

DIGITAL MARKETING

Five Units Notes

*Department of Computer Science
St. Joseph's Degree & PG College, Hyderabad*

**BBA (IT) / B.Com (IT) /
I Year - II Semester**

DIGITAL MARKETING

UNIT-I:

Digital Marketing: Introduction to Digital Marketing. Traditional Vs. Digital Marketing, Technology behind Digital Marketing, Characteristics of Digital Marketing, Digital Marketing Strategy, Understanding Digital Consumer.

UNIT-II:

Online Advertising: Introduction, Objective, Where to Advertise, Online AdFormat, Search Engine Ad, Network Advertising, Affiliate Programs, Landing Pages

UNIT-III:

Email Marketing: Introduction, Types of Email, Email Marketing Campaign Process, Email marketing Tools, Advantages and Disadvantages, Opt-in Email Advertising, Email tracking

UNIT-IV:

Social Media Marketing (SMM):

What is Social Media Marketing, Seven Myths of SMM, Characteristics of Successful Social Media Marketer, Social Media Marketing plan, Social Media marketing Tools, Publishing Blogs, Podcast and Webinars, Social Media Monitoring, Social Media: Facebook, Twitter.

UNIT-V:

Search Engine Optimization (SEO): Understanding SEO, Search Engine Optimization Process – Goals, On-Page Optimization, Off-Page Optimization and Analyze, Search Engine Result Process (SERP), SEO Tools.

Lab Work: Online Advertising, Email Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Conducting Webinars Search Engine Optimization

Unit – I

Digital Marketing

Introduction to Digital Marketing, Traditional Vs Digital Marketing, Technology behind Digital Marketing, Characteristics of Digital Marketing, Digital Marketing Strategy, Understanding Digital Consumer.

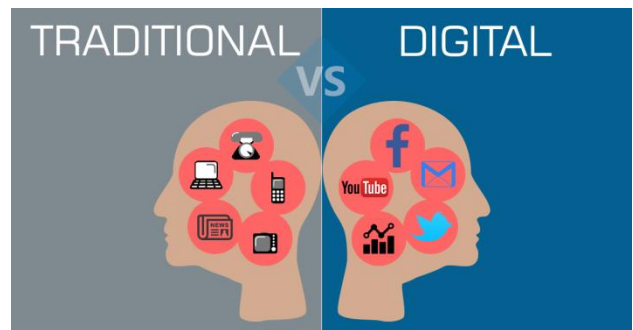
Introduction to Digital Marketing:

Today's time of Internet has opened the gateway of tremendous digital marketing opportunities for businesses. By utilizing different channels of digital marketing, businesses cannot just share their product and services online; additionally they can gain clients for their business, entice them and can convert them to boost their business profits. The speed and straightforwardness with which the digital media transmits data and support a business is astonishing.

The world is super-connected nowadays and all things considered, marketing and advertising are no more the same as they once were. This is particularly valid because of the ascent of online networking, which has changed how organizations speak with potential and existing customers. Essentially, it is an aggregate term, which is utilized where advertising and marketing meet web innovation and different types of online media platforms.

Traditional Marketing Vs Digital Marketing:

The debate continues as to whether digital marketing is overpowering and surpassing traditional marketing or not. Many think that for the most part, digital marketing has taken over and traditional marketing barely exists, if at all. Recent occurrences such as the magazine giant, Newsweek switching to totally digital publications cause ripples throughout the marketing arena. Over the last year or so traditional marketing had fallen nearly 160% while in the same time frame expenses for digital marketing increased over 14%.



Traditional Marketing:

The traditional way of marketing lets businesses market their products or administrations on print media, radio and TV commercials, bill boards, business cards, and in numerous other comparable ways where Internet or web-based social networking sites were not utilized for promoting.

- However, traditional promoting approaches had constrained client reachability and extent of driving clients' purchasing conduct. In addition, traditional marketing methods were not quantifiable too.
- There are many facets of traditional marketing and examples might include tangible items such as business cards, print ads in newspapers or magazines. It can also include posters,

commercials on TV and radio, billboards and brochures. Traditional marketing is anything except digital means to brand your product or logo.

- Another overlooked means of traditional marketing is when people find a particular business through a referral or a network and eventually you build a rapport with them.
- Because of its longevity, people are accustomed to traditional marketing. Finding ads in magazines and newspapers, or reading billboards are still familiar activities and people still do them all the time.
- Most of the time, traditional marketing is reaching only a local audience even though it is not limited to one.
- There are some aspects where traditional marketing wins over the online advertising battle, which include Target Local Audience, Materials are for keeps, More personal and Simpler process.
- One of the primary disadvantages of traditional marketing is that the results are not easily measured, and in many cases cannot be measured at all.
- In most cases, traditional marketing is also more costly than digital marketing. And perhaps the biggest disadvantage today is that traditional marketing is static which means there is no way to interact with the audience. It's more like you are throwing information in front of people and hoping that they decide to take action.



Digital Marketing:

Digital Marketing can be understood as a well-targeted, conversion-oriented, quantifiable, and interactive marketing of products or services by utilizing digital innovation to achieve the customers, and transform them into clients in a sustainable fashion. The whole concept and functionalities of Digital Marketing are more competent, effective, result-oriented and measurable, which make it very different from traditional marketing.



- Digital or online marketing is the marketing mode of the global village. It is only obvious that the era of the internet will have its influence in every realm of life.
- The world of digital marketing continues to evolve and as long as technology continues to advance, digital marketing will as well.
- Examples of digital marketing include things like websites, social media mentions, YouTube videos, and banner ads. Specifically, digital marketing is similar to traditional advertising, but using digital devices.
- However, digital marketing is considered a form of inbound marketing and its goal is for people to find you. Businesses put content (or ads) out for individuals to find.
- People may conduct an organic online search, a paid search, find your business on a social network or by reading content that has been published online such as a blog or an article. The more they see you or your content, the more familiar they will become with your brand and they will eventually develop a trust and a rapport with you through this online presence.
- One benefit to using digital marketing is that the results are much easier to measure; and another is that a digital campaign can reach an infinite audience. It is also possible to tailor a digital campaign to reach a local audience but it can also be used on the web and reach the entire globe when appropriate.
- Digital marketing is also a very interactive means of reaching an audience since it makes use of social outlets. There can be plenty of direct contact between the audience and the business which means that the business can get some very valuable consumer feedback.
- Benefits of Digital Marketing over Traditional Marketing include reduced cost, real time result, brand Development, non-intrusive, higher exposure, higher engagement, Quicker publicity, Non interruptive, Good For All Stages Of Fields, Easy analytics and Strategy Refinement.
- One of the disadvantages to using digital media marketing strategies is that it can take some time to realize measurable success.

Differences between Traditional Marketing & Digital Marketing:

Traditional Marketing	Digital Marketing
1. Communication is unidirectional in traditional marketing, which means, an organization communicates about its services with its audiences.	1. Communication is bidirectional in Digital Marketing as businesses can communicate with customers and customers can ask queries or make suggestions to businesses as well.
2. Medium of communication in traditional marketing is generally phone calls, emails, and letters.	2. Medium of communication is more powerful and involves social media websites, chats, apps and Email.
3. Campaign in Traditional marketing takes more time as designing, preparing, and launching are involved.	3. Digital marketing campaigns can be developed quite rapidly and with digital tools, channelizing Digital Marketing campaigns is easier.
4. It is best for reaching local audience.	4. It is very effective for reaching global audiences.

5. It is almost impossible to measure the effectiveness of a traditional marketing campaign.	5. Digital Marketing lets you measure the effectiveness of a digital marketing campaign through analytics.
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Characteristics of Digital Marketing:

We are living in the digital age today. Outdated marketing won't help you get profits you desire for. Digital Marketing is a necessity today of almost every business. There is no way around it. The way you dedicated a lot of your time and effort to making your product, similarly it is important to invest in a complete digital strategy to launch and show your product or services to your targeted audience and continually improve your brand presence online.

Make sure that you evaluate all your options so you get aware of your digital marketing platforms and whether or not you're really boosting the potential of your marketing campaign. When done correctly, this can help you stand out from the crowd and get succeed.

Digital Marketing is a great way of increasing brand awareness, customer engagement and long-term loyalty and generating a short-term boost in sales, despite the fact that every digital marketing campaign is different in their own ways, the reality is that many of them are built on common basics and a few key elements. Successful Digital Marketing Campaign requires a lot of time following through analytics and data to find insights. But, as we have analyzed which characteristics successful campaigns share to help you.

1. Get a Quality Company Website:

What was a novelty a mere decade ago is a critical requirement today. A business website is a pseudo B2B portal, allowing businesses and customers from around the world to connect with you. A business website is similar to your Company brochure, available 24x7, and projects you as a professional outfit.

2. Social Media Presence:

The biggest achievement of this digital era has been the ease with which people have learnt to communicate- Social Media websites like Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest, YouTube etc. are the latest methods to communicate across wide demographics of age, taste and culture. By actively promoting your company on these social media, you are getting the world to talk about you.

3. Blogging and Forums:

Here is a powerful axiom- 'Content is King'. Produce powerful, genuine and compelling content as part of your Company blog. Be a regular on relevant forums and discussion panels. Learn the art of connecting your business themes into the content that you produce. In time, your content will stand up to be the biggest promoter of your brand.

4. List your business on the three biggest listing services:

Register your business on 'Google Places'- this allows your business to feature on Google searches and be listed on Google Maps. Other business databases that you must be part of include 'Yahoo! Local' and Microsoft's 'Bing'. Joining these services is free; setting up an

account takes very limited time and the far reach of these services translates to free promotion for your business.

5. Email Marketing:

In recent times, bulk emailing isn't a very favored promotional concept. However, if done well, and with good intentions, email marketing could be a powerful tool in your Company's online promotional arsenal. Personalized emails speak directly to the target audience, helps you get an immediate response and can aid in the opening of a line of communication with your prospective customer base. It's free and fast promotion- with an impactful feedback.

6. A Dedicated Digital Marketing Expert:

If you aren't sure about pulling off a good promotional job individually, maybe it's a good idea to hire an innovative, enthusiastic Digital Marketing Consultant to handle your Company's online promotional strategy. This action will allow you to be on top of your promotional ideas while employing a professional to implement concepts that drive towards your expected results.

Technology behind Digital Marketing:

Developments in technology and the evolution of marketing are inextricably intertwined. Technology has underpinned major milestones in the history of marketing since its inception. The process tends to go something like this:

- New technology emerges and is initially the preserve of technologists and early adopters.
- The technology gains a firmer foothold in the market and starts to become more popular, putting it on the marketing radar.
- Innovative marketers jump in to explore ways they can harness the power of this emerging technology to connect with their target audience.
- The technology migrates to the mainstream and is adopted into standard marketing practice.

The printing press, radio, television and now the internet are all examples of major breakthroughs in technology that ultimately altered the relationships between marketers and consumers for ever, and did so on a global scale.

But, of course, marketing isn't about technology; it's about people: technology is only interesting, from a marketing perspective, when it connects people with other people more effectively. There are plenty of examples of technology through the ages having a significant impact on various markets – technology that may seem obscure, even irrelevant today. The mainstream adoption of digital technology – the internet, the software applications that run on it, and the devices that allow people to connect both to the network and to each other whenever, wherever and however they want to – promises to dwarf all that has come before it.

The first global communications network: 'the highway of thought'

To understand the explosive growth of the internet we need to look back at how early communications technology evolved into the global network of interconnected computers that

today we call the internet. The story of electronic communication begins with the wired telegraph – a network that grew explosively to cover the globe, connected people across vast distances in a way that seemed almost magical, and changed the world for ever.

Early Networks:

The internet story really starts in 1957, with the USSR's launch of the Sputnik satellite. It signalled that the United States was falling behind the Soviet Union in the technology stakes, prompting the US government to invest heavily in science and technology. In 1958, the US Department of Defense set up the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA), a specialist agency established with a specific remit: to make sure the United States stayed ahead of its Cold War nemesis in the accelerating technology race.

You've got mail E-mail, which is still often described as the internet's 'killer application', began life in the early 1960s as a facility that allowed users of mainframe computers to send simple text-based messages to another user's mailbox on the same computer. But it wasn't until the advent of ARPANET that anyone considered sending electronic mail from one user to another across a network.

In 1971 Ray Tomlinson, an engineer working on ARPANET, wrote the first program capable of sending mail from a user on one host computer to another user's mailbox on another host computer. As an identifier to distinguish network mail from local mail Tomlinson decided to append the host name of the user's computer to the user login name. To separate the two names he chose the @ symbol.

E-mail, one of the Internet's most widely used applications, and one of the most critical for internet marketers, began life as a programmer's afterthought. The ARPANET was a solution looking for a problem.

From ARPANET to Internet :

The term 'internet' was first used in 1974 by US computer scientist Vinton Cerf (commonly referred to as the 'father of the internet', and now a senior executive and internet evangelist with Google). Cerf was working with Robert Khan at DARPA on a way to standardize the way different host computers communicated both across the growing ARPANET and between the ARPANET and other emerging computer networks. The Transmission Control Program (TCP) network protocol they defined evolved to become the Transmission Control Program/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) protocol suite that's still used to pass packets of information backwards and forwards across the internet to this day.

In 1983 the ARPANET started using the TCP/IP protocol – a move that many consider to signal the true 'birth' of the internet as we know it. That year, too, the system of domain names (.com, .net, etc) was invented. By 1984 the number of 'nodes' on the still fledgling network passed 1,000 and began climbing rapidly. By 1989 there were more than 100,000 hosts connected to the internet, and the growth continued.

Making Connections – 'birth of the Web'

It was in 1989 that Tim Berners-Lee, a British developer working at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva, proposed a system of information cross-referencing, access and retrieval across the rapidly growing internet based on 'hypertext' links. The concept of a hypertext information architecture was nothing new, and was already being used in individual programs running on individual computers around the world. The idea of linking documents stored on different computers across the rapidly growing internet, though, was

nothing short of revolutionary. The building blocks for the world wide web were already in place – but it was Tim Berners-Lee’s vision that brought them together.

The first web page on the internet was built at CERN, and went online on 6 August 1991. It contained information about the new world wide web, how to get a web browser and how to set up a web server. Over time it also became the first ever web directory, as Berners-Lee maintained a list of links to other websites on the page as they appeared.

The World Wide Web – A New Frontier

Up to this point, the internet had been the realm of technologists and scientists at research institutions. But the advent of the web changed the landscape, making online information accessible to a much broader audience. What happened next was explosive. Between 1991 and 1997 the web grew at an astonishing 850 per cent per annum, eclipsing all expectations. With more websites and more people joining the online party every day, it was only a matter of time before innovative tech-savvy marketers started to notice the web’s potential as an avenue for the marketing message.

In August 1995 there were 18,957 websites online; by August 1996 there were 342,081 (‘Fifteen Years of the Web’, Internet timeline, www.bbc.co.uk). It was an era that saw the birth of some of today’s most well-known online brands: sites like Amazon, Yahoo!, eBay and, in September 1998, Google Inc.

Boom, Boom. . . Bang!

