

BEHIND — THE — CLICK



HOW DOES DIGITAL
MARKETING FIT INTO
YOUR BUSINESS?



EVOLVE & ADAPT



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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He is the founder of marketing consultancy firm, Evolve & Adapt, and represents a new generation of hybrid marketers, knowledgeable and experienced in both traditional and digital marketing.

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He is a certified digital marketing strategist (SSG-WSQ accredited) with 11 years of experience specialising in search engine optimisation, content marketing and analytics, and holds a B.A. from National University of Singapore.

Besides writing “Evolve, Adapt or Collapse: Bottom Line Driven Marketing in a Digitally Evolving World”, he is the creator of several digital courses including “Search, Click & Buy: Digital Marketing for Offline Business”.

J C unconventionally began his professional career. He first established himself as a creative force on the world stage as an award-winning international illusionist (now retired), show producer and entertainment project director, working on creating content for live shows, television and online media.

His years spent around the world (34 countries on 4 continents) working with different marketing, P.R. and media production teams has given him an in-depth understanding and hands-on experience in branding and promotion for different markets and a wide variety of industries.

BEHIND THE CLICK

How Does Digital Marketing Fit into Your Business?

Technological disruption has fundamentally changed industries and how businesses produce, distribute and operate.

Salespeople were once the gatekeepers of information. Regardless of whether you were a business-to-business (B2B) or business-to-customer (B2C) customer, if you needed information to evaluate a product or service, the salesperson would show you a brochure, demonstrate the product and answer any questions that you might have. You made an informed decision on a purchase, depending on how experienced and knowledgeable a salesperson was.

The modern consumer carries an Internet-connected supercomputer with her wherever she goes. She no longer depends on T.V. ads, billboards or the fore-mentioned salesperson for advice on the best products or services. She generally prefers to research things herself online. Social media, marketplace reviews and online reviews sites like Trustpilot make it quick and easy to discover what other people are saying about the consumer goods on their radar.

The digitally evolving world has changed the way customers buy and in turn, changed the way entrepreneurs, business owners and marketers sell to their customers.

In the digital world, a “click” is an act of selecting an option on an electronic interface by pressing a button or touching a screen.

Essentially, a click brings you to another webpage, opens a dialogue box or launches an application.

In digital marketing, the term click is frequently used to describe a call-to-action where a prospect clicks on a hyperlink or a banner ad. Or, you might have also heard terms like click-through-rate (C.T.R.) or pay-per-click (P.P.C.). Both are metrics used in web analytics based on clicks.

So, “behind the click”, is a fitting metaphor for understanding the discipline of digital marketing.

This eBook is not designed as a textbook to train you to become a digital marketing practitioner by teaching tactical and technical implementation of online tools.

Instead, I hope to provide you with a broad overview understanding of what digital marketing is and how it fits into the modern marketing mix.

We will also explore the distinction between digital marketing channels and assets, and the all-important digital marketing strategy. After all, it is always strategy before tactics.

First, let us have a clear understanding of what exactly is digital marketing.

WHAT IS DIGITAL MARKETING

Unless you are a digital marketer or savvy marketer, you might have the impression that digital marketing is about social media promotion or ads you see while performing a Google search.

If you think so, you will not be wrong since social media marketing and paid advertising are types of digital marketing.

However, digital marketing is so much more. It is a specialised marketing discipline in its own right.

I have spoken to both sides of the marketing camp, marketers who consider themselves practitioners of traditional marketing and those who see themselves as specialised digital marketers. I was quite surprised by how some view each other’s role in contemporary marketing.

One traditional marketer remarked that digital marketing and traditional marketing are the same, the only difference being the channels employed. So, there is nothing much to learn as the concepts are the same.

Some digital marketers feel that (digital) marketing is all about reach and conversion and knowing how to use the different technologies to reduce cost per acquisition and convert customers. This is achieved through setting up campaigns, split-testing, analysing data

and adjusting the campaigns to optimise conversions. So, traditional marketing theory does not play a significant role in online marketing success.

Both camps are not entirely wrong if viewed in the silo of just the traditional marketing or digital marketing world, respectively. But their line of thinking does not encompass the big picture view of marketing that is needed to achieve business goals in the current economic and social landscape.

