some countries, the advertising message has to be identified with the word “ad- vertisement” or abbreviation, as well as with a valid postal address for the company. Simple procedures for the user to withdraw consent are a must.

In the case of multinational companies, the relevant legislation is that of the country where the company is based and not that of the recipient.

Subscribers

The success of a marketing campaign lies precisely in target management; therefore, a good strategy to attract and retain subscribers is needed.

The recipient database must be meticulously kept and segmented. The essential question here is quality over quantity; therefore, purchasing user databases is discouraged—unless this is unavoidable, or unless their usefulness has been proven.

Best practices in e-mail marketing stress the need to generate and maintain the organisation’s own database. The reason is simple: it is easier to get back a client than to get a new one.

Getting subscribers is a slow but steady task, although it can be sped up through online and traditional channels. Registration boxes can be

created on a website, either as pop-ups or in another Web section where registration is required to request information (e.g. a budget) or in exchange for exclusive content or downloads.

Generally, easy forms must be used, where the compulsory fields include name and/or e-mail, although the number of fields in the form may be increased depending on the value of the treat one is offering the user in exchange for their registration.

Another common instance is e-commerce. When a user registers on a particular online shop and accepts the use and service terms, they are automatically included in the e-mail marketing database.

Regarding traditional channels, the compilation of e-mails and information related to the users can be done through competitions, on-street promotion, post-cards, loyalty cards or formal information requests through e-mail, phone or postal mail. Traditional channels demand, however, the digitalisation of the data to be included in a subscriber list.

Keeping subscribers is a task that needs special attention and that must be implemented while new users are added. In this process, brands must be especially careful regarding content and the form e-mail communications take. Content must be interesting for the user, giving priority to quality instead of periodicity.

In a nutshell, it is about adding value to commercial communications with complementary information

(comparisons, advice, features, etc.) useful for the consumer.

Newsletters–Some Key Aspects

Four key aspects are to be considered for effective newsletter design:

- ***Database.*** In order to have good content segmentation, the organisation needs to know the subscriber base of their newsletter as much as possible. This information will allow for specific profiling depending on demographics, geographical data, interests, etc., thus increasing the efficiency of communications.

- ***The content of the newsletter.*** The content must be useful and interesting, and the weight of commercial information must be properly balanced. Subscribers value content that adds value or is useful to them. In fact, newsletters are one of the key tools of content marketing.

- ***The field “from”.*** In the context of communication saturation, the customer will look at the field “from” as a filter to recognise the origin and dismiss-or not- the mail.

- ***The field “subject”.*** Same as with a slogan or tagline, the field “subject” must stand out above the mass of incoming e-mails. Likewise, this field must fulfil the criteria of usefulness and interest for the user and, above all, honesty about the content they will find in the mail. Otherwise, the company runs the risk of their mail becoming invisible and that the subscriber requests to unsubscribe from their database.

The field “subject” must not be too long or complex, although it allows for the inclusion of special characters such as emojis.

There is no exact formula to predict the success of a newsletter. Each campaign is different and is closely linked to the audience it addresses. In any case, campaigns may be optimised using A/B tests.

These tests are random experiments with two differential variables. Two different versions of the newsletter are sent to two subgroups of the database just changing a single element (the field “subject”, layout or organisation of content, the colour of the download button, the size of the main image, etc.). This process allows for an empirical test that reveals which version of the message works better and leads to higher ratios of opening, clicks, conversions, etc., so that optimisation of future versions of the newsletter becomes possible.

Metrics to Assess the Efficiency of E-mail Marketing

There are three elements to assess e-mail marketing: the user database, sending the newsletter and conversion metrics.

In metrics related to databases, estimating the index of increase in subscribers is easy or, if that were the case, the rate of unsubscribers. Identifying the cause for any increase or decrease in subscribers is of essence. As they happen in a timeline, the cause can be traced back to a particular content item, so that the organisation knows what content

works better.

Regarding sending newsletters, there are four indicators to measure the success of e-mail marketing:

- **Sent index:** Percentage of deliveries to the recipient (i.e. where there was no mistake in sending).
- **Opening rate:** Percentage of e-mails that have been opened by the recipient. Some applications provide information about what recipients have received and opened the e-mail, as well as reception and opening time.
- **Clicks on links:** It is possible to determine what are the links that have been clicked and establish a popularity ranking depending on the number of clicks.
- **Unsubscribers per batch sent:** Number of people who have cancelled their subscription to a newsletter after they have received a particular issue.

Finally, a conversion rate can be established between the sending of the newsletter and the accomplishment of a particular goal, for example downloading a mobile application, using a discount voucher, registration on another website and sending additional information by the user.

Applications and Resources for an E-mail Marketing Campaign

The supply of existing applications around e-mail marketing is wide, with many applications for different operating systems, such as Windows (G-Lock EasyMail7, for example) or OSX (Direct Mail, for example), although market trends seem to focus on the

development of Web applications that help manage this kind of online marketing. The advantages of Web services lie in their mobility and the possibility of accessing them from different devices.

Thus, we can have a wide array of Web services to implement an e-mail marketing campaign successfully. The features vary a little across platforms, although there are a series of functionalities that must be present for a proper professional development of such marketing:

- **Contact and list management**, with the possibility to import and export, and to create segmented contact lists.
- **Newsletter design**, usually HTML based. Many of the tools incorporate visual editors to make the design aspects of the newsletter as easy as possible, to include multimedia elements and to distribute the elements in the newsletter.
- **Sending** campaigns and the possibility of scheduling and automating the process.
- **Statistical analysis of output.**

Some tools enable the integration of the newsletter with other services and platforms regularly used by organisations. Some examples are the incorporation of a widget on the company's blog, the integration of social media or tools such as Google Analytics.