For a time it seemed as though the halcyon days of the late 1990s would continue forever and that the dot.com bubble was impervious to bursting. Fuelled by speculative investment and high-profile high-tech IPOs, the Nasdaq Composite stock index continued to rocket upwards. Each new dot.com success fuelled the fervour for technology stocks, blowing the bubble up a little more. On 10 March 2000 the Nasdaq index hit an intraday high of 5,132.52 before settling to an all-time closing high of 5,046 points.

Enough Technology – let’s talk about people

One of the key things to remember is this: digital marketing isn’t actually about technology at all; it’s all about people. In that sense it’s similar to traditional marketing: it’s about people (marketers) connecting with other people (consumers) to build relationships and ultimately drive sales.

Technology merely affords you, the marketer, new and exciting platforms that allow you to connect with people in increasingly diverse and relevant ways. Digital marketing is not about understanding the underlying technology, but rather about understanding people, how they’re using that technology, and how you can leverage that to engage with them more effectively. Yes, you have to learn to use the tools at your disposal – but understanding people is the real key to unlocking the potential of digital marketing.

A huge and growing market

Although internet companies suffered bruised finances and a tarnished public image in the wake of the dot.com crash, the internet itself never stopped growing, in terms both of the number of websites online and, crucially from a marketing perspective, of the number of people with internet access.

In March 2000, when the dot.com bubble burst, there were an estimated 304 million people in the world with internet access. By March 2003 that figure had doubled to 608 million, and in December 2005 the global online population passed 1 billion. As of December 2007 the figure sat at around 1.3 billion people. That’s 20 per cent of the world’s population – and climbing (Internet World Stats, www.internetworldstats.com). As global and local online populations have spiralled upwards, so too have the levels of broadband penetration, which

means that not only are there more people online but they're also online more often, for much longer periods of time and can do much more with that time.

All of this means the market penetration of digital channels is growing rapidly. As the potential audience grows, so too does the allure of digital marketing. Marketers around the world are sitting up and taking notice, and big name brands are starting to take the internet and other digital marketing channels seriously: loosening the purse strings and redistributing their advertising spend.

Introducing Consumer 2.0

Web 2.0 is not a revolution in technology; it's an evolution in the way people are using technology. It's about harnessing the distributed collaborative potential of the internet to connect and communicate with other like-minded people wherever they are: creating communities, and sharing knowledge, thoughts, ideas and dreams. If you've ever shared photos on Flickr, read and commented on a blog, looked for friends on Facebook or MySpace, watched a video clip on YouTube, tried to find your house on Google Maps, video-called friends or family abroad using Skype or looked up an article on Wikipedia, then you've used Web 2.0 technologies.

Analysts at Jupiter Research identified **seven key ways** in which the increasingly widespread adoption of **technology is influencing consumer behavior**:

- **Inter-connectivity:** Networked digital technology is enabling consumers to connect with each other more readily, be it through e-mail, instant messaging (IM), mobile messaging, or web-based social networking platforms such as Facebook, MySpace and LinkedIn – or more likely a combination of all of these platforms. Consumers are interacting with like-minded people around the world, paying scant regard to trifling concerns like time zones or geography. Peer-to-peer interaction is reinforcing social networks and building new virtual communities.
- **Technology is leveling the information playing field:** With digital technology content can be created, published, accessed and consumed quickly and easily. As a result the scope of news, opinion and information available to consumers is broader and deeper than ever. Consumers can conduct their own unbiased research, comparing and contrasting products and services before they buy. Knowledge is power, and digital technology is shifting the balance of power in favour of the consumer.
- **Relevance filtering is increasing:** With such a glut of information available to them, digital consumers are, through necessity, learning to filter out items relevant to them and to ignore anything they perceive as irrelevant. Increasingly digital consumers look to have their information aggregated, categorized and delivered (whether through e-mail or RSS feeds). They use personalization features to block out irrelevant content and increasingly employ software solutions to exclude unsolicited commercial messages.
- **Niche aggregation is growing:** The abundance and diversity of online content allow consumers to participate in and indulge their specialist interests and hobbies. Aggregations of like-minded individuals congregate online; the homogeneous mass consumer population is fragmenting into ever-smaller niche groups, with increasingly individual requirements.

- **Micropublishing of personal content is blossoming:** Digital media's interactive and interconnected nature allows consumers to express themselves online. Publishing your own content costs little more than a bit of time and imagination, whether through discussion forums, message boards, feedback forms, voting platforms, personal photo galleries, or blogs. Users are posting their opinions online for all to see and are consulting the opinion of their online peers before making purchasing decisions. How often do you check an online review before booking a table at an unknown restaurant or a weekend break at a hotel, or even buying a new car?
- **Rise of the 'prosumer':** Online consumers are getting increasingly involved in the creation of the products and services they purchase, shifting the balance of power from producer to consumer. They're letting producers know what they want in no uncertain terms: the level of interaction between producer and consumer is unprecedented. Individuals are more involved in specifying, creating and customizing products to suit their requirements, and are able to shape and mould the experiences and communications they receive from producers. Traditional mass-production and mass-marketing concepts are rapidly becoming a thing of the past.
- **On demand; any time, any place, anywhere:** As digital technology becomes more ubiquitous in people's lives, the corresponding acceleration of business processes means that consumers can satisfy their needs more quickly, more easily and with fewer barriers. In the digital economy, trifling concerns like time, geography, location and physical store space are becoming irrelevant. It's a world of almost instant gratification, and the more consumers get of it the more they want it – now, now, now!

Digital Marketing Strategy:

Why you need a digital marketing strategy?

The simple answer: because without one you'll miss opportunities and lose business. Formulating a digital marketing strategy will help you to make informed decisions about your venture into the digital marketing arena and ensure that your efforts are focused on the elements of digital marketing that are most relevant to your business. It's a crucial first step towards understanding how the constantly evolving digital marketplace relates to you and how it affects the relationship between your business or brand and your customers and prospects.

- It doesn't matter what business you're in; it's a fairly safe bet that an increasing number of your target market rely on digital technology every day to research, evaluate and purchase the products and services they consume.
- Without a coherent strategy of engagement and retention through digital channels your business is at best missing a golden opportunity and at worst could be left behind, watching your competitors pull away across an ever-widening digital divide.
- Unlike conventional forms of mass media marketing, the internet is unique in its capacity to both broaden the scope of your marketing reach and narrow its focus at the same time.
- Using digital channels you can transcend traditional constraints like geography and time zones to connect with a much wider audience. At the same time, digital technology allows you to hone your marketing message with laser-like precision to target very specific niche segments within that wider market. Implemented effectively, it can be an incredibly powerful combination.

- It's often stated that the internet puts consumers in control as never before. But it's also important to remember that the internet also delivers an unprecedented suite of tools, techniques and tactics that allow marketers to reach out and engage with those same consumers. The marketing landscape has never been more challenging, dynamic and diverse.
- And therein lies the crux of our need for a cohesive digital marketing strategy. If you're going to harness the power of digital marketing to drive your online business to dizzying new heights, you need a thorough understanding of your market, how your customers are using digital technology, and how your business can best utilize that same technology to build enduring and mutually rewarding relationships with them.
- As digital channels continue to broaden the scope available to us as marketers, so they add to the potential complexity of any digital marketing campaign. Having a clearly defined strategy will help to keep you focused, ensure that your marketing activities are always aligned with your business goals and, crucially, ensure that you're targeting the right people.

Defining your Digital Marketing Strategy:

Once you've decided that you do, in fact, need to pursue some form of digital marketing, the next step is actually to sit down and define your strategy. Unfortunately there is no 'one size fits all' strategic panacea here. We don't have a magic recipe to ensure your digital marketing success, and neither does anybody else. Basically every business needs to 'bake' its own unique strategy based on its own particular set of circumstances. While the available ingredients are the same, the resulting strategies can be radically different.

If you sell apples to local grocers by the truckload, your strategy will bear little resemblance to that of a company selling downloadable e-books and reports on financial trading, which will in turn be very different to the strategy adopted by a sports clothing manufacturer who wants to cut out the retailer and sell directly to consumers over the web. Different products, different markets, different needs – different solutions. What it ultimately boils down to is this: the best people to define your digital marketing strategy, curiously enough, are the people who best know your business.

Laying strong digital foundations:

The good news is that you've almost certainly already started the process of defining your digital marketing strategy. Probably been thinking about digital marketing in the context of your business, about what your competitors are doing online and why, about how your customers and prospects are integrating digital technology into their lives, and about how you can best exploit these new and exciting digital channels to foster longer, more productive relationships with them. These are the components that will form the foundation of your digital marketing strategy:

- ***Know your business:*** Is your business ready to embrace digital marketing? Are your products or services suited to online promotion? Do you have the right technology, skills and infrastructure in place? How will digital marketing fit into your existing business processes, do those processes need to change, and are you and your staff ready to accommodate those changes?
- ***Know the competition:*** Who are your main competitors in the digital marketplace? Are they the same as your offline competitors? What are they doing right (emulate them),

what are they doing wrong (learn from them), what aren't they doing at all (is there an opportunity there for you?) and how can you differentiate your online offering from theirs? Remember, competition in the digital world can come from just around the corner or from right around the globe. The same technologies that allow you to reach out to a broader geographical market also allow others to reach into your local market. When you venture online you're entering a global game, so don't limit your analysis to local competition.

- **Know your customers:** Who are your customers and what do they want from you? Are you going to be servicing the same customer base online, or are you fishing for business from a completely new demographic? How do the customers you're targeting use digital technology, and how can you harness that knowledge to engage in a productive and ongoing relationship with them?
- **Know what you want to achieve:** If you don't know where you're going, there's a pretty fair chance you'll never get there. What do you want to get out of digital marketing? Setting clear, measurable and achievable goals is a key part of your digital marketing strategy. Are you looking to generate online sales, create a source of targeted sales leads, improve your brand awareness among online communities, all of the above or perhaps something completely different? Your goals are the yardsticks against which you can measure the progress of your digital marketing campaigns.
- **Know how you're doing:** The beauty of digital marketing is that, compared to many forms of advertising, results are so much more measurable. You can track everything that happens online and compare your progress against predefined goals and key performance indicators (KPIs). How is your digital campaign progressing? Are certain digital channels delivering more traffic than others? Why is that? What about conversion rates? How much of that increased traffic results in tangible value to your business? Measure, tweak, refine, re-measure. Digital marketing is an ongoing and iterative process.

The process of formally defining your digital marketing strategy forces you to sit down and analyze the market in which you're operating with a critical eye, and to really think about the different components of your business and how digital marketing can help you to achieve your business goals. Don't get down in the technical details – remember, digital marketing is about people communicating with other people; the technology is just the bit in the middle that helps it to happen. Your strategy should provide you with a high-level framework – a bird's-eye view of the digital marketing landscape with your business centre stage; the details will come later.

Understanding Digital Consumers:

There is a notion that pervades marketing circles today, a notion of mysterious ethereal creatures who exist in a hyper-connected, multifaceted cyber-world of their own. They are an enigma: they speak a different language, communicate in ways we don't understand, and they're turning the world of marketing on its head. These are the ephemeral, wraithlike 'digital consumers', who slip effortlessly through the marketer's grasp. Digital consumers are different, we're told – but are they really?

The Digital Consumer revealed

The first thing to realize about digital consumers is that there's basically no such thing. The customers and prospects you encounter online are the very same people who walk into your store every day, call you on the telephone, or order something from your mail-order catalogue. There's nothing dark, sinister or mysterious about them. They're people – like everybody else. 'There is no great mystery about how [digital consumers] think and what they want', maintains interactive marketing expert.

These consumers are doing exactly what people have been doing for thousands of years – communicating with each other. The fact that technology is enabling them to communicate with each other faster, over distance, over mobiles and in 3D worlds is being perceived as something dangerous, unique and extraordinary, something that needs to be controlled and pinned down. People talk to each other – they always have.

Making the Web their own

Consumers, whatever their 'flavour', don't care about the way marketers define what they do. Concepts like above the line, through the line, below the line, digital, traditional, experiential, linear, analogue, mobile, direct, indirect or any other 'box' we care to slip our marketing endeavours into are completely meaningless to them.

All consumers care about is the experience – how the marketing available to them can enhance the experience and help them to make more informed decisions. People are the single most important element in any form of marketing. That's just as true in the digital space as it is in any other sphere of the discipline. As a marketer you need to understand people and their behaviour – and here's where the notion of the digital consumer does carry some weight, because consumer behaviour is changing, and it's changing because of the pervasive, evocative and enabling nature of digital technology.

Digital marketing allows us to build uniquely tailored ongoing relationships with individual customers. Marketing in the digital age has been transformed into a process of dialogue, as much about listening as it is about telling.

I don't know you and you don't know me

Perceived anonymity is another online trait that can have a profound effect on consumer behaviour. It liberates consumers from the social shackles that bind them in the real world; online they are free to do and say as they please with scant regard for the social propriety that holds sway in 'real life'. In a bricks-and-mortar store shoppers will wait patiently for service, and will often endure a less-than-flawless shopping experience to get what they want. Online they won't; they demand instant gratification and a flawless customer experience. You have to deliver, first time, every time. If you fail to engage, retain and fulfill their expectations on demand, they're gone, vanishing into the ether of cyberspace as quickly as they came, the only trace a fleeting, solitary record left on your web server's log file.

Key traits of the Online Consumer

Well, there's something about the immediacy and anonymity of the digital experience that has a similar effect on people. It's always risky to generalize and make assumptions about people – especially in a field as dynamic and fast moving as this one. The only real way to know your market intimately is to conduct original research within your particular target group. That said, a lot of research work has been done (and continues to be done) on the behavioural traits of online

consumers, and a broad consensus has emerged around the key characteristics that epitomize digital consumers:

Digital consumers are increasingly comfortable with the medium: Many online consumers have been using the internet for several years at this stage – and, while the user demographic is still skewed in favour of younger people, even older users are becoming increasingly web savvy. As people become more comfortable with the medium they use it more efficiently and effectively, which means they don't hang around for long: your content needs to deliver what they want, and it needs to deliver quickly.

They want it all, and they want it now: In the digital world, where everything happens at a million miles per hour, consumers have grown accustomed to getting their information on demand from multiple sources simultaneously. Their time is a precious commodity, so they want information in a format that they can scan for relevance before investing time in examining the detail. Designers and marketers need to accommodate this desire for 'scannability' and instant gratification when constructing their online offering.

They're in control: The web is no passive medium. Users are in control – in the Web 2.0 world more than ever before. Fail to grasp that simple fact and your target audience won't just fail to engage with you, but they will actively disengage. We need to tailor our marketing to be user-centric, elective or permission based, and offer a real value proposition to the consumer to garner positive results.

They're fickle: The transparency and immediacy of the internet don't eradicate the concept of brand or vendor loyalty, but they do erode it. Building trust in a brand is still a crucial element of digital marketing, but today's consumers have the power to compare and contrast competing brands literally at their fingertips. How does your value proposition stack up against the competition around the country and across the globe? Your brand identity may be valuable, but if your *overall* value proposition doesn't stack up you'll lose out.