The analogy I like to give to explain both types of marketing is to compare them with cooking and baking. Generally, both cooking and baking involve working in a kitchen to prepare food to be eaten. But any chef or baker will tell you that both disciplines are entirely different.

Cooking relies a lot on experience and is more instinct-based with a set of principles and techniques to guide the chef. In this way, traditional marketing is like cooking in that it requires experience and know-how, along with a strategy that can be tailored as the marketer deems fit.

Baking requires precision and a meticulous approach to preparing and mixing the ingredients. Even a slight change to the ingredients or proportion of ingredients can affect the end-product. The heat of the oven and the time in the oven must also be monitored closely.

The baker must strictly adhere to the recipe to attain the results as intended. This process is very similar to digital marketing, where data analytics is used to fine-tune and optimise campaigns that are carefully planned based on research data.

So, even though traditional and digital marketing come under the umbrella of marketing, they are both quite different in scope, implementation and measurement.

According to the Digital Marketer, "*Digital marketing is the act of promoting and selling products and services by leveraging online marketing tactics such as social media marketing, search marketing, and email marketing*"¹.

Essentially, it covers all forms of marketing activity that takes place in the online space.

¹ "The Ultimate Guide to Digital Marketing", (retrieved Feb 2020). Digital Marketer.

It is widely acknowledged that the birth of digital marketing took place in 1994 where AT&T purchased the first clickable banner ad on HotWired.com. 44% of people who saw that ad clicked on it, an almost-impossible metric to hit today².

Digital marketing grew in the 2000s and the 2010s, with the introduction of the iPhone and other smartphones and devices. These digital devices allowed access to digital media that subsequently grew substantially due to increasing demand.

The development of social media in the 2000s, such as LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter, gave brands the ability to communicate and interact with consumers directly.

This digital evolution changed the customer journey and experience. The change in customer behaviour improved the diversification of marketing technology.

Digital marketing has also been refined due to the availability of extensive data collection and tracking technology that allows for highly targeted marketing and retargeting advertising.

Digital tools like Facebook Insights, Google Analytics, tracking pixels, cookies and email automation have made digital marketing much more sophisticated.

Benefits of Digital Marketing

Here are some benefits of digital marketing over traditional marketing:

Speed & Flexibility

One of the most significant advantages of digital marketing is the speed. You can embark on a digital marketing campaign very quickly, assuming your digital assets (more on this later) are set up correctly.

Creating and launching the campaign can be done in days with an experienced digital marketer, and it is easy to make changes as needed.

With digital marketing, you can see results much faster than you would with traditional marketing, due to the real-time results that can be tracked.

² Lafrance, Adrienne, "The First-Ever Banner Ad on the Web", (Apr 2017). The Atlantic.

Highly Targeted Outreach

With the sophisticated digital channels and marketing tools available today, it is possible to reach prospects that you could never have reached before unless you had an astronomical budget.

Popular digital channels like Facebook, Google and YouTube will have advertising tools that allow you to present your brand in front of a highly specific and target audience. This targeting feature maximises your marketing spending and ensures you are reaching out to prospects who are likely to be interested in your brand.

The Internet also means you can reach prospects in any part of the world, even if you are not geographically close to them.

Enhanced Customer Experience and Service

Unlike traditional advertising, digital marketing allows you to communicate and engage with prospects and customers in a two-way conversation. The interactive nature of digital marketing will enable brands to create a better customer experience and provide timelier customer support. Customers can also provide feedback that you can act on to improve the customer experience and strengthen brand loyalty.

Availability of Real-time Data and Analytics

One of the most powerful aspects of digital marketing is the availability for real-time data and analytics if you use popular and effective channels such as Google, Facebook and YouTube.

Data analytics allow you to understand the effectiveness of your marketing tactics better and will enable you to adjust and optimise your marketing budget by investing in well-performing marketing campaigns and channels.

Lower Cost Per Acquisition

Compared to traditional advertising channels like newspaper, television or radio ads, digital marketing campaigns are designed to reach a desired targeted audience more effectively. And, if the campaign is set up right by an experienced marketer, the amount spent will be relative to the size of the reach and optimised.