The most widely used newsletter editors are Teenvío, Dopple, MailChimp, Benchmark, MailRelay, Campaign Monitor, MPZ Mail or SendinBlue.

These kinds of services tend to offer freemium business models, offering a limited free version that allows to test the service with some restrictions; they are usually linked to the number of subscribers and/or monthly dispatch of e-mails (see Table 1). Choosing one platform or the other depends on the needs of the company and the possibilities they offer on their free or payment versions.

Why Email Marketing?

Cost - Email marketing is CHEAP, there are no two ways about it. Whether you do it yourself, or through an email marketing agency, marketing to hundreds of consumers via email is going to cost you tiddlywinks compared to other channels of advertising.

Success - Emails can be targeting specifically to the ideal consumer. With this concept in mind, along with email cost-effectiveness, it's no wonder that email marketing's ROI often blows other direct marketing strategies out of the water - The trick is that you have to get it right!

Measureability and Flexibility - With the analytics available today it's easy to track responses to your emails exactly, in order to work out what parts of your campaign are working and what parts aren't. With this knowledge, you can then react instantly to modify your campaign strategy if need be.

Approach to Email Market?

Dave Chaffey from Marketing Insights offers an experienced view into the success factors of email marketing, using the mnemonic “CRITICAL”:

Creative - This refers to the overall design of the email (layout/images/colour). Specifically, it is a good idea to ask each customer whether they would like the emails in text or HTML as there is often a great preference for one over the other.

Relevance - Targeting, targeting, and more targeting. Make your emails relevant and personalised to each recipient if you want that response rate to rise.

Incentive - Recipients look at emails and think “WIIFM?”, i.e. “What’s in it for me?”. There’s no such thing as a free lunch right? Well... Offer the recipient a “free lunch” for participating and they will be more likely to respond.

Timing - Don’t send out an email that recipients will receive overnight, let it pop up in their inbox during their working day. This also expands to selecting certain days, months and even years. Remember - You can test and measure what timing works best for which email.

Integration - Companies can not just rely on one method of marketing, nor can they rely on several methods of differentiated marketing. Instead, best marketing practices utilise integrated marketing communication (IMC) where all aspects of their promotion work together to create a whole. Email

marketing must be including here, therefore your emails must carry the same image and message as your entire operations. Even the timing of the campaign must work in with other aspects of your marketing mix.

Copy - When considering the copywriting for your email you must consider all aspects of the language, from subject line through to your mail signature. With emails, not all links should be saved for the last sentence, pop them in early to grab that impulsive customer!

Attributes - Here Dave talks about the email header, with attributes including the subject line, from address, to address, date/time of receipt and format. Once again, testing your campaigns can rule out the attributes that customers consider spam and highlighting the attributes that will work best for your business.

Landing Page - Want those emails to turn into sales conversions? Don’t just hyperlink your customers to your home page; show them exactly where you want them to go and make it quick and easy to complete any forms!

Email marketing is a vital component in many industries, especially for creating those important customer-firm relationships. Learn to use it well and it will definitely bump up your company’s success.

Just try not to send out another email that goes straight through to my spam folder. And, if the email does manage to make it through to my inbox - Make it worthwhile to read!

REFERENCES

1. Toffler A (1980) The third wave. New York: Bantam Books
2. Kotler P (1986) The Prosumer Movement: a new change for marketers. *NA-Advances in consumer research*, 13:510-513
3. Shultz C, Holbrook M (1999) Marketing and the tragedy of the commons: a synthesis, commentary, and analysis for action. *J Public Policy Marke* 18(2): 218-229
4. Kotler P (1967) Marketing management: analysis, planning, and control. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall
5. Rust RT, Lemon K N, Zeithaml VA (2004) Return on marketing: using customer equity to focus marketing strategy. *J mark* 68(1):109-127
6. McCarthy EJ (1964) Basic marketing, a managerial approach. Illinois: R.D. Irwin
7. Lauterborn B (1990) New marketing litany: four Ps passé; C-Words take over. *Advert Age* 61 (41):26
8. American Marketing Association (2013, July) Definition of marketing. <https://www.ama.org/AboutAMA/Pages/Definition-of-Marketing.aspx>. Accessed 31 July 2015
9. Krishnamurthy S (2006) Contemporary research in e-marketing. Hershey: Idea Group Inc (IGI)
10. Osterwalder A., Pigneur Y (2010) Business model generation: a handbook for visionaries. New Jersey: Wiley
11. Doran GT (1981) There's a SMART way to write management's goals and objectives. *Manag rev* 70(11):35-36
12. Strong EK (1925) The psychology of selling and Advertising. New York: McGraw-Hill
13. Rogers (2011) The network is your customer: five strategies to thrive in a digital age. New Haven: Yale University Press
14. Lieb R, Owyang J (2012) The convergence media imperative: how brands must combine paid, owned, and earned media. Altimeter. <http://es.slideshare.net/Altimeter/the-converged-media-imperative>. Accessed 20 June 2015
15. Campos-Freire F (2008) Las redes sociales trastocan los modelos de los medios de comunicación tradicionales. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social* 63:287-293
16. Boyd DM, Ellison NB (2007) Social network sites: definition, history, and x scholarship. *J Comput-Med Commun* 13(1):210-230. doi:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00393.
17. Sheth JN, Sisodia RS (2015) Does marketing need reform?: fresh perspectives on the future. New York: Routledge

18. Baston R (2012) 8 profesiones y 7 organigramas para social media. <http://elogia.net/blog/profesiones-organigramas-social-media/>. Accessed 31 July 2015

19. Sanagustin E (2013) Marketing de contenidos. Estrategias para atraer clientes a tu empresa. Madrid: Anaya Multimedia