They're vocal: Online consumers talk to each other – a lot. Through peer reviews, blogs, social networks, online forums and communities they're telling each other about their positive online experiences – and the negative ones. From a marketing perspective this is something of a double-edged sword – harness the positive aspects and you have incredible viral potential to propagate your message; get it wrong, and you could just as easily be on the receiving end of an uncomfortable online backlash.

Using influencers to help spread the word

There is one particular category of users online that warrants a special mention when it comes to defining your digital marketing strategy. Dubbed 'influencers', these early adopters are the online opinion leaders. Through blogs, podcasts, forums and social networks they harness the power of the web to extol the virtues of products and brands that they like, and equally to denigrate those they find unsatisfactory.

Why are influencers important to you as a marketer? Because they have the virtual ear of the online masses. People read and listen to what they have to say; they value their opinion and trust their judgment. These online influencers have already won the pivotal battle for the hearts

and minds of online consumers. Engage positively with them, and you essentially recruit a team of powerful online advocates who can have a potentially massive impact on a much wider group of consumers.

This is the online equivalent of ‘word-of-mouth’ marketing, on steroids. Of course, give them a negative experience and, well, you can guess the rest. But how exactly will you recognize these online influencers? A December 2006 report by DoubleClick (‘Influencing the Influencers: how online advertising and media impact word of mouth’) defined influencers as people who ‘strongly agreed’ to three or more of the following statements:

- They consider themselves expert in certain areas (such as their work, hobbies or interests).
- People often ask their advice about purchases in areas where they are knowledgeable.
- When they encounter a new product they like they tend to recommend it to friends.
- They have a large social circle and often refer people to one another based on their interests.
- They are active online, using blogs, social networking sites, e-mail, discussion groups, online community boards, etc to connect with their peers.

Identifying the influencers within your market sector, analyzing their behavior and tailoring part of your digital campaign to target this small but influential group can result in disproportionate knock-on benefits. Don’t neglect your core market, of course – but certainly consider targeting influencers as part of your overall digital marketing strategy.

Unit – II

Online Advertising

Introduction, Objective, Where to Advertise, Online Ad Format, Search Engine Ad, Network Advertising, Affiliate Programs, Landing Pages.

Introduction:

Simply put, online advertising is advertising on the Internet. Online advertising encompasses advertisements on search engine results pages, advertisements placed in e-mails, and other ways in which advertisers use the Internet.

- Whether online or off, the main objective of advertising is to increase sales. Advertising also aims to increase brand awareness. Advertising is based on the simple economics of supply and demand. Advertisers aim to stimulate a consumer need and then satisfy that need.
- One of the greatest benefits of online display advertising is that the messages are not restricted by geography or time.
- Online advertisements are also much more interactive than offline advertising. While both online and offline advertising can be disruptive, interactive online advertising can be designed to be perceived as less so.
- Online display advertising began as simple hyperlinked images shown on a Web site and has since progressed to include video, sound, and many other modern technologies. Today, messages and interactions can be contained within the advertising display without ever taking consumers to a landing page.
- Although the Internet provides new scope for creative approaches to advertising, we see its true advantage when we realize how trackable, and therefore measurable, Internet advertising is. Or, to take it from Eric Schmidt, CEO of Google, “The Internet will transform advertising because of its trackability, not its beauty.”

History:

Online advertising rapidly followed the developing Internet. And, as consumers are increasingly spending more time online, and hours spent on the Internet start to eclipse hours spent watching television, the medium becomes increasingly important to any advertiser.

According to Wikipedia, the first clickable banner advertisement was sold to a law firm in 1993 by Global Network Navigator. HotWired, an early Web magazine, was the first to sell advertising space in large quantities to a number of advertisers. One of the very first advertisers was AT&T (a U.S. telecom company), which went online in October 1994.



Figure 3.1 An Early Banner Ad for AT&T

This was part of a campaign that AT&T was running to promote the Internet to consumers, and included television and outdoor advertising. Believe it or not, but this was cutting edge back in

1994! As Web technology has developed, so has the technology that is used to create and serve advertising online.

Definition of Online Advertising:

Online advertising is a marketing strategy that involves the use of the Internet as a medium to obtain website traffic and target and deliver marketing messages to the right customers. Online advertising is geared toward defining markets through unique and useful applications.

Since the early 1990s there has been an exponential increase in the growth of online advertising, which has evolved into a standard for small and large organizations. Online advertising is also known as Internet advertising.

A major advantage of online advertising is the quick promotion of product information without geographical boundary limits. A major challenge is the evolving field of interactive advertising, which poses new challenges for online advertisers.

Online advertisements are purchased through one of the following common vehicles:

- **Cost per Thousand (CPM):** Advertisers pay when their messages are exposed to specific audiences.
- **Cost per Click (CPC):** Advertisers pay every time a user clicks on their ads.
- **Cost per Action (CPA):** Advertisers only pay when a specific action (generally a purchase) is performed.

Examples of online advertising include banner ads, search engine results pages, social networking ads, email spam, online classified ads, pop-ups, contextual ads and spyware.

Objectives of Advertising:

Understand when best to use online advertising. Advertising, whether online or offline, has a number of objectives:

1. **Building Brand Awareness:** Making people aware of a brand or product is an important long-term goal for any marketer. Once customers know about the brand, the marketer has taken the first step toward gaining the customer's trust and patronage. The better known a brand is, the more business they can do. And the ultimate goal is to do more business and sell more of the product. Online, creative advertising or banner advertising is largely visual, making it an ideal channel for promoting brand collateral.
2. **Creating Consumer Demand** Consumers can't want what they don't know about. Advertising needs to convince consumers about what they should want and why they should want it. Modern online advertising provides a great way to communicate the USPs (unique selling points) of a product, thereby helping stimulate demand.
3. **Satisfying Consumer Demand:** Once the consumer is aware of and desires a product, they need to find out how to satisfy that desire. If brand building has been effective, they will know that a particular brand exists. At this point, it is important for the marketer to show the consumer how their particular brand or product will best meet that need.
4. **Driving Response and Sales:** All forms of online marketing need to drive traffic and sales in the long term. However, the immediacy of online advertising also drives traffic

and sales in the short and medium terms. Unlike traditional media advertising, online advertising can turn the potential customer into an actual customer right there and then. What's more, it is possible to measure accurately how effectively the online advertising campaign does this.

5. **The Key Differentiator:** Online advertising is able to drive instant sales and conversions. Unlike offline advertising mediums, the consumer can go from advertisement to merchant in one easy click. Because of the connected nature of the Internet, online activities are highly trackable and measurable, which makes it possible to target advertisements and to accurately track and gauge the effectiveness of the advertising. Each display advertisement can be tracked for success.
6. **Introducing a New Product to the Market:** Online advertising is an important strategy when a new product or brand is launched, however this should often be after the launch of an online public relations campaign which includes press releases, blogs, news sites and other tactics to gain wide media coverage. Advertising before the launch of an online PR is not advisable because it loses its newsworthiness and media outlets are unlikely to accept it. Some online channels to use to announce your new product are display ads on networks like the Google Display Network (GDN), Search advertising, organic search, email marketing and others.
7. **Explain how a Product Works:** Advertising can help to explain the uses of a product and in what setting it is to be used. It's often easier with video advertising which can include animation, motion, text, graphics and many other elements. It is also effective at showing the product in use and even talking heads are great for explaining how it works.
8. **Reduce Buyer Fear:** Video advertising is also helpful here after a purchase to reduce fear that the customer has bought the wrong product and to explain how they can use it. Buyer remorse is a major problem especially for high-ticket items that require a high financial outlay, so it's important to allay their fears and convince them that they have made the right purchase.
9. **Build Company Image:** Many online channels are effective at building a company's image but social media is one of the best and using advertising tools on sites like Facebook you can reach out to new, existing and non-existent customers. This is about raising brand awareness and reinforcing the company's image at all touchpoints with the target market. Social media is helpful because the company can interact with followers and build a relationship outside of its own portals.
10. **Build Brand Preference:** There are many brands in the online space that are vying for customers' attention and it's important to highlight brand attributes and values and create a competitive advantage for your brand. Using advertising vehicles like PPC advertising, display advertising, social media paid advertising and others, your brand can promote its unique online value proposition and increase click through rate, conversions and brand recall.
11. **Inform Market of an Offer:** If you have a sales promotion and want to inform the market through online advertising, you can use text and display ads on search and display platforms. So you can include a money-off offer, a coupon or voucher, category discount and many others and these are effective at boosting CTRs for ads and also conversions.

- 12. Encourage Switching to Your Brand:** Comparative advertising is common online especially on PPC platforms like Google Adwords. So, you can bid on competitor brand names and then display ads that highlight your unique offers and how your products have a competitive advantage. Of course many competitors will be doing the same so it's important that you bid on your own brand names too.
- 13. Maintain Top Of Mind Awareness:** Remarketing is an online advertising vehicle that works well for a wide range of brands and companies that want to raise brand awareness, increase sales or leads, increase brand recall and be top of mind. Google Adwords, Analytics and Facebook provide remarketing features and resources to target people that are aware of your brand and then bring them back to your website and purchase from your business.
- 14. Remind Buyer of the Product or Brand:** This marketing objective is similar to top of mind awareness and using remarketing and pay per click advertising; it is possible to effectively remind target customers of your products or brands. The benefit is that it is affordable and you only pay for clicks to your website, unlike traditional advertising vehicles where you pay even if there is no customer interaction or response.

Where to Advertise?

Advertising can be expensive – and way out of your budget if you're just starting out as a freelancer or small business. But with some clever thought, there are a few ways you can promote your enterprise for free in your local area.

Different ways to advertise your business:

Here are 10 simple ideas for promoting your freelance services or small business for free in your local area (and beyond).

1) Make sure your website adds value

Whether you're targeting local or global customers, your website should clearly explain what you do, be easy to find and navigate, and be attractive. An article in E-consultancy suggests that you should look at the following things when building or rebuilding your website:

- How goal-focused it is.
- The quality of your content.
- How easy your website is to use by its intended target audiences.
- How well it projects and communicates your brand identity.
- How search engine optimized (SEO) it is.
- Social media channel usage and integration.
- Mobile internet users.

2) Make blogging a high priority

It's important to add a blog to your website because it increases your chances of being noticed, and helps with your SEO as you can use your keywords and phrases in your blog posts. Websites get crawled quite regularly so it's always important to have new, quality content.

Writing a regular blog also gives your audience an opportunity to interact with you by placing their comments about your posts. Remember to add social sharing buttons to your blog posts so readers can easily share them, and more people can discover you and your business.

3) Distribute a press release once a month

It's important to keep in touch with your local newspaper and submit press releases which have the potential opportunity to get you in print for free. These could be about anything from taking on new staff to winning a new client – it doesn't have to be big news, just something to let local businesses know you are there.

If you build relationships with editors and journalists this will help ensure that your press release is read and hopefully published. As will our quick, 30-second guide to writing a powerful press release!

4) Use email marketing software to help increase sales

This method is fast, effective, immediate and easy to design. You can also track and understand exactly how your email marketing software is growing your business and see how individual customers respond so you can increase sales over time.

To get full value from your email marketing, ensure that you update and grow your database regularly, and try to get people to opt-in by signing up on your website. There are many self-service email platforms available (such as MailChimp), or you may decide to get help from a specialist agency.

5) Start using videos to market your business

YouTube is the world's second largest search engine, so it makes sense to create a YouTube Channel and leverage proven video marketing tactics, like 'how-to' style video content and response videos, to improve search visibility and potentially drive leads.

One idea is to make individual video interviews on local news-makers in your niche using Skype. Once you've recorded the video, to maximize its benefit:

- Post it on YouTube.
- Embed the YouTube code on your website.
- Transcribe the video with a cheap tool.
- Post the transcribed content on your blog for search engines to find.
- Or you could host an online seminar and share it on your website and via social media networks – a perfect opportunity to gain exposure.

6) List your business on popular local directories

Getting clients and customers to find out where you are is crucial, and one of the best ways local businesses can be found online is by adding their company to top online business directories.

There are a number of popular online directories, including Google, Bing, Yahoo, LinkedIn, Yelp, Yellowbook and Foursquare. Make sure you place your details on all of them, because if you are only posting on these top few, then you will be missing an opportunity to be found by customers and clients who are after your services. You can find a more comprehensive list of free directories on HubSpot.

7) Be active on social media

It's important to know who your target audience is, as this is one of the most popular ways to get noticed.

You can promote any news, events and interact with your audience as well as post your blog content through the most common media channels, including Facebook, Google+ LinkedIn and Twitter.

8) Verify your listing on Google+ Local

Previously known as Google Places, Google+ Local is a way of verifying on Google maps where your business physically is.

This can be verified by anyone at the business. Google will send a pin number through to your exact business address, and as long as someone enters this pin number onto your listing it means you are verified and can receive the benefits.

These include more chances to appear within Google local searchers, the opportunity to connect your Google+ profile to your Google+ Local listing, and the opportunity to gain reviews from your customers that will then show up as star ratings in your search results.

The best bit about this is that it's completely free.

9) Attend local networking events and build connections

The best way to meet new local contacts (and potential customers) is to get out there and start networking. Make a point of attending events and meet-ups focused on your business topic, and participate in conversations by asking questions or volunteer to speak at a live blog conference.

You can search local events by region and town or city on Find Networking Events. You can also look for networking events specifically for women, as well as workshops, seminars and business shows.

10) Guest post on someone else's site

Writing a blog for someone else's site is a great way to gain more exposure for your business, and get a reputation as an expert – especially if they're well known in your local area.

Guest posting gives you an excellent opportunity to make new contacts with bloggers and hopefully attract some loyal readers. These readers could well evolve into customers, so guest posting is going to be beneficial towards your increase in revenue. Just make sure you stay within the Google guidelines for guest posting.

Other relevant directories that could increase exposure for your business include:

- **Bing Places for Business:** Only Google outpaces this free Microsoft product in visits, and you can add multiple business locations, photos, videos, and more during your fast, free, and easy registration.

- **Yahoo Local Listing:** Ranking third next to Google and Bing, Yahoo's service draws millions of searches daily.

- **Yelp** is one of the best online sources for candid consumer reviews. Bonus: It allows you to send public or private messages (including deals) to customers and review business trends using the Yelp reporting tool. The most reviewed categories on Yelp include shopping, restaurants, and home services respectively.

- **MerchantCircle** is a free network targeted toward small businesses seeking to connect with local customers and other small businesses in their areas.

- **Yellow Pages:** This well-organized online version of the antiquated classic generates millions of daily searches. It offers advertising, lead generation, and detailed ad performance data.

- **White Pages:** This lists some 30 million companies, offering sponsored ad opportunities and a premium text message service for clients.

- **Superpages.com:** This free, easy-to-navigate service includes helpful options, including weather and lottery listings, as well as fast access to popular categories, search tips, and a Facebook sign-in option.

- **Yellowbook** allows for easily searchable business listings that include your business information, a link to your website, product descriptions, a map feature, and options for display and video ads.