More importantly, the wide range of digital channels and the availability of real-time data and analytics allow you to make instant adjustments and move marketing budgets in and out of campaigns, based on their performance.

All these features will result in a lower cost per acquisition of a new customer, saving money and maximising your marketing budget in the long run.

THE DIGITAL MARKETING FUNNEL

A digital marketing funnel is identical in concept to the traditional sales funnel or customer journey. But it is slightly more intricate, mainly due to the digital channels and tools available to engage customers at each stage of the funnel or journey.

Fig 1: Conventional Sales Funnel



The basic idea is to fill your funnel with traffic using digital marketing tactics to drive that traffic from the top of the funnel to the bottom of the funnel where they convert into a paying customer and become a loyal customer and advocate for your brand.

While this funnel model is evolving to cater to the complexities of online communication and emerging technologies, the basic concept of the funnel remains.

Awareness

The top of the funnel (TOFU) is to capture the attention of as many people as possible. From a digital marketing perspective, awareness is a strictly no-sale stage. It's all about helping the prospect understand their problems.

This is the stage where you offer education and provide people with value in their problem area in the hope of drawing attention to your brand.

Here are some of the popular tools used to create awareness at the top of the digital marketing funnel:

- Healthy social media channels (Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.) with regular postings that receive engagement.
- A search engine optimised website that ranks well for target keywords.
- Paid Google ads that appear during Google search as well as display ads on 3rd party website with AdSense (Google's advertising platform) activated.
- A landing page, also known as an opt-in, squeeze page or lead capture page, is the page that people "land" on when they first discover your business via paid ads or promotions.

It is a single web page that typically offers a "lead magnet", often a free tool, eBook, guide or resource in exchange for the lead to sign up and provide an email address.

The objective of this stage of the funnel is to move the prospect to the middle of the funnel to consider your offer.

One metric commonly used to measure the number of prospects moving from the top of the funnel to the middle of the funnel is the click-through-rate.

Consideration

In the middle of the funnel (M.O.F.U.), the prospect is evaluating whether she wants to buy your product or service. This stage focuses on providing specific information to show how your product can solve the prospect's problem or fulfil a need. You may also share relevant testimonials from satisfied customers.

Common digital marketing tactics to help win the prospect over include:

- An automated email campaign that focuses on educating the prospect on how the product or service will provide a solution to her pain points through a series of target emails.
- Content in the form of articles, videos or podcasts that provide detailed information on your product, service or brand and how they can solve a customer's problem.
- A live webinar with interactive live chat to discuss problems prospects face and offering solutions.
- Retargeting ads (created from platforms like Google and Facebook) that display ads to prospects who have previously clicked on your ad or visited your website during the 'awareness' stage.

These digital marketing tools and tactics are designed to lead the prospect to the bottom of the funnel, where she is converted into a customer.

Purchase

The bottom of the funnel (B.O.F.U.) is where a prospect decides to do business with you. This is called a sales conversion. The prospect has evaluated your product or service and is prepared to make a purchase.

Conversion tools are designed to provide that extra incentive, if needed, to convert the sale. The metric used to measure the number of prospects moving from the top of the funnel to the middle of the funnel conversion rate.

Here are commonly seen conversion tools at the bottom of the digital marketing funnel:

- Content on providing case studies about your product or service, price comparison charts, and 3rd party studies or reports
- Social proof in the form of testimonials, positive ratings and reviews on social media, blogs, websites, marketplaces or videos.
- Retargeting ads to direct customers. 'consideration' content and social proof
- Special offers in the forms of discounts, free shipping, bundle deals or bonus offers.

- Free trials, if applicable

Advocacy/ Brand Loyalty

Once you have converted a customer, the digital marketing tactics switch to keeping her engaged and returned as a repeat customer. The goal is also to turn this customer into an advocate of your brand, where she will provide reviews, referrals and word-of-mouth marketing for your brand.

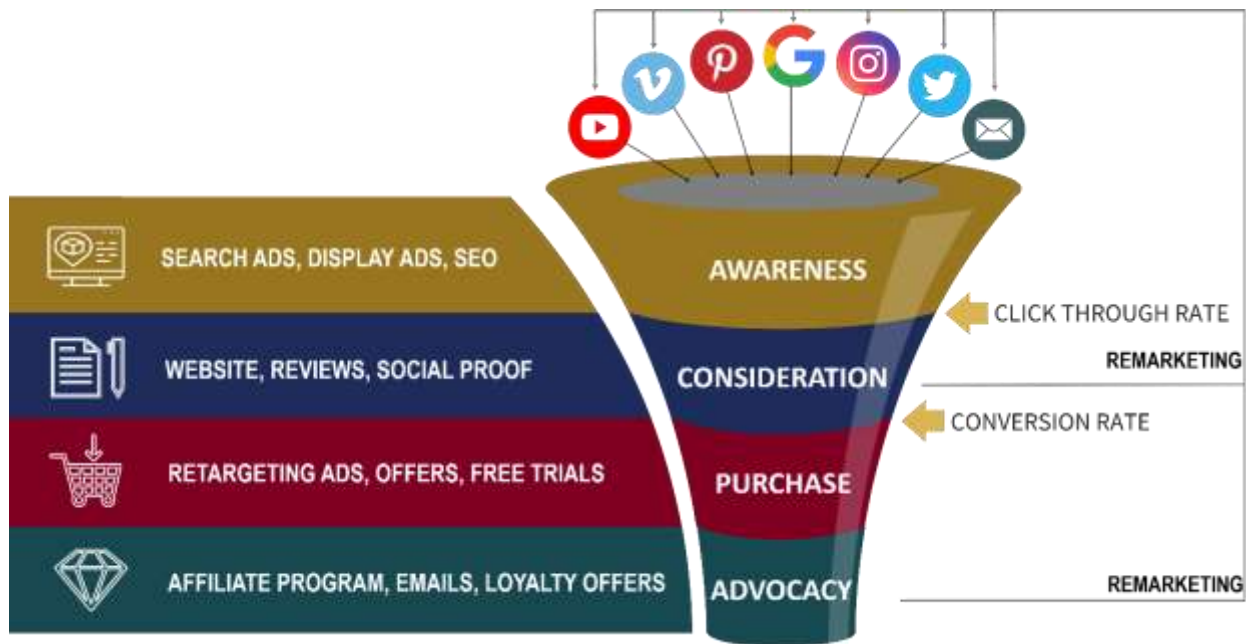
Besides, a satisfied existing customer is the easiest to up-sell and cross-sell to because they already trust your company.

Common advocacy digital marketing tools include:

- A regular automated email sequence that provides the customer with useful content.
- Special discounts and offers exclusively for loyal customers.
- A loyalty program that offers that allows customers to redeem point or ensure customer-only benefits.
- Surveys to existing customers to provide feedback on their customer experience journey.
- Incentivised loyalty and commission-based affiliate programs to encourage referrals.

While the funnel is vertical identical to the traditional customer journey in concept, digital marketing provides more sophisticated tools that can be used to target and retarget prospects. Tactics and content can also be highly customised to a target audience.

Fig 2: Digital Marketing Funnel



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DIGITAL CHANNELS AND ASSETS

Digital marketing is facilitated by multiple digital marketing channels that utilise a brand's digital assets. The objective is to find channels which result in maximum two-way communication and determine which digital assets are most useful to provide a better overall R.O.I. for the business.

As you embark on adding digital marketing into your overall marketing strategy, it is essential to distinguish between digital channels and digital assets.

Digital Channels

A digital channel is an interface or platform connected to the Internet through which users can communicate through or on.

If you are doing an online search, a search engine is a digital channel. If you are directly communicating with someone, email is your digital channel. If you are posting a photo to a social network, the social media platform is your digital channel.

You do not own the digital channels (unless you are a Mark Zuckerberg), you are a content creator or advertiser that uses the channels to reach out and engage with your target audience.

Examples of digital channels include:

- Search Engines
- Email and Automated Email Software
- Social Media Platforms
- Paid Advertising (Search Ads and Display Ads)
- Forums & Online Directories

Digital assets

In the simplest terms, a digital asset is content that is stored digitally or an online account owned by a brand or individual.