- **YellowBot** provides basic contact and location info about your business similar to the Yellow Pages, with customer reviews and options that include premium listings, searchable tags, and fast sign-in via Windows Live, Google, Facebook, Yahoo, or Twitter.
- **Manta** calls itself one of the largest online resources dedicated to small business. “The Manta directory boasts millions of unique visitors every month who search our comprehensive database for individual businesses, industry segments, and geographic-specific listings,” it reports. “[We] deliver helpful news and advice, promotion opportunities, and tools for small businesses.
- **Citysearch:** This free site specializes in listings for restaurants, bars, spas, hotels, restaurants, and other businesses across the U.S., optimizing them via a partner network that includes Expedia, Urbanspoon and MerchantCircle.
- **MapQuest:** This blast-from-the-past web-mapping service owned by Verizon gets searchers to your physical location quickly and easily via detailed maps.
- **Local.com:** This free directory gives searchers detailed info about events, deals, and info relevant to a given city. Its database includes more than 16 million business listings covering every zip code in the U.S., it reports. Paid ad options allow for coupons and other features.
- **Foursquare:** This combination business directory and social networking site allows users to check in via map and comment about your business, with or without the Foursquare mobile app.
- **DexKnows:** This business listing site monitors your reviews and ratings and provides data into how customers engage with your profile, giving insights to online and offline advertising opportunities. The DexKnows mobile app is available for Android and Apple and allows users to make single-tap searches, write reviews, mark favorites, and find fuel stations based on GPS locations.
- **The Business Journals:** This local option, available in most major U.S. cities, generates 8 million monthly searchers and offers four levels of listings. Its searchers rack up an average income of more than \$97,000, and 84 percent shop online.
- **Angie’s List:** This respected site is known for its objective consumer reviews in more than 720 categories. More than 3 million members turn to Angie’s List to research, hire, rate, and review local service providers.
- **Hotfrog:** This free, detailed online directory can help get your website listed in Google search results. Options include coupons for your customers. The site attracts 1.6 million active users monthly across 38 different countries.
- **Kudzu:** This free database reports that it helps some 20 million homeowners a year make decisions regarding their renovations. Options include a dedicated account manager who can work to boost your website in search results. Profiles can include marketing descriptions, photographs of work performed, videos, coupons, professional affiliations, credentials, and user-generated reviews and ratings.

- **Trip Advisor** offers a flat subscription rate for any business related to the hospitality or entertainment industries in 48 markets worldwide. Calling itself the world's largest travel site, it reaches 390 million average monthly unique visitors and so far has logged some 435 million reviews and opinions covering 6.8 million accommodations, restaurants, and attractions.

Affiliate Marketing:

Affiliate Marketing is a web-based marketing practice in which a business rewards one or more affiliates for each visitor or customer brought about by the affiliate's marketing efforts.

Affiliate marketing is also the name of the industry where a number of different types of companies and individuals are performing this form of internet marketing, including affiliate networks, affiliate management companies and in-house affiliate managers, specialized 3rd party vendors, and various types of affiliates/publishers who promote the products and services of their partners.

Affiliate marketing overlaps with other internet marketing methods to some degree, because affiliates often use regular advertising methods. Those methods include organic search engine optimization, paid search engine marketing, email marketing and in some sense display advertising. On the other hand, affiliates sometimes use less orthodox techniques like publishing reviews of products or services offered by a partner.

In simplistic terms, therefore, affiliate marketing is the practice of driving traffic from one site to another in return for reward.

Right now, affiliate marketing is very much the staple diet of adult, gaming and retail sites across the web, but it is rapidly extending its reach into other vertical markets like mobile phones and finance, which are, incidentally, the highest-spending categories in global online marketing.

The affiliate marketing eco-system

Affiliate marketing is still treated by many as a bit of a dark art within the overall marketing mix. Many brands are wary of the potential for misrepresentation and seek reassurances on a range of issues, including security, fraud and brand bidding.

'Brand bidding' is the term used to describe the practice of affiliates buying keywords on PPC programmes relating directly to brands or trademarks, with the sole objective of driving traffic towards the brand site and generating income for the affiliate. Many marketers want to maintain control over their own brand names, believing that this is, in essence, their traffic to begin with and that affiliates or other partners should stay away from these particular keywords and focus on more 'long-tail' keyword phrases to drive traffic. In other words, some marketers don't want to find themselves competing with affiliate partners in the SERPs.

Others are more enthusiastic about affiliate marketing and regard it as an integral part of their overall online marketing operations. On the plus side, affiliate marketing offers you a ready-made sales force operating on a reward or commission-only basis – in an age when marketers continuously seek ways to offset risk this surely has to be worth investigating, right?

On the negative side there are plenty of challenges surrounding measurement, and a lack of clear communication channels between affiliates and brands. For example, say a customer clicks on a special offer on an affiliate site, only to discover on arriving at the brand site that the offer has already expired – that's bad news for the affiliate and for the brand, because both lose

revenue potential, but more seriously they also alienate a customer, perhaps for good (and, remember, online consumers are highly accomplished when it comes to letting their peers know about bad online experiences).

Today things are starting to hot up on the affiliate front. Early in 2008 Time Warner's AOL acquired affiliate network buy.at, and in the travel sector Expedia-owned TripAdvisor acquired Holidays Watchdog, deals that demonstrate how seriously investors are treating the whole affiliate business model.

But who are these people?

Meet your affiliates:

The most basic affiliates are individuals (or companies run by individuals) or larger organizations who leverage their web properties to suck traffic from around the web and then push that traffic out to brand sites in return for commission. A click on an affiliate site can pay handsomely for high-value transactions. One web hosting company, for example, pays its affiliates up to \$600 for new business. More traditional affiliates, such as poker rooms and casinos, pay up to \$400 for a new account and a decent share of all revenue earned too. So there's plenty of incentive.

Affiliates may be considered by some as the bottom feeders in the affiliate ecosystem, but they are a vital component in achieving any sort of scale through investment in the affiliate marketing channel. You should look after your affiliates as well as you'd look after your own sales force. Equally, the age-old adage 'Be wary of strangers bearing gifts' applies, and you should make sure you have controls and measures in place to monitor your affiliates: there is no point in signing up 100 affiliates who are unchecked, unmotivated and unproductive. Moving up a notch, you have what are known as super-affiliates. These would typically include price comparison sites like moneysupermarket.com and pricerunner.com as well as loyalty sites like the Irish-owned pigsback.com (the term 'on the pig's back' is derived from an old Gaelic expression that essentially means someone is 'on to something good').

Super-affiliates do pretty much the same thing as affiliates, but on a much larger scale. Companies like E-conversions, for example, operate as super-affiliates for major brands such as Dell, British Gas and SKY in the UK market.

One example we encountered at the 2008 Internet World show in London was the US-owned Affiliate Response Network; their proposition is very straightforward. Once you are set up as a client and they conduct some initial testing on search terms (to find out what keywords pull relevant, targeted traffic) they connect your brand to a high-performing online network of affiliates focused on getting results. They will work closely with you to assess the optimal channels to pull targeted traffic: this could be e-mail, search, display, emerging media and so on. Typical models of business they support include cost per lead, cost per sale, etc. The network also provides clients with real-time tracking and reporting systems, an essential ingredient in understanding the power of affiliate marketing and also in allowing marketers to get a more accurate picture of which digital marketing elements really work for them.

So who lives in this ecosystem? Consumers, clients, affiliates, super-affiliates, affiliate networks and not forgetting, of course, Google and the search engines (which sounds suspiciously like a dodgy 1970s rock band). Depending on your view of the world, Google with its distributed AdSense pay-per-click model is the biggest affiliate marketing player of them all. Then again, in the words of the great Jerry Reitman, former head of direct marketing worldwide for Leo Burnett's, 'at the end of the day. . . it's all advertising'.



Online Ad Format:

The text ads that appear alongside Google search results are just one type of ad format you can create with AdWords. You can also promote your products and services with video ads, image ads, app or digital content ads, and more.

Each ad format has its own benefits, whether it's the ease and affordability of running a text ad, or the colorful storytelling that comes with video. You can run multiple kinds of ads from the same AdWords account and, in some cases, from the same campaign.

Ad formats available in an AdWords account

Format	Description	Main benefits
Text	Words only. * Boston's Best Bonsais - Spring Sale Going on Now Ad www.example.com Florist And Indoor Plant Nursery. Two Locations. Spruce Up Your Desk Today!	Maintain ads quickly and easily. Reach customers when they search on Google. Use Ad extensions to provide additional details and contact information that can make your text ads more relevant to customers.
Responsive	Responsive ads automatically adjust their size, appearance, and format to fit available ad spaces. They can transform into text or image ads.	In a matter of minutes, create ads that fit just about any ad space available. Plus, responsive ads can show as native ads, which boost your impact by blending into publisher's websites.
Image	Static or interactive graphics. Animated ads in .gif and Flash format can be used.	Showcase your product or service in a visual way. Reach customers on websites that partner with Google.

		
<p>App promotion ads</p>	<p>Drive app downloads and engagement with app promotion ads.</p>	<p>Send your customers to download your app from an app store, or include a deep link directly into your app. Note: Ads will appear only on devices compatible with your content.</p>
<p>Video</p>	<p>Video ads that show online. Run standalone video ads or insert them in streaming video content.</p> 	<p>Deliver a rich and engaging experience to customers. Reach customers on websites that partner with Google.</p>
<p>Product Shopping ads</p>	<p>Shopping ads show users a photo of your product, a title, price, store name, and more details about your product.</p>	<p>Show an ad featuring your product to people shopping online for that product or related products.</p>
<p>Showcase Shopping ads</p>	<p>An image and description that expands when clicked to show several related products and information about the store.</p>	<p>Show a Shopping ad to people who are researching where to buy rather than looking to buy a specific product. Showcase Shopping ads are available in Australia, Canada, Germany, France, Ireland, India,</p>

		New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, the UK, and the US. You may create Showcase Shopping ads using the new AdWords experience and the AdWords API . If you want to advertise individual products, check out Product Shopping ads
Call-only ads	<p>Call:(555)555-555</p> <p>Adwww.example.com</p> <p>Description Line 1</p> <p>Description Line 2</p>	Drive phone calls to your business with ads that include your phone number. People can click on these ads and then call your business directly. These ads will only appear on devices that can make phone calls, and any field in these ads can be hidden to fit on smaller screens.

Search Engine Ad:

Search engine advertising (SEA) is a branch of online marketing and, together with SEO, a discipline of search engine marketing. In SEA, advertisements in the form of a text or images are posted on search engines such as Google or Bing. The advertisements then appear prominently in the SERP (Search Engine Results Pages). The posting of advertisements within the framework of SEA belongs to the main source of income for search engine providers.

SEM vs. SEA vs. SEO

The terms SEO, SEA, and SEM are mainly used less selectively. The following description will try to compare and contrast these marketing terminologies.

SEM

- Search engine marketing, abbreviated: SEM
- Combination of SEA and SEO, branch of online marketing

SEA

- Search engine advertising, abbreviated: SEA
- Posting of ads in the form of a text or images on search results pages or other websites
- Ad booking in the SERPs based on bids on keywords for which the ads are placed
- Good ranking can be achieved through optimization of text ads and offers
- Clear control of advertisement measures with calculable success
- Means to increase traffic or improve the brand
- Can be part of a temporary marketing campaign
- Many possibilities for targeting or retargeting
- It can be part of remarketing
- Acknowledged as advertising

SEO

- Search engine optimization, abbreviated: SEO
- Includes measures to optimize websites for crawling and indexing by search engines using on-page and off-page optimization.
- Good rankings can be achieved through optimization of the website onpage and off-page factors
- No decisive guarantee that optimization measures will lead to better positions for certain keywords
- Branding is more of a secondary part of an SEO strategy
- SEO is often long-term
- Targeting can only be done through tests, evaluations, and estimations that lead to the adaptation of the content or seeding
- Rather “invisible” for the user

Objectives of SEA:

Search engine advertising is usually a part of a marketing or branding strategy. One of the primary objectives of SEA is to increase the click-through rate since the number of clicks on a website can quickly be increased through the posting of advertisement space. In addition, the Conversion Rate is particularly important for the SEA, as it ultimately determines how high the advertising costs are, and thus the ROAS.

At the same time, search engine advertising can also be used to generate advertising pressure through page impressions from display campaigns. For the most part, advertisements are used by customers in the e-commerce industry since SEA is aimed at persuading the user to buy. Thus, one of the main objectives is to increase conversions in the form of sales.

However, newsletter subscriptions, downloads, or reviews, and leads, can be manipulated through search engine optimization. The scope of the SEA measures is thereby always dependent on the amount of invested advertising budget as well as the actual search volume of research keywords.

Google AdWords:

Google Adwords is a product of Alphabet Inc. that offers marketers a wide range of advertisement opportunities in the SEA field. The principle of placing ads through AdWords is based on auctioning. Advertisers bid on specific keywords or they pay for clicks and impressions on display advertisements. Factors, such as the quality of the landing page, quality of the ad text, as well as relevance of the keywords and positive history of the AdWords account, play a crucial role in the final placement of text ads or banners. Banners or text ads posted through Google AdWords are always regarded as advertising. The following forms of advertising are possible using Google AdWords:

- Classic text ads: An advertiser selects keywords with which his/her text ads will be displayed on a prominent position in the SERP. This entails creating the so-called campaigns that, in turn, consist of ad groups. Every ad group is categorized into advertisements based on the selected keywords. If a user searches for one of these keywords, the corresponding AdWords advertisement is displayed.
- Product listing ads: With the so-called Shopping Ads (former Product Listing Ads), Google AdWords offers the possibility to place product ads that are directly created from a product

file generated by the customer. The modulation is done by specifying the Structured Data in the data feed.

- Display ads: These are ads in the form of images or text that are placed on platforms belonging to the Google advertisement network. Registration for this network can be done through the Google AdSense platform.

Google AdWords offers the possibility to combine different forms of advertisement of SEA. Simultaneous placement of PLA, text ads, and display ads is, therefore, possible. The AdWords platform is one of the most used SEA tools in the world.

- Video ads: Advertisers in the Google AdWords program can also place ads on YouTube. Text or video ads are available for this purpose.
- Gmail-Ads: If you use Google AdWords, you can also book ads in Gmail accounts. Payment is made via CPM or Cost-per-Click.
- With the AdWords Express program, Google offers small companies the possibility to use SEA without having to create their own campaigns. The thereby required files are automatically generated by Google. The advertiser only provides his/her advertising budget.

Bing / Yahoo ads:

Together with Yahoo, Bing also offers its own SEA platform. Bing / Yahoo ads]] function in a similar way to Google AdWords. However, due to Google's market dominance, Google AdWords is the platform that is mostly used for SEA in Germany and Europe. Nevertheless, a comprehensive SEM strategy should also include possibilities to advertise on Bing and Yahoo. This applies, for example, to the USA, where Bing has a significantly larger market share than in Germany.

Other SEA platforms:

Besides the major search engine providers, almost all larger search engines offer their own advertising programs. SEA, through specialized search engines, can also be advantageous depending on the targeting. As an alternative to purchasing ads from Google AdWords, for example, Amazon product ads can also be placed on the Amazon platform.

For example, if a website also wants to be successful in Russia, SEA for Yandex, etc. should also be taken into consideration. If an online shop wants to advertise vehicle parts to specific target groups, it also has the option to place its ads on different car comparison portals.

Posting models:

In SEA, posting ads is done based on different provisions:

- CPC (cost per click): Here, the advertiser specifies how much he/she is willing to pay per click.
- CPA (cost per acquisition): The advertiser specifies how much he/she is willing to pay per conversion achieved through the advertising measures.
- CPM (cost per thousand): The advertiser specifies how much he/she is willing to pay per 1,000 impressions of his/her advertisements.

- Cost per call: Here, certain advertisement portals offer the possibility to specify how much an advertiser is willing to pay per visit, Google AdWords, for example.
- Cost per lead: Depending on the web portal, costs for leads such as subscribing to a newsletter or downloading a PDF can also be agreed upon.

Impacts of SEA on SEO:

Although search engine advertising is not considered to be SEO, SEA can possibly have an impact on the ranking of a website. Therefore, this makes SEA sort of an indirect SEO measure. If an online shop raises its advertising impact through SEA and thereby improves its scope and visibility, direct type-ins of the shop's name as a brand are for example deemed to follow. Thus, the brand is strengthened and, among other things, the domain trust of a website is as well. Ever since the Vince Update, the brand plays a greater role in the SERP. For example, a website can increase its awareness with the help of SEA and, if a campaign is successful, can thus generate more traffic via the organic search, because the brand is known to many users and they decide in the SERPs for the more well-known URL, although it may even rank worse.

Through SEA, Google, or any other search engine, new information on the visits to a website is received. Since the click rate and bounce rate are also considered in the evaluation of a website, successful SEA measures also lead to an improvement of the quality of a website. Another direct consequence of SEA measures is that a website or web shop can become more famous and thereby result in "offline" access through word of mouth.

Network Advertising:

What is an Advertising Network?

An advertising network, or ad network, connects businesses that want to run advertisements with websites that wish to host them. The principle attribute of an ad network is the gathering of ad space and matching it with the advertiser's needs.

The term ad network is media neutral, but is often used to imply "online ad network" since the marketplace of aggregated publisher ad space and advertisers is increasingly found on the Internet. The crucial difference between traditional and online ad networks is that online ones deliver advertisements to the public through an ad server. Delivering ads through one central hub allows the business owner to use various methods of targeting, tracking and reporting that don't exist with traditional media alternatives.

How do they work?

Ad networks work with publishers all over the Web, helping anyone who has unsold inventory, or ad space, and wishes to monetize their offerings. The networks then aggregate this inventory, package it and sell it to advertisers.

Advertising networks provide a way for media buyers to coordinate ad campaigns across dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of sites in an efficient manner. The campaigns often involve running ads over a category (run-of-category) or an entire network (run-of-network). Site-specific buys are not a major emphasis when dealing with advertising networks.

Ad networks vary in size and focus. Large ad networks may require premium brands and millions of impressions per month. Small as networks may accept unbranded sites with thousands of impressions per month.

One of the key issues for publishers is **Exclusive vs. Non-exclusive representation**.

- **Exclusive** representation generally brings a higher percentage of revenue sharing, but sometimes results in a smaller percentage of ad inventory being sold.
- In **non-exclusive** arrangements, publishers may use secondary advertising options to fill the space left unsold by the primary ad network.

Pros and Cons:

- The benefits of using ad networks are numerous for both content providers and advertisers. Content providers find them an easy and reliable way to sell inventory, although the revenue is typically less than what they could earn selling the space themselves.
- Advertisers also like the ease of use. With minimal effort, they can purchase a campaign that targets a specific group of consumers on websites throughout the world. Ad networks are also known for flexible payment models and cost efficiencies.
- The downside to advertisers is limited control over ad placements. The possibility exists that ads could appear next to inappropriate content.
- Many advertisers have also complained that their own campaign analytics often do not match up with the metrics provided by the networks. Despite these downfalls, many businesses find ad networks to be an affordable and efficient way of reaching consumers.

Pricing Structure:

Ad networks offer many different pricing models to suit the needs of different businesses.

- **CPM - cost-per-mille** (Latin for "thousand") is the simplest of ad delivery options. Advertisers pay a price for every 1,000 impressions delivered. An ad served on someone's browser is an impression. Whether or not the user clicks on the ad has no bearing on the price.
- **CPC - cost-per-click** is a performance-based model. Impressions served do not factor in cost. Instead, advertisers pay for every click they get on an ad campaign. This method of pricing often depends upon advertisers bidding on the maximum amount they will pay for a single click, a model that's become very popular on Google AdSense and Adwords. The downside of CPC is the uncertainty of how often the ad will be served, however, the low risk and focus on performance still make it an attractive option to most marketers.
- **CPA - cost-per-acquisition**, or **cost-per-action**, takes the performance-based model even further by guaranteeing advertisers will only pay for a specific action or conversion by the user. This ad delivery metric is often a key performance indicator for marketers when evaluating return on investment (ROI).

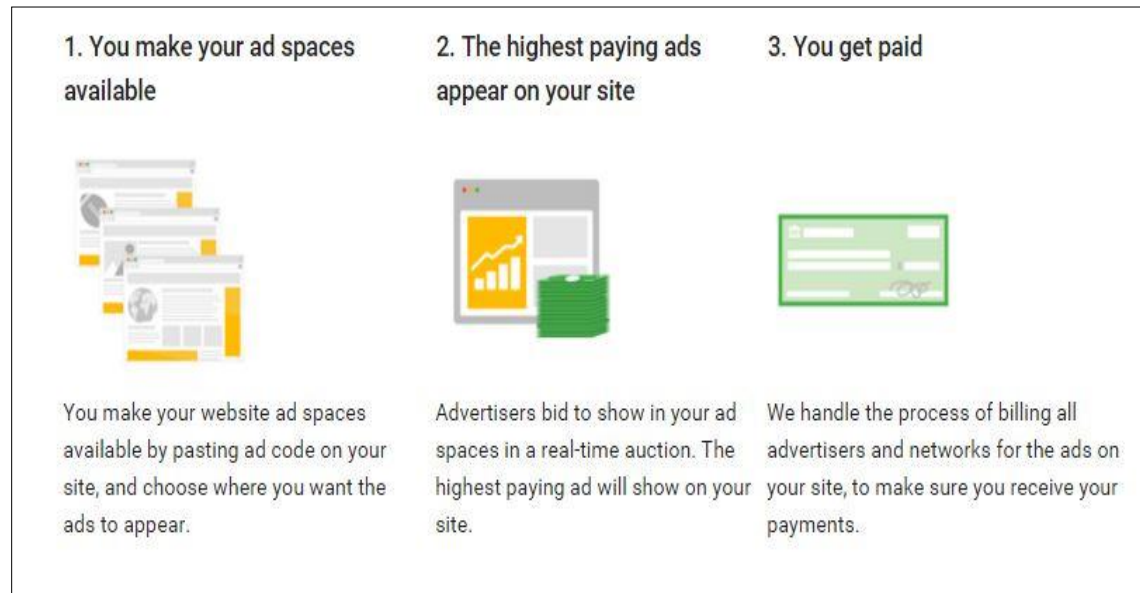
Ad targeting capabilities

Targeting capabilities for advertisers have increased dramatically over the years due to massive quantities of consumer data that have become available to the marketing community. Targeting capabilities may include:

- Age
- Gender
- Income
- Geography
- Behavior - displays relevant ads to users based on content they've clicked on while visiting several sites.

How Ad network work with Advertisers and Publishers:

An ad network is essentially a middleman; it connects advertisers to websites that host advertisements. The network seeks out unsold advertising space from publishers, and then sells that space to advertisers searching for ad space with particular content.



Ad networks are beneficial for all three parties involved; the advertiser pays a certain amount each time their ad is clicked by a potential customer (or a set amount for every 1,000 impressions), while the network and publisher each take a percentage. For example, if an advertiser pays \$1 per click, every time the ad is clicked, the publisher might get 70 cents and the network 30 cents.

There are **three** types of ad networks, each based on how they work with advertisers and publishers. These include:

- 1. Blind networks** offer low prices, but advertisers generally have no control over where ads are placed.
- 2. Vertical networks** tend to have higher quality traffic with advertising across general categories like automotive.
- 3. Targeted networks** are the most expensive for advertisers, and focus on specific targeting like behavior or website context.

Perhaps the most well-known ad network is Google AdSense, but there are many others out there, including advertising.com, casalemedia.com, tribalfusion.com, and valueclick.com.

How Do Ad Networks Help Content Publishers:

Ad networks offer content publishers an easy and convenient way to make money by selling space on a personal blog or other website. They link advertisers and publishers that perhaps would never connect otherwise – and offer a safe place for both publishers and advertisers to buy and sell.

Generally it costs a blogger or publisher nothing to partner with a network and implement a revenue stream. The network does all the work, from finding advertisers, setting up campaigns,

targeting and collecting money. The network taking on those parts of the partnership leaves the publisher with time to create quality and relevant content, which is necessary to bring in revenue.

Google Display Network (GDN):

Google has a vast network of websites advertisers can display ads on, from the New York Times down to the smallest blogs on the Web. They offer several options businesses can use to target audiences. They may even combine two or more targeting methods in the same campaign.

- **Contextual Targeting** - Google delivers advertisements to users based on the content they consume. The content aggregator - Google, in this case - assigns labels to specific websites and matches it with keywords associated with a specific ad. GDN can also serve an ad that contextually fits websites where a user has previously been. For instance, a user might visit an outdoor sporting goods website and then click away to look at political news site. Contextual targeting could be used to show an ad for family-sized camping tents to that user on the political site.
- **Placement Targeting** - marketers can choose which websites or webpages the ad serves on.
- **Remarketing** - users who visit a website are then shown advertisements for that website as they browse other areas of the display network. Remarketing can be a highly effective tactic to market to people who may have abandoned their shopping carts on your website.
- **Interest Categories** - Marketers can target people based on interests they reveal in the Web content they visit.
- **Topic Targeting** - Similar to interest categories, topic targeting allows marketers to pick a specific topic and Google will display the ads on quality sites related to that subject.
- **Geographic and Language** - Marketers can distribute their ads within a specified region or postal code and define the native language of the audience.
- **Demographic Targeting** - Ads are distributed to an audience based on age and gender.

The growth of advertising networks, and the wealth of user data that has come with it, presents tremendous opportunities for marketers who want to expand their reach with consumers. Whether your goals are to build awareness or generate conversions, an advertising network can help you find your audience and get results.

Landing Pages:

What is a Landing Page?

In the purest sense, a landing page is any web page that a visitor can arrive at or “land” on. However, when discussing landing pages within the realm of marketing and advertising, it’s more common to refer to a landing page as being **a standalone web page distinct from your main website** that has been designed for a single focused objective. This means that your landing page should have no global navigation to tie it to your primary website. The main reason for this is to limit the options available to your visitors, helping to **guide them toward your intended conversion goal**.

Landing pages are specialized, optimized web pages that visitors are taken to upon clicking an ad. Landing pages can feature specific products featured in the advertisements themselves, or they may include prompts for users to



provide the advertiser with more information, such as web forms. Landing pages can be used to convince prospects to complete an action, such as making a purchase, or function as another step in a longer “funnel,” such as requesting additional information or downloading a piece of content for lead generation purposes.

A landing page can be commonly defined as the page beyond the click in a digital marketing campaign context. Landing page optimization is a central issue for:

- Display Campaigns
- Pay per Click (PPC) ads
- Affiliate marketing programs
- Email marketing campaigns
- Some offline campaigns - with QR Codes for instance.

Types of Landing Pages:

There are 2 basic types of landing page, Click Through and Lead Generation (also referred to as Lead Gen or Lead Capture pages).

1. Click Through Landing Pages

Click through landing pages (as the name implies) have the goal of persuading the visitor to click through to another page. Typically used in ecommerce funnels, they can be used to describe a product or offer in sufficient detail so as to “warm up” a visitor to the point where they are closer to making a purchasing decision.

All too often, inbound advertising traffic is directed at shopping cart or registration pages. This leads to poor conversions as the ad doesn’t provide sufficient information for someone to make an informed decision.

This is where the click through page comes in. As a result, the destination page from a click through page is typically the shopping cart or registration page – now with a much higher chance of conversion having passed through the details of the landing page.

2. Lead Generation Landing Pages

Lead generation landing pages are used to capture user data, such as a name and email address. The sole purpose of the page is to collect information that will allow you to market to and connect with the prospect at a subsequent time. As such, a lead capture page will contain a form along with a description of what you’ll get in return for submitting your personal data.

There are many uses for lead gen landing pages, some example uses and the items given to the user are listed below:

- Ebook or whitepaper
- Webinar registration
- Consultation for professional services
- Discount coupon/voucher
- Contest entry
- Free trial
- A physical gift (via direct mail)

- Notification of a future product launch

Some websites may have hundreds or thousands of automated landing pages created specifically for digital campaigns.

Landing pages are key factors of campaign effectiveness and ROI, and are still sometimes insufficiently taken into account. Many failed digital campaigns are due to poor landing pages. Landing page design and optimization rules differs according to industries, product categories, traffic sources and campaign goals. Some landing page design services may offer several hundreds of landing page templates.

There are many kinds of landing pages:

- Product landing pages
- Lead gen landing pages
- Facebook landing pages
- Dynamic landing pages
- Automated landing pages
- Personalized landing page
- Mobile landing pages
- Responsive landing pages
- Co-branded landing pages
- Co-branded affiliate landing pages
- B2B landing page

The Importance of Landing Pages in Your Digital Marketing Campaigns:

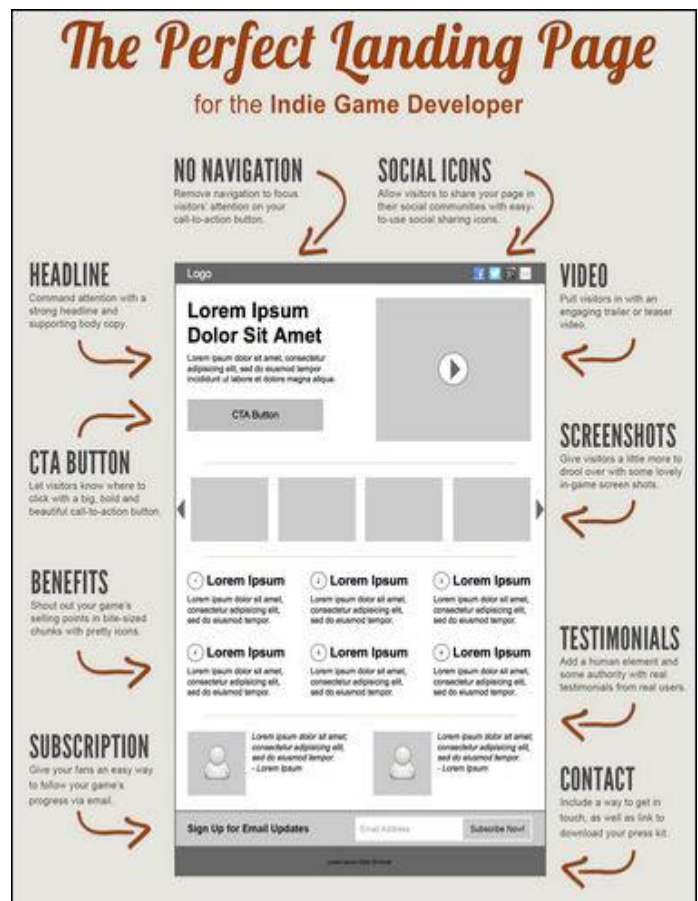
When it comes to turning traffic into conversions, landing pages can be the most important aspect of a digital campaign. Remember, landing pages are independent pages dedicated for specific traffic (Email marketing, Pay Per Click, Direct, etc) and are designed to drive conversions.