For most businesses, a primary digital asset is a website, inclusive of the domain name. Other examples of content include your logos, infographics, photos, videos, audio, slides, spreadsheets and lead magnets.

Online accounts are considered digital assets in and of themselves and have value to an estate, even if you do not outright own them.

These accounts include email accounts, social media profiles (such as YouTube and Instagram), social networking profiles (such as Facebook and LinkedIn), and even instant messaging apps. The caveat is that you do not wholly own these accounts and are subject to the terms of use governed by a contract between the service provider and yourself.

Digital assets provide a visual representation of your products or services, and they enable you to connect with and engage your target audience through a vast array of channels and mediums. In digital marketing, digital assets are the foundation of your brand identity and presence online.

As new digital formats are continually emerging, the definition of a digital asset is always expanding.

TYPES OF DIGITAL MARKETING

Now that we understand the distinction between digital channels and assets, we can explore some of the more popular forms of digital marketing that use the different channels and assets to engage, inform and sell to prospects and customers.

Some of the most effective forms of digital marketing include:

- Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)
- Content Marketing
- Paid Advertising
- Email Marketing
- Social Media Marketing
- Influencer Marketing

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

One of the most important types of digital marketing that is the foundation of your digital marketing strategy is search engine optimisation (SEO).

As such, I will spend the most space writing about this form of digital marketing because it is strategic with long-term benefits.

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is the process of increasing the quality and quantity of website traffic by increasing the visibility of your website in a web search engine, like Google, without paying for search or display ads.

Simply put, the goal of SEO is to rank your website high on Google so potential customers will find you when typing in specific keywords when looking for solutions to their problems.

For example, if your business is a pizza parlour in Gotham Town, you would want your website to appear on the first page of Google when people search for “Pizza in Gotham Town” or “Pizza Restaurant in Gotham Town” or “Best Pizza in Gotham”.

SEO is one of the most effective forms of digital marketing, as it is an organic form of discovery for the prospect. They know it is not an advertisement and feel it is a result of their search efforts which makes it objective and unbiased.

If your website is not ranked higher for your target keyword, you are missing out on a fundamental digital marketing tactic.

Dr George Berkeley, an Anglican Bishop and philosopher in the 1600s, posed the following question:

“If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound?”

Likewise, if a website appears on page 10 of Google and no one clicks on it, does it exist?

Or a favourite SEO joke of mine is:

“Where is the best place to hide a dead body? On Page 2 of Google.”

Here are a few statistics that show the importance of SEO.

- Businesses that show up on the first page of results get 92% of consumer traffic.³
- 75% of people never scroll past the first page in search results, and 80% of people ignore Google ads, despite the jump Google ads are expected to see this upcoming year⁴.

SEO is quite a technical subject. You do need someone who is trained or experienced in SEO to get excellent search engine ranking performance (S.E.R.P.) for your website.

There are good books and resources on the subject, but it takes experience to apply the knowledge and techniques to get consistent results.

SEO takes time to get results. It can take anywhere from 6 weeks to 6 months to get good S.E.R.P. depending on how intense your competition is.

Content Marketing

Content that you share on your website must be leveraged and marketed as part of the overall marketing strategy.

Content continues to be a vital tool, with 45% of marketers saying that at least 50% of their campaigns are content-led⁵.

³ Carter, Joanna, "100+ Must-see Digital Marketing Research Statistics for 2019, (Oct 2019). Smart Insights.

⁴ Liedke, Lindsay, "100+ Internet Statistics and Facts For 2020", (Jan 2020). Website Hosting Rating

⁵ "The Future of Global Content-led Marketing", (Jan 2019). The World Media Group.

The Content Marketing Institute defines content marketing as:

“... a marketing technique of creating and distributing valuable, relevant and consistent content to attract and acquire a clearly defined audience – with the objective of driving profitable customer action.”⁶

Content marketing contributes heavily to the first two stages of the digital marketing funnel, ‘awareness and ‘consideration’.

Different content types are designed for each stage of the funnel. Images, photos and short videos are effective in raising awareness for a brand or product.