For the purposes of this post we are focusing on the relationship between landing pages and PPC campaigns, however, the best practices outlined can be applied to all traffic sources.

There are many different benefits that come from having optimized and targeted landing pages in any campaign, to understand these benefits it's important to understand Pay-Per-Click campaigns and how landing pages work within those campaigns.

The PPC process can essentially be broken down into two main parts:

- Generating traffic through the setup of the campaign
- Converting that traffic at the highest rate possible



When setting up your PPC campaign, the focus is on structuring the ad groups in a way that will produce a high quality score for your identified keywords. Quality Score is Google's grading system for Adwords performance strength and is determined by three things:

- Ad relevance
- Expected click-through rate
- Landing page experience

This quality score is very important in determining where an ad is placed and how much the click will cost. Following the keyword and ad copy, converting traffic becomes a responsibility of the landing page experience. It is vital that the landing page follows this same pattern of keyword and ad copy to continually communicate the same response to what the initial inquiry was seeking.

Being able to create very specific, targeted ad groups is the power of PPC efforts. Therefore, differentiating the landing page message based on each target is vital to conversions. To help with this, here are some 'best practices' for creating landing pages for your PPC account and overall paid marketing efforts:

- **Be Campaign Specific:** We all know companies generally offer a lot of different products/services. However, most PPC searches are based on users looking for something specific. It is much more effective to provide the specific information they are searching for rather than a generic message with conflicting offerings.
- **Make Them Easy to Modify:** PPC campaigns are constantly being optimized and modified, that's one of their greatest aspects. Your landing pages need to have the same flexibility in order to incorporate A/B testing ideas and overall optimization strategies.
- **Focus on Conversions:** Your website's homepage is typically found organically or through referral traffic and does a great job educating someone on the company, products, etc. PPC traffic is psychologically different than Organic traffic and needs to be treated differently. The window of opportunity to convert PPC traffic is much smaller than that of the Organic visitor. Being able to have relevant calls-to-action and information based on the visitor's intent streamlines their steps to conversion rather than possibly losing them as they browse the website searching for the answers on their own.
- **Keep it Simple:** Determine the most essential information needed and leave the rest out. The easier it is for the customer to complete the desired action, the higher the conversion rate will be.
- **Be Benefit Driven:** Once the user has reached your landing page you know they are already interested in your product or service, the goal now is to give them an offer they can't refuse through promotions or discounts.
- **Stay Focused:** Include specific search terms from the ad group the brought the user to the site. Including these keywords not only adds a level of trust for your potential customer but also adds value to the landing page experience, which directly improves the Quality Score in AdWords.

Once you have determined what your marketing goals are, as well as the point of conversion for each goal, you can create a landing page based on the points above to round out your overall PPC structure. Be sure to keep your messaging tightly themed with each corresponding ad group and as you continually monitor and optimize both your ad groups and landing pages you will find which combinations work best to improve your overall performance rates.

By segmenting your potential website customers into their interest areas, you can ensure the first thing they see when they land on your website is highly relevant information which gives you the best chance of turning them into a customer.

Email Marketing

Introduction, Types of Email, Email Marketing Campaign Process, Email Marketing Tools, Advantages and Disadvantages, Opt-in Email Advertising, Email tracking.

What is Email Marketing?

Email marketing is using e-mail as a means of promoting your products or services. This can be direct one to one e-mails but typically it relates to sending e-mails to a group of people that have subscribed to a mailing list.

Email marketing is a digital marketing channel that engages prospects at various stages of the funnel, engaging and maintaining their interest. Because of its versatile nature, email is a vital tool for online retailers who want to stay top of mind with consumers. Email marketing is a good and cheaper alternative to sending direct mail (via the post).

For example some people may subscribe to receive a regular newsletter from you. In general the term “Email marketing” is used to refer to:

- Sending promotional e-mails in order to acquire new customers or convincing current customers to purchase something immediately.
- Sending emails specifically designed to enhance relationships with current or previous customers, to encourage customer loyalty and repeat business.
- Adding advertisements to others companies’ e-mails (on a partnership basis) to gain exposure within a new market.

How online businesses use e-mail to engage customers:

Email is utilized throughout the sales funnel and is a key revenue driver for many online retailers. Common emails include:

- **Newsletters:** Engage users with information about the industry, company news, and
- **Promotions:** Often sent to existing customers, promotional emails alert users to new products and sales.
- **Abandoned Cart Notifications:** Indecision, nontransparent shipping charges, and a variety of other reasons cause customers to leave a cart before purchase. These notifications remind them and can boost conversion by 15% or more.

Measuring the Success of Email Marketing:

The following metrics are used to judge the overall success of email marketing:

- **List Growth Rate:** This measures how many addresses are being added to the company's list of contacts. More contacts is *not* necessarily better - a small list of leads who are likely to buy is better than a large list that doesn't care.
- **Bounce Rate:** A 'bounce' is an email that was never successfully delivered. This indicates a problem such as the account no longer being in use, and businesses need to trim these addresses on a regular basis.

- **Click-Through-Rate:** This calculates how many people are clicking one or more links in the email (typically taking them to a product page or special offer), and is one of the major signs of interest in an online store.
- **Conversion Rate:** An extension of the previous metric, the Conversion Rate calculates how many people are *finishing* what they've been prompted to do. The most common criteria for this is purchasing a product or service, but it is possible to use other criteria, such as filling out a form to provide more information about themselves.
- **Revenue Per Message:** This metric calculates how much profit, on average, a company made throughout its campaign. The calculation is a simple division of total revenue by the number of marketing emails sent.

Checklist for an Effective Marketing Email:

Individual needs for e-commerce businesses vary, but the following elements of marketing emails have been proven to improve the overall conversion rate.

- **One Topic:** Emails with multiple marketing messages are seen as "busy." Restricting them to one topic focuses the reader on the actual message and tends to result in measurably higher revenue per message.
- **Attractive Design:** Simple designs that complement the message without distracting from it are best. Remember that many emails will be opened on mobile devices and many accounts have disabled images.
- **A Clear Call To Action:** Readers should never be wondering what to do next, especially when you want them to purchase something.
- **The Result of Experience:** Every campaign should teach something new about customer behavior and what elements (designs, offers, etc.) they are responsive to. Use this experience to improve the messages on a regular basis.

Types of Email:

1. Promotional Email:

Promotional email is to promote a product or service, usually to entice customers to make a purchase. Every Business almost would enjoy this benefit. Promotional emails are short and sweet. You might want to create a special graphic to complement your email copy; otherwise, it's not a time consuming process.

Tips for creating a Promotional Email:

- **Make the offer clear.** Your customers may not take the time to read your email, but if you have a clear offer that's front-and-center, they won't be able to ignore it. In the promotional email below, there's no question what the deal is.
- **Create a sense of urgency.** Give customers a reason to act quickly, rather than let the email sit in their inbox. In the example above, the dates of the promotion are apparent. Use active language as well. To tie in with a seasonal promotion, this email from Banana Republic Factory injects a little personality into their CTA language, encouraging readers to "hop to a store."

- **Keep it short.** Promotional emails don't require a lot of explanation. State the deal, then tell customers how to redeem it before it expires. No need for a lot of flowery words. Take a look at the example below. In less than 45 words, the retailer sums up the deal.

2. New inventory email

Its Purpose is to let your customers know about new items. It falls under the promotional email umbrella. You're updating customers, but also hoping for a sale. Any business can tell customers about a new item in stock. Fashion and retail businesses may get the most bang for their buck. Time is spent taking a good picture of the new product, but these don't require a lot of text.

Tips for creating a new inventory email:

- **Send the email out as soon as the item arrives.** As soon as you have the inventory in stock, create the email and hit send. This shows you're on top of new trends and want your customers to have the latest, greatest items available.
- **Take a killer picture.** You don't have to get artsy, but you do need to showcase your new item. In fact, these types of emails are more about the photo than text. Take the email below, for example. It's all about the picture. With just a few words, Nike gets its point across.
- **Convey the point in your subject line.** You know subject lines can determine whether or not your customer opens your email, and this email is no different. Be sure to tell your customers that you've got something new and fun for them to check out.

3. Newsletter email

Newsletter email purpose is to inform customers about company news, improve brand awareness and build a relationship with your core audience. Almost Business would benefit with this type of email. It takes a bit of time to create a solid newsletter, but it's a valuable marketing tool.

Tips for creating a newsletter email:

- **A newsletter doesn't mean long format.** Break the copy in your newsletter into short, digestible and actionable sections of content, copy, images and calls to action.
- **Create an easy-on-the-eyes design.** Think of your newsletter like a mini-newspaper. You want clear lines and divisions between your content. You want a simple layout with basic fonts. Don't go crazy with the color scheme, either:
- **Include your contact information in the newsletter.** You always want your contact information in an easy-to-find area on the newsletter. The purpose of your newsletter isn't necessarily to sell, but if your customers are inspired to reach out to you because of the newsletter, you want them to be able to find you. You could put social media contact buttons in the header or footer of your message; you could go the more traditional route, and include your phone number and email address; or you could do both.

4. Welcome email

Its purpose is to welcome new email subscribers to the family and establish a good relationship. Creating the email doesn't take long, but you need to know when a new customer signs up.

Tips for creating a welcome email:

- **Write in a conversational tone.** A welcome email is like a virtual handshake that accepts a new member into your group. It should be inviting and warm. Show the personal side of your business. Take a look at the email below. It specifically welcomes new subscribers into a community, and the tone is friendly and casual, but still professional.
- **Consider offering a reward.** In celebration of a new customer, you could offer a discount or some sort of perk. You could offer 10 percent off the next purchase like Society6 did in the example above, or offer another perk like free shipping.
- **Remind new users about the benefits.** Thank your new customers for signing up and reinforce their decision to join. Tell readers what they'll get out of this new partnership. The email below does exactly that.

5. Product advice email

The purpose of this mail is to offer your customers advice on how to get the most from your business or product. At the same time, to establish your authority in the industry. This kind of email has more information, so your time will go toward writing and proofreading.

Tips for creating a product advice email:

- **Create valuable content** - The key to this kind of email is to offer tips that your customers want to read. Help solve problems they may have or obstacles they may need to overcome. Or, offer tips to help your customers use and maintain your product or service. If you sell cameras, send an email that teaches customers how to use certain features. Whatever your business is, create an email that gives your customers a helping hand.
- **Proofread** - No matter what email you send, you should proofread it several times. Read it from the bottom up so your brain isn't reading words that aren't there. Then, have someone else read it. Take it through an error-check process before sending. Nothing cuts your credibility like misspellings and grammatical errors.
- **Focus on customer service** - Emails that offer product tips should also showcase your commitment to customer service. Emails like this tell customers, "We're here for you." Follow through with that message by adding contact information to the email. The email below, for example, offers tips to wear a certain piece of clothing, but you'll also notice there is a "contact us" option in the top right corner.

6. Educational email

Educational Email provide customers with industry knowledge that's connected to your business or product. It helps build relationships and trust between your business and your customers. It takes time to brainstorm ideas and to create a sharp email.

Tips for creating an educational email:

- **Offer relevant content** - When you send an educational email, you're trying to build a relationship with your customers. The best way to do that is to teach them something. However, you want to teach them something that has a connection to your business. For instance, Monster.com, the job search site, sends its customers information about life in the workplace. An example is below.
- **Consider offering bite-sized information** - Take a cue from the Monster.com email above and write bite-sized pieces of information in the article; let your customers decide if they want to read more. The "Read more" link takes your customer to your blog for the full article. It's a great way to engage with customers via email and boost blog traffic.
- **Add a mini-promotion** - You can add a promotional element to this kind of email, but it shouldn't be the main attraction. For example, Lumosity, the brain game site, offers an educational article as the main feature, but notice a promotion on the right side for a family membership. It's subtle and simple.

7. Reorder email

Reorder Email is To remind customers that it's time to reorder a certain product. Any business that sells products or services needed on a regular basis would benefit. Examples include products like printer cartridges, contacts, pet medications and vitamins. Basic text and images are needed.

Tips for creating a reorder email:

- **Clear call to action** - The purpose of a reorder email is to encourage your customers to replenish your product or perhaps renew a subscription for a service. You want to make the buying process as simple as possible. To do so, create a simple, easy-to-find button that says, "Reorder now." For instance, in the example below, customers can reorder pet medication from Pet Wellbeing.
- **Remind customers of the value** - In the email, tell your customers why reordering is a good idea. Maybe it's to keep vital pet medications on hand, or to avoid the hassle of running out of toner at the office. You could also offer a discount to those who reorder within a certain time frame.
- **Mention past purchases** - If you want, you can mention in the email what your customer purchased in the past, so they can reorder the same thing. The pet supply store below does this for its customers. It's a nice addition to the email, but you can send it without this information.

8. Testimonial Email:

Its Purpose is to reinforce how valuable your business or product is through customer feedback. Every business **would** benefit with this mail and It takes a bit of time to collect testimonials. You may need to be persistent to get customers to give them to you.

Tips for creating a testimonial email:

- **Create a sleek design** - Email design elements are important with testimonial emails. You want something that's eye-catching and easy to read. Take a look at the example below. This retailer put together four quotes from happy customers and highlighted the product, too. It's a win-win. Both the accolades and the products are showcased well in this simple design.
- **Include an image** - If you sell tangible items like clothing, using pictures of shirts and dresses makes sense. But that doesn't work for every business. Take a medical clinic, for example, or a sanitation company. What image do you use in these cases? If you need a powerful image, ask the customer who gave the testimonial for a picture. Take a look at the example below. The customer's picture is what makes the email work.
- **Offer more information** - A testimonial is great, but you should offer your customers a next step. For example, in the email above, customers can read more testimonials by clicking on the text. You could offer a link for others to leave feedback, or a link to other uplifting company news.

9. Survey email

Survey Email is to collect helpful information you can use to improve the customer experience. Any business looking to better itself can use this email. We have to spend time creating the survey and writing an email with a link to the survey.

Tips to create a survey email:

- **Explain what's in it for them** - If you want a customer to take the time to fill out a survey, you need to give them a reason. In the example below from CVS, participants are entered to win a cash prize.
- **Address the purpose of the survey** - Besides an incentive to fill out the survey, you should tell your customers why you want the information. Whether you're trying to improve your business or conducting product research, let your customers know the purpose of the survey.
- **Make the survey easy to access** - There should be an obvious, clickable link to the survey. Take a look at the example below. Notice the link to the survey is a clear, easy-to-spot button at the bottom of the email.

Email Marketing Campaign Process:

Planning your Email Marketing Campaign Before you get started actually creating your email campaign and designing the layout of your email, you first need to think about the purpose of the campaign and what you are trying to achieve. The types of things we need to include:

- **What am I trying to achieve?** — This is where you think about the purpose and goals of your email marketing campaign. You may have a long term goal, whereby you want to

communicate with your customers on a regular basis to keep them informed of the latest offers, new services you have added to the hotel, and so on.

- **Who do I want to target?** — identify who you want to send the email to. Your existing customers, such as, families or couples who have stayed with you before. You may even want to split up all your e-mail subscribers to groups and tailor communication based on the group.
- **How will I get people to subscribe to my mailing list?** — By law you have to get specific permission from people to send them a marketing email. This is sometimes referred to as an “opt-in” and there are many ways you can get people to subscribe (or opt-in) to your mailing list. For example, you could have a sign-up form on your home page so that people can subscribe to your newsletter.
- **How frequently will I send these emails?** — How frequently you send out your emails will depend on their type and purpose. For example, you may send out special offer and promotional emails as and when they are available, whereas you may send out a newsletter once a month. But try and keep the number of promotional communication’s to a minimum (1-2 a month) as too many emails could potentially annoy and alienate your subscribers causing them to unsubscribe.
- **Calls to action** — This is what you want to get the reader to do once they have read your email. When designing your email you need to lay out exactly what you want the recipients of your email to do, and design it to make that path clear and easy to follow. For example, don't distract with too many links or offers, and make not only the call to action clear but also what recipients can expect when they click through. This can be as simple as "Click here for a 20% discount on your next weekend trip". For more information on calls to action, see the section in the guide “Getting the Most from your Website” which is part of this series of guides.

E-mail Marketing has evolved, moving from simple one-way messages and auto-responders (now referred to as e-mail 1.0) to a much more sophisticated way of communicating with your customers referred to as e-mail 2.0. It's an advancement in technology, entrepreneurs now have the ability to tailor the messages they send based on their customers' interests, preferences and purchase history - and targeted e-mails yield greater results.

With all the capabilities now available in e-mail marketing systems, there are a few basic things we need to know about e-mail marketing to build deeper relationships with your customers to increase revenues, grow your business and get ahead of your competition.

Here are seven steps to creating and launching a successful **E-Mail Marketing 2.0 Campaign**.

1. Choose the Right E-mail Marketing Software System

CRM systems can range from simple database models to more complex systems that include sales force management, shopping carts, affiliate programs and e-mail behavior campaigns. Infusionsoft offers complete CRM capabilities, which include not only database and campaign management but also offer information on interest, preference and purchase behaviors so that you can tailor your message and campaigns. Other systems, such as Mail Chimp, Constant Contact and AWeber offer more basic e-mail database and campaign management services. Decide what capabilities you want and use a checklist to compare

systems. Most e-mail programs have training and free support to guide you through the learning process.

2. Build a List

Even if you only have 10 e-mail addresses, you need to start somewhere. Add those to your database. Once you have your list started, make sure that you launch a campaign to keep in touch and in front of your contacts without overwhelming their inbox. I suggest two e-mails per month maximum. It's not about e-mail quantity; it's about quality.

3. Set up Contact Information Capture Forms

It's easy to add forms to your website or blog to allow visitors to give you their contact information, such as e-mail address, name and phone number.

4. Decide What You Want to Accomplish

Before you launch your first campaign, you need to decide what it is that you want to accomplish. Do you want to deepen the quality of relationships, take your list through the sales cycle, educate them? Why are you sending your e-mails? Set clear goals before you send your first e-mail, and build your messages and campaign around those goals.

5. Set up Auto-respond E-mails

Set up at least six e-mails that will automatically release on the dates and times you choose to send out to your list. Keep them short, simple and to the point. Do not make them "sales pitchy"; use auto-respond e-mails to educate and build relationships, and the rest will follow. Make sure that each auto-respond e-mail has several links for more information; this is how you will gauge their interest and determine how to keep marketing to them.

6. Add Triggers to E-mails

Here's an example of a trigger: Your client clicks on a link in one of the e-mails you sent her about your product or service. As soon as she clicks on that link, it automatically triggers the release of a message sending her information about a similar product or service based on the original link. Triggers are used to send clients into a new sales cycle based on topic.

7. Monitor Results

Once per month, look at reporting (metrics) to see which e-mails are more effective and have a higher rate of opening as well as click-through. Use the lessons learned to build your next campaign. It's important to know how your list is responding to the e-mails that you send. If you aren't getting a good click-through response, the problem is either the quality of your message or the topic. Test a few e-mails with your top customers to see what they respond to and what they don't respond to (one common test is to send the same message with several different subject lines to see what your list favors). Offer recipients a discount on services for their time.

Not only has e-mail technology and software evolved, but the way people use it to communicate has changed how entrepreneurs and small-business owners market and grow their businesses. E-mail 2.0 marketing is an effective way to increase relationships, response rates and conversions through smart, targeted communication.

Advantages of Email Marketing:

Email marketing can be used for many different purposes.

- **Promotion** — you can use emails to promote a special offer, or a new product or service to a list of existing or potential customers. The main aim of a promotional email is to get the reader to take some type of action, such as, book a room, buy a gift card, or reserve a table. If your readers have specifically subscribed to your mailing list to receive special offers and promotions then that's fine, but if they have subscribed to a list to be kept up-to-date on news and events then if you are constantly bombarding them with promotional emails you stand the risk of alienating them and forcing them to unsubscribe.
- **Retention** — these are emails aimed at building a relationship between you and your readers. These generally take the form of newsletters where you are providing your readers with information and stories that they may find interesting. A newsletter can of course also include promotional messages or advertisements but these should not be their main aim. Your customers can forget about you very quickly so keeping in contact with them on a regular basis is a good way to keep them aware of you and your business.
- **Communication** — these types of emails are generally short emails designed to communicate some important information to your readers. For example, invitation to an event in your hotel, a traveller tip for your area, details of a news article about your hotel. Email marketing allows you to reach millions of customers with a click of a button. Like any marketing medium, it has its advantages and disadvantages. Use it correctly, and you'll make more money, but use it incorrectly and you could lose your business. Weigh these pros and cons before you start an email campaign.
- **Other Benefits of Using Email marketing** - There are many good reasons to use e-mail marketing because even with the growth of social media, e-mail marketing can still be very effective
 - **Cost** — Communicating via email has many of the advantages of traditional direct mail but with much lower costs.
 - **Speed** — if you need to, you can get a message out to your entire list very fast.
 - **Easy to create** — with the many email tools out here, such as, MailChimp and Constant Contact, it has become extremely easy to send out professional looking emails and track their performance through reports. Most of these tools provide standard templates and layouts for all different types of emails, such as newsletters, invitations, special offers and many more.
 - **Personalized** — the more information you collect, the more messages can be tailored and personalized.
 - **Tracking** — you can track how well your email campaign is doing, such as, how many emails were opened, what links did they click, and so on. With this information you can then adjust your next campaign and improve performance.

Disadvantages of Email Marketing:

Businesses use email marketing as an affordable and often effective advertising tool. However, before employing this technique we should make yourself aware of the disadvantages and misconceptions that exist. For example, though many people believe email marketing is free, starting any marketing campaign from scratch (even an electronic one) will cost your company money. Several factors can hinder your effectiveness, and, in some cases, email marketing can even work against your business.

- **Spam** - People's in-boxes get inundated with email, both solicited and unsolicited. To cut down on the amount of unwanted emails, many servers have filters in place to lessen the number of spam emails a person receives. ("Spam" is a common term for bulk distributed emails.) People can further adjust their email filters to their own tastes. Our email marketing could well land in a spam folder and never get viewed. In some cases, you could find yourself or your business in serious legal trouble. The CAN-SPAM Act sets forth strict guidelines that companies must meet in order to use email marketing. Violations of the act can cost up to \$16,000, and numerous people may be charged. Even when you take pains to ensure your email marketing conforms to the rules, you may still be accused and have to prove your campaigns are legitimate.
- **Engagement** - Email marketing requires constant tweaking to keep your subscribers engaged. A person will often sign up to receive email solely as part of a promotion. For example, if a user provides his email address, he may receive a discount on a product. A user might also unintentionally sign up, such as if subscribing was the default choice on a web page. In such cases, your email marketing may be perceived as a nuisance. Even in the case that someone deliberately signed up to receive your marketing emails, like an industry newsletter, you still must work to maintain a level of engagement to keep your reader from unsubscribing.
- **Appearance** - You may have worked to create your email marketing to look exactly the way you envisioned. Unfortunately, due to the varying servers and computer settings, your design may not come through the way you hoped, which can diminish the impact of your message. Text may be moved from one line to the next on a person's screen. The email setting on another person's computer may only allow text, blocking images from coming through. If the main focus of your marketing was a logo, it could be lost. If you want to avoid a misconstrued or possibly messy appearance, you'll need to make sure the code used translates to the most basic processing systems. This may entail consulting with a technical specialist or marketing firm.
- **Costs** - Sending a quick email to someone may not cost you much more than Internet access, but the costs of launching an email marketing campaign add up. Even basic self-managed monthly plans with fewer than 10,000 subscribers can cost \$70, according to one marketing software firm. Hiring a company to design and manage an email marketing campaign includes templates and consultations and can get pricey. A start-up

package can cost several thousand dollars initially plus a thousand or more per month for continuing management.

Opt-in Email Advertising:

Opt-in email is defined as an email that a brand sends after a consumer willingly provides his or her email address. Brands can collect email addresses in myriad ways, but usually they use forms on their websites as well as incentives, such as free downloads.

Think of it as a way to authenticate your email list. Instead of sending emails blindly to people who might not have any interest in your online courses, you're spending time only on people who already know who you are and who want to hear from you.

What Is Opt-In Email Marketing?

Opt-in email marketing is a marketing campaign that uses permission-based email-collection methods to capture email addresses from willing consumers. Once you have a potential customer's email, you can add it to a marketing list based on the customer's position in the sales funnel.

For instance, if your prospect signs up for your email list during his or her first interaction with your brand, you might segment that consumer into a list that introduces your online courses and provides actionable tips for interested consumers.

However, if your prospect joins after buying a course, you could send emails about getting the most out of your course material or about applying the information you teach to the real world.

Opt-in email marketing isn't just a way to capture email addresses so you can blast prospects with sales copy. In fact, that's the worst way to use it.

Instead, use opt-in email marketing to nurture your prospects through the sales process.

- **Invite prospects to interact:** Let your email marketing recipients know where to find you online, from your social media accounts to your blog.
- **Encourage customers to convert:** Provide sound reasons why a prospect should buy one of your courses. Use real-world examples to illustrate your points whenever possible.
- **Follow up with prospects:** If a prospect abandons his or her shopping cart or goes inactive for a while, reconnect with a nurturing email that reminds him or her that you exist.
- **Send promotions:** Offer discounts and other promotions that encourage prospects to buy your course for the first time or to buy a subsequent course.
- Set up your opt-in email marketing campaign based on your specific objectives. Every course creator has different goals, so you don't want to copy someone else's campaign. Instead, think of the goals you want to reach, then design emails that help push customers to help you reach them.
- **Gain brand visibility:** If you want to establish yourself as an authority figure in your industry and make more people aware of your brand, encourage your email opt-ins to share your messages. The more people forward your emails, the more signups you get.
- **Boost sales:** Use promotions, bundles, and discounts to get people to finally hit the "buy" button.

- **Increase upsells:** Encourage customers to buy multiple courses and other digital products.
- **Check on progress:** Find out where your customers are in their online courses and whether they need any assistance or have any feedback.
- **Solicit reviews:** Ask your customers to review your courses online. You'll get backlinks as well as more brand visibility. Plus, prospective customers will feel more comfortable buying from you. In fact, nearly 85 percent of respondents to a study stated that they trusted online reviews as much as they valued recommendations from friends.

You'll continually adjust your email marketing campaign as you gain more subscribers and measure the results. Even though you're using an opt-in email approach, you can't always predict whether customers will open, read, or engage with your emails.

Keeping track of key metrics can help.

- **Open rates:** If customers don't open your emails, you might need to create more compelling subject lines or introduce an incentive early in your emails.
- **Engagement rates:** Customers open your emails, but they don't do anything else. If this happens, add more attractive calls to action using freebies and discount codes. Get people to click on links through incentives.
- **Conversion rates:** Do customers buy your online courses after reading your emails? You can track conversions through email and landing pages to figure out how well you're converting.

Spam Versus Opt-In Email

Spam is a word, whom you don't want people to associate it with your brand.

Unfortunately, even when you use opt-in email, your emails could be perceived as spam. It happens when you use overly promotional, salesy language, or when you send too many emails in too short a time period.

Additionally, if you don't use the opt-in strategy at all, you risk your emails getting diverted to spam folders. If your recipients report your emails as spam, their email clients might automatically assume that everything you send is spam. That's the wrong way to start an email marketing campaign.

So what differentiates spam from opt-in emails?

First, of course, is the permission factor. When you collected an email address, did you get permission from the person who owns it? In other words, did it come via a form or other email-collection tool? If not, you might not want to use it.

Secondly, were you clear about the types of messages the consumer would receive?

It's easy to collect email addresses via a form if you promise rainbows and unicorns. Unless you can actually deliver rainbows and unicorns, however, you're being disingenuous, and your subscribers will quickly catch on to your game.

When you collect email addresses through an opt-in form, make two things perfectly clear:

1. **Email type:** What messages will the subscriber receive? Mention that you send insider tips and tricks, promotions and sales, or other content (but make sure it's true).
2. **Frequency:** How often should subscribers expect to hear from you? If you promise to email only once per month, but you send emails every day, you'll get some backlash.
If you follow those rules, you can separate your email campaign from the dreaded spam word.

A smooth opt-in process from start to finish will ensure that you are collecting subscribers who know what they are signing up for and who will be active recipients when they receive the content they are expecting. Delivering on promises made during the opt-in process and refining your strategy to send targeted mailings will keep your attrition rate low.