Detailed blog articles, long-form videos, webinars and comparison infographics can educate and influence customers to purchase your product over others.

In practice, content marketing works together with other digital marketing channels such as search, paid advertising and social media for attracting, engaging, communicating with and selling to prospects and customers.

Content marketing also contributes to SEO efforts by generating natural inbound links and building up good content on your website that gets found in search engines.

Content marketing is not limited to B2C businesses. It is a beneficial form of digital marketing for B2B companies. 86% of B2B marketers have used content marketing in the year to raise brand awareness⁷.

The most important aspect of content is to offer value. The content you are sharing must be useful, relevant, and consistent to make it worth the time of those consuming it.

Paid Advertising

In concept, the way paid advertising on digital channels works like traditional advertising. You are buying ad space in the form of an image, post or video to drive traffic to your product or landing page, depending on your objectives.

The main difference for digital marketing is the implementation of the paid ads, bidding strategies and choice of available ad networks to display your ads.

⁶ "What Is Content Marketing?", (retrieved Feb 2020). Content Marketing Institute.

⁷ "B2B Benchmarks Content Marketing 2020", (Oct 2019). Content Marketing Institute.

The most popular platforms to advertise on are Google, YouTube, Bing, and social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Paid ads are sometimes referred to as search engine marketing (S.E.M.), paid channel marketing, or pay-per-click (P.P.C.) marketing.

Paid ads are very popular as they offer sophisticated targeting options for you to reach your desired audience, are easy to set up, are measurable, and if done right, can provide a good R.O.I.

Just 8% of advertisers are decreasing their advertising investments on Search this year; this compared to a whopping 46% that are increasing them⁸.

Paid ads are often used to create awareness as well as to convert sales.

For sales conversion, you will have to spend money to make money though. It is not uncommon for paid ad marketers to spend \$1000 to make \$3000 to realise a profit of \$2000. For example, according to Google, businesses make an average of \$8 in revenue for every \$1 they spend on Google Ads⁹.

Of course, there is also a high-risk that you might lose money on your investment if the ads are not set up correctly.

One limitation of paid marketing is that it is effective if you continue to spend money and run the ads. However, once you stop the ads, the traffic will stop coming in. Moreover, if you're not smart about your online advertising,

Email Marketing

Email marketing is the use of email to promote your business and is an "owned" digital marketing channel; that is, the sender fully controls the content and distribution.

Email marketing is highly targeted, can be personalised and is a cost-effective marketing tactic to engage, communicate and sell to prospects and customers. Typical email content

⁸ Donnelly, Gordon, "The Online Advertising Landscape in 30 Definitive Charts", (Jun 2018). WordStream.

⁹ "Google Economic Impact Report", (2018). Google.

includes product/company updates, promotional emails, newsletters and event invitations.

Email is one of the top-performing digital marketing channels in terms of R.O.I., lead generation, content distribution and other key metrics. Almost 70% of businesses use email marketing as part of their campaign strategy¹⁰.

Over half (51%) of consumers say that email is the best way for brands to contact them. However, personalised emails are most effective, as 72% of consumers will only engage with personalised marketing messages¹¹.

Email marketing software makes it easy to set up and track an email marketing campaign. Software like Aweber, MailChimp and Constant Contact allows for automated marketing where emails are sent out to prospects and customers in a pre-determined sequence and schedule.

You can also use the email marketing software to track analytics like click-through rates, open rates, bounce rates, and conversions.

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is the use of social media platforms to connect and communicate with your audience to build your brand, drive website traffic and increase conversions. It is the most relevant advertising channel for 50% of Gen Z and 42% of millennials¹².

This form of digital marketing involves publishing engaging content on your social media profiles, interacting with your followers, analysing your results, and running social media paid ads.

The most popular social media platforms with the most users currently are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, and Snapchat. These platforms will change over time as new platforms emerge and trends change.

¹⁰ Bedgood, Larisa, "State of Digital Marketing – Priorities, Challenges, Trends and More", (Nov 2019). Business 2 Community

¹¹ "26 Essential Personalization Stats for B2C Marketers", (2019), SmarterHQ

¹² Coates, Emily, "45 Essential Social Media Marketing Statistics for 2020", (Aug 2019). HubSpot.

Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is a type of marketing that focuses on promoting your brand or product to new audiences through the voice and trusted relationships of a key leader in a particular field.

Influencers, unlike celebrities, can be anyone who has influence due to their massive followings on the Internet and social media. Influencers become popular because they have engaging personalities or have original perspectives to subjects that they are passionate about.

One typical quality is that their followers find them authentic, and this authenticity has built up a high level of trust.

Influencer marketing can be very effective if your brand allows the influencers the ability to stay true to themselves when working on sponsored or branded content. Content that is insincere or irrelevant feels like the influencers are selling out and result in followers losing trust in them. By association, consumers will not trust your brand.

Influencers are experts at generating discussions online. Most of the time, the content they create on behalf of a brand is talked about, shared, and reposted. This is called earned media.

Consumers trust earned media more than paid media (advertising) or owned media (content that the brand puts out) When influencers post about their own experiences and share compelling content about a brand, their audience feels it comes from them, instead of the brand.

DATA ANALYTICS

Digital marketing analytics is the translation of customer behaviour into actionable business data.

The objective is to use digital analytics tools to examine the effectiveness of different digital channels as marketing communication tools and identify revenue opportunities from existing campaigns.

Digital analytics can be used to structure a business goal into outcomes based on three broad categories:

1. The effectiveness and relationship between different marketing channels
2. Customer behaviour at different stages of the marketing funnel
3. Revenue generated by specific marketing channels, assets, strategies or tactics

Some data points that you can view at any time include metrics such as:

- Website traffic
- Demographics of visitors
- Interests of visitors
- Time spent on a webpage/ website
- Source of traffic
- Cost Per Click (C.P.C.)
- Cost Per 1000 Impressions (C.P.M.)
- The geographic location of visitors
- Devices used to view your website
- Sales conversion rates
- Drop-off rates

The subject of digital marketing and data analytics can fill entire books and academic courses. So, if you want to be able to benefit from this subject, you (or a team member) will have to learn how to gather and interpret data.

DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY

In concept, strategy and tactics in digital marketing are the same as in traditional marketing. I discussed the differences between strategy and tactics in the chapter “The Big Bang Theory” that I will repeat here in the context of digital marketing.

A digital marketing strategy is a master plan that aligns directly with your revenue targets, digital marketing objectives, long-term vision, ethics and business goals of an organisation.

Digital marketing tactics are employed to implement a marketing strategy. It includes the groundwork of optimising a website for SEO, designing and running ads for different ad networks, writing an email marketing campaign and automating it as well as other digital marketing activities that directly support the strategic marketing plan.

As always, strategy comes before tactics. Strategy directs tactics.

You will often hear the term “digital marketing campaign”. A campaign does not refer to a strategy but can be best described as a collection of digital marketing tactics design to achieve a marketing goal based on a strategy.

Your digital marketing strategy will also help you clearly define what digital assets you require and how they should be designed and created that will best support your strategy.

Remember, every strategy requires an objective.

For example, imagine a business that has the digital marketing objective to create awareness for a new product that will be launched in the near future.

The digital marketing strategy is to create awareness by running an influencer campaign and paid ads on social media to generate maximum exposure.

The campaign runs tactics that include choosing the influencers, providing content to them and selecting digital channels to run ads. The design of the ads, bidding strategies and ad formats are also tactical decisions that fall under the campaign.

An analysis of data culled from analytic platforms gives feedback to optimise tactics and refine the strategy if needed, to achieve better results.

A visual representation of the above example will look something like this:

Fig 3: Digital Marketing Strategy



Digital Marketing Plan

After developing a digital marketing strategy based on a marketing objective, you must craft a digital marketing plan.

Your plan may comprise of several different campaigns if you are using different channels.

When creating your plan, be sure to create S.M.A.R.T. goals. These are goals that are:

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Attainable**
- **Relevant**
- **Time-based**

Here is an overview of the steps to take to craft a digital marketing plan:

STEP 1: Set & Measure Your KPIs:

One of the most significant benefits of digital marketing is the availability of real-time data and analytics that allows you to track, quantify and measure your marketing tactics and campaigns.

Set your digital marketing KPIs and ensure they are in line with the digital marketing objective and strategy.

STEP 2: Define Your Target Audience

Using paid advertising tools on ad networks like Google and Facebook, define your target audience by location, age, gender, language, interests, and behaviours.

Create a customer profile and identify the customer's pain points as well as the solution your product or service provides.

STEP 3: Assess Your Digital Marketing Assets & Channels

Review your digital marketing assets like your websites, images, photos, slides, videos, ad copy, lead magnets and social media accounts. Make sure they are up-to-date and optimise to convert customers.

Next, assess your available digital marketing channels and identify the ones that will be used for the campaign(s). Plan your sub-strategy for each channel.

Your digital marketing assets include human resources, your digital marketing team. Ensure you have team members assigned for specific roles and responsibilities. Digital marketing encompasses many different activities that require different skill sets, so it is essential team members are experienced or trained for their respective roles.

Finally, determine your digital marketing budget and allocate monetary resources for each channel/ campaign.

STEP 4: Create Your Campaign(s) and Determine Digital Marketing Tactics

Now that you have everything in order, from your digital marketing strategy, KPIs, defined target audience, digital assets and channels; it is time to create your digital marketing campaign(s) and determine the marketing tactics that you will employ.

It is essential to go into the fine details of the tactics such as the amount you intend to spend on each tactic, the length of time each tactic runs for as well as what assets and channels need to be utilised.

STEP 5: Create Your Digital Marketing Calendar

Based on the campaign(s) created, create a timeline with specific start and end dates of tactics as well as implementation timelines, KPIs, analytic reviews and indicate the team member(s) assigned for different activities.

Once you have crafted your digital marketing plan, you can start executing it.

HOW DIGITAL MARKETING FITS IN

It has taken some time to get to answering the question of “what is behind the click - how does digital marketing fit into a business’s modern marketing mix?”

Inspired by a quote from Scott Gibson, Group Executive Digital Practice, Dimension Data, my recommendation to organisations looking at digital marketing to help transform their business in this new digital age is as follows:

Digital is not a strategy. And strategy is not just going digital.

It is a fallacy to think that the solution to marketing in a digitally evolving world is to engage in digital marketing immediately.

Your digital marketing strategy should start from, for lack of a better term, an offline marketing strategy.

Digital marketing is just one component of your overall marketing mix, which is determined by the overall marketing goal.

Your overall marketing goal determines your overall marketing strategy. From this overall strategy, you will develop sub-strategies for traditional marketing, digital marketing and possibly sales, especially if you are an offline business.

Digital marketing, in itself, is not a strategy for your business. It forms an essential component of your marketing mix in the digitally evolving world. It will grow more critical when more customers shift online completely, or your business transforms to become a more digital one.

So, if your overall strategy has not been defined or is not clear, it is unlikely your digital marketing strategy can be effective, even with a mastery of tactical implements across different digital channels.

From a business strategy standpoint, you will share your resources across your traditional marketing, digital marketing and sales teams to execute strategies with tactics that are determined by the respective sub-strategies.

Digital marketing is the latest form of marketing communication, albeit a monster of a medium due to its pervasiveness through all aspects of our lives today.

But that is how digital marketing fits in.

However, the discussion so far has treated traditional and digital marketing as separate mutually exclusive disciplines. In modern practice, it is an evolved hybrid of the two that provides the true solution to today's business and marketing challenges.

In this hybrid marketing approach, digital marketing plays an intricate role as both a leading and supporting revenue driver.

HYBRID & DIGITAL MARKETING CONSULTANCY

Businesses looking to digitally transform effectively can hire a digital consultant such as [Evolve & Adapt](#).

We have the unique skillset and qualifications of being certified business management consultants and certified digital marketers that can provide hybrid marketing, digital marketing and SEO consultancy.

If you are a Singapore SME, as a certified management consultant, we can help you tap on the Enterprise Development Grant (EDG).

The EDG can be used to help offset consultancy-related costs (SMEs up to 80% till end 2020; non-SMEs up to 50% of qualified costs).

Watch the video below to understand our consulting approach.



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