Opt-in email: Advantages

- Preserves your email marketing reputation
- Shows customers that you respect their privacy
- Helps you email people who are interest in what you're selling
- Saves you time and money by micro-focusing your list
- Lets you be more targeted in your campaigns
- Helps you build long-term, trust-based relationships with customers
- Can boost your sales and product interest

Email Marketing Tools:

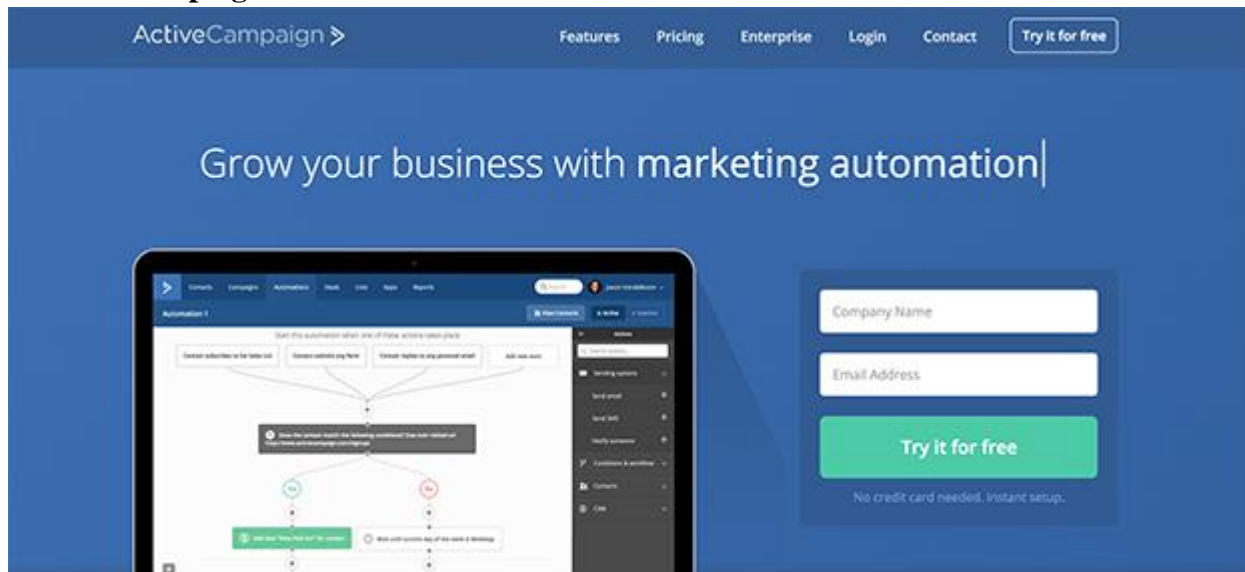
Email marketing tools are tools that marketers use to create, send, test, optimize and report on their email campaigns. An email marketing tool could be a specific tool related to email marketing like an email subject line generator, or an inbox placement testing tool, or a suite of tools that enables a marketer to do all their email marketing end-to-end.

1. Sendloop



One of the most important aspects of refining a drip campaign is targeting the right people. With **Sendloop**, you can funnel contacts into very specific campaigns and track their movements on your site to further tailor your messaging in the future.

2. ActiveCampaign



ActiveCampaign allows you to create drip emails that are driven by subscriber interaction, behavior, interests, location, history and more. With this tool, you can automate the entire life cycle of a subscriber or customer.

3. BombBomb

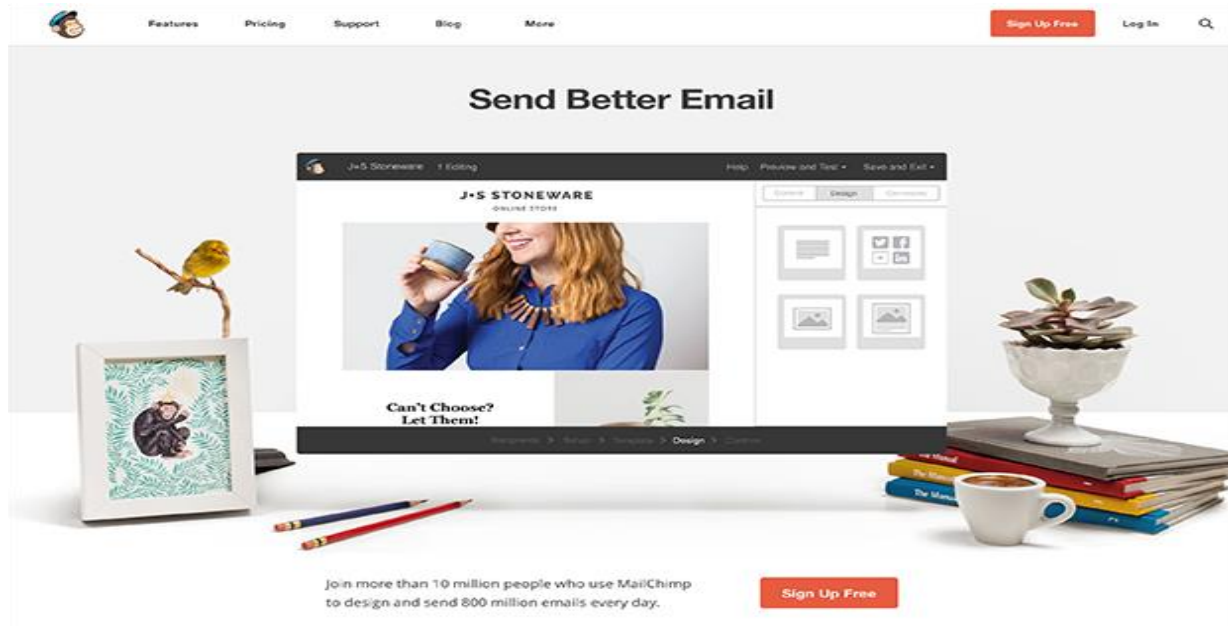
Text-only emails can be boring. Heck, even images are becoming boring in today's media-saturated internet landscape. If you want to effortlessly spice up your emails, then you should consider using **BombBomb** to create video-powered drip emails.

4. Drip



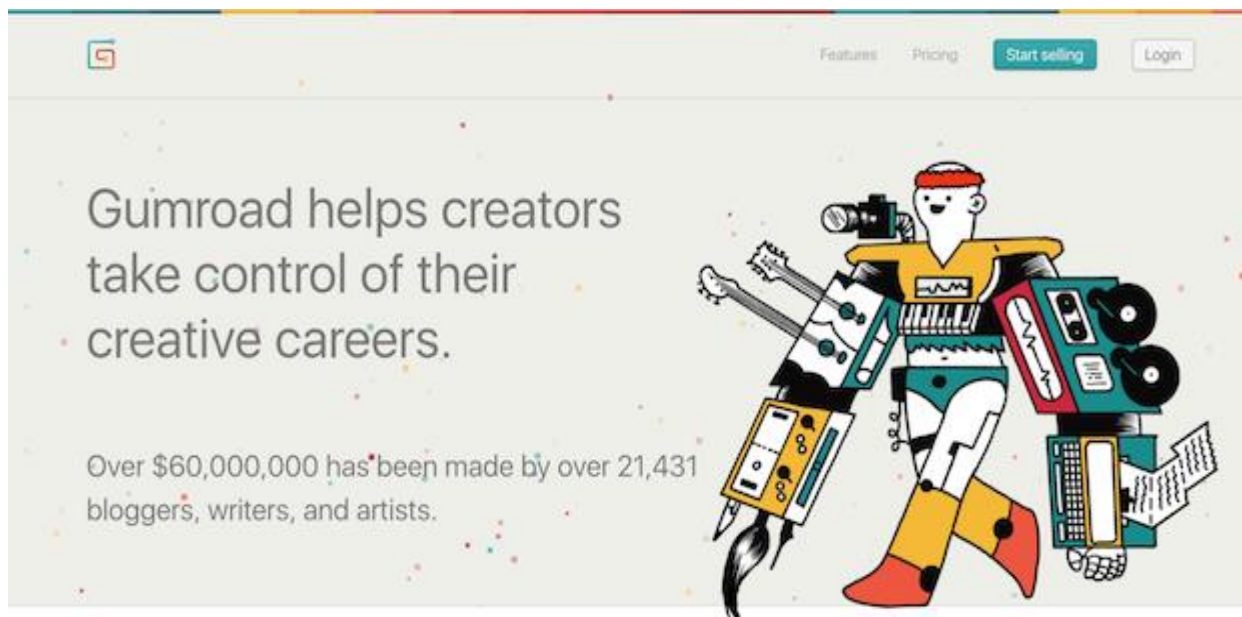
As the name suggests, **Drip** is an app designed for streamlining the drip email process. It's a surprisingly simple tool that packs quite the punch. The app features email gathering technology, pre-made templates, and drag and drop elements for simple creation.

5. MailChimp



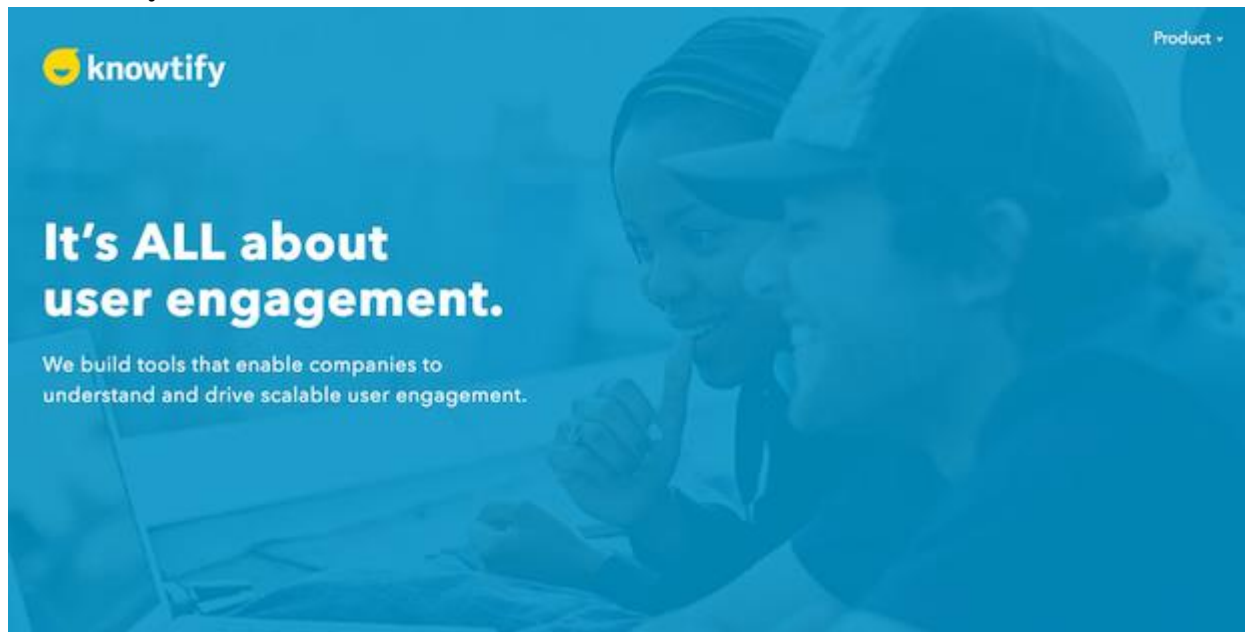
MailChimp allows you to send drip emails to follow up based on website activity, abandoned carts, activity or inactivity, and much more. You can also use **MailChimp Groups + OptinMonster** to send drip emails based on what the subscriber opted in for, or even based on checkboxes that the user selects on your optin form.

6. Gumroad:



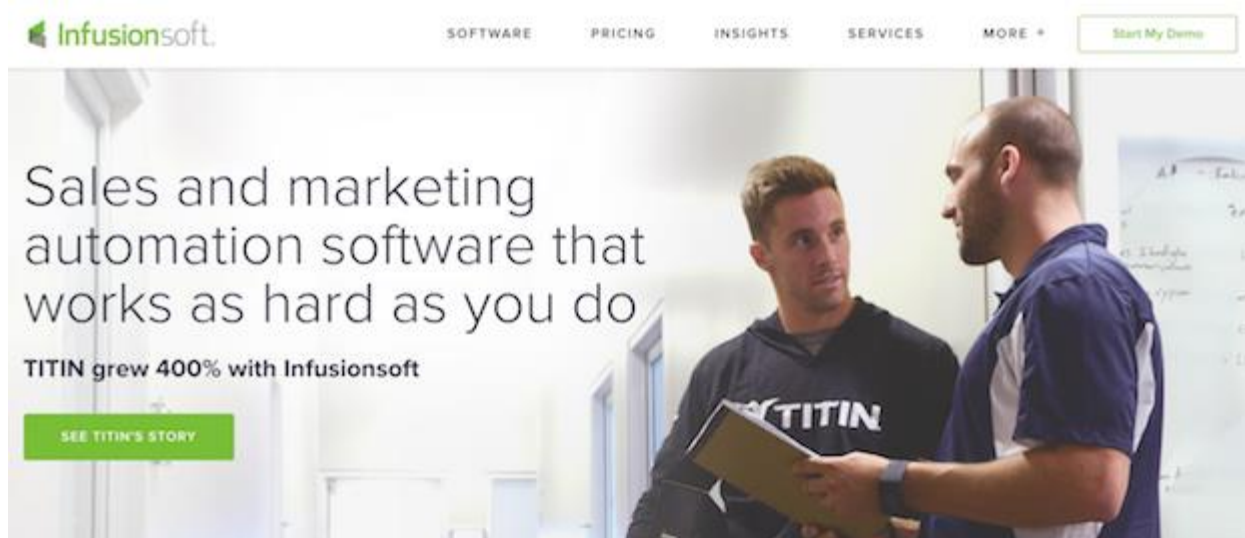
Widely known as a place to sell digital products and services, **Gumroad** now has an email feature that lets you gather and store potential customers alongside existing customers. You can then segment based on numerous features and send updates about your products.

7. Knowtify



As you know, email is a versatile tool. Rarely are two messages ever sent with the same goal in mind. **Knowtify** understands this, and gives you an easy way to launch drip campaigns based on transactional, digest, or behavioral emails.

8. Infusionsoft



In addition to helping automate standard email drip campaign tasks, **Infusionsoft** serves as a general task manager. The “My Day” feature shows you which appointments you have for the day, as well as which contacts you need to follow up with.

9. AWeber

Did you recently add a bunch of new subscribers to your email list? Well, instead of bombarding them with a bunch of past emails, you can use **AWeber’s** Follow Up feature to get subscribers up to speed in a hurry.

10. GetResponse



The image shows the top portion of the GetResponse website. At the top is a dark navigation bar with the GetResponse logo and links for Features, Pricing, Affiliates, Help, Enterprise, Blog, and Log In. Below this is a blue sign-up bar with a "Start your free trial" button and input fields for Name, Email address, and Password, followed by a "Sign up" button. The main content area features the headline "World's Easiest Email Marketing" and a sub-headline "350,000 happy customers in 182 countries, engaging more than 1 billion subscribers every month." Below this is a screenshot of an email campaign interface with a red banner that says "GetResponse PRO start now for better results". To the right of the screenshot is a list of features:

- Email Creator**: Now anyone can create beautiful emails that look great on any device.
- Marketing Automation**: Automate entire customer journey based on subscriber data and behavior.
- Landing Pages**: Create, publish and host beautiful, high-converting landing pages - in minutes.
- Webinars**: Increase conversions and engagement rates with a complete webinar marketing solution.

If you’re like most people, your email newsletters are sent at predetermined times. Shouldn’t they be integrated into your calendar then? **GetResponse’s** autoresponder tool uses drag and drop features to make calendar management a breeze.

11. ConvertKit



Want some of the more advanced features of a CRM without the price tag? **ConvertKit** allows you to send targeted autoresponders to subscribers based on their interaction with your emails with Automation Rules. They even have blueprints that you can use to quickly create **autoresponder sequences** for almost any situation.

12. Emma



Nobody likes a generalized email newsletter. That's why **Emma** is a great tool. This powerful tool works with Shopify, Salesforce and **OptinMonster** to gather CRM and sales data and personalize emails based on the subscriber.

13. Contactually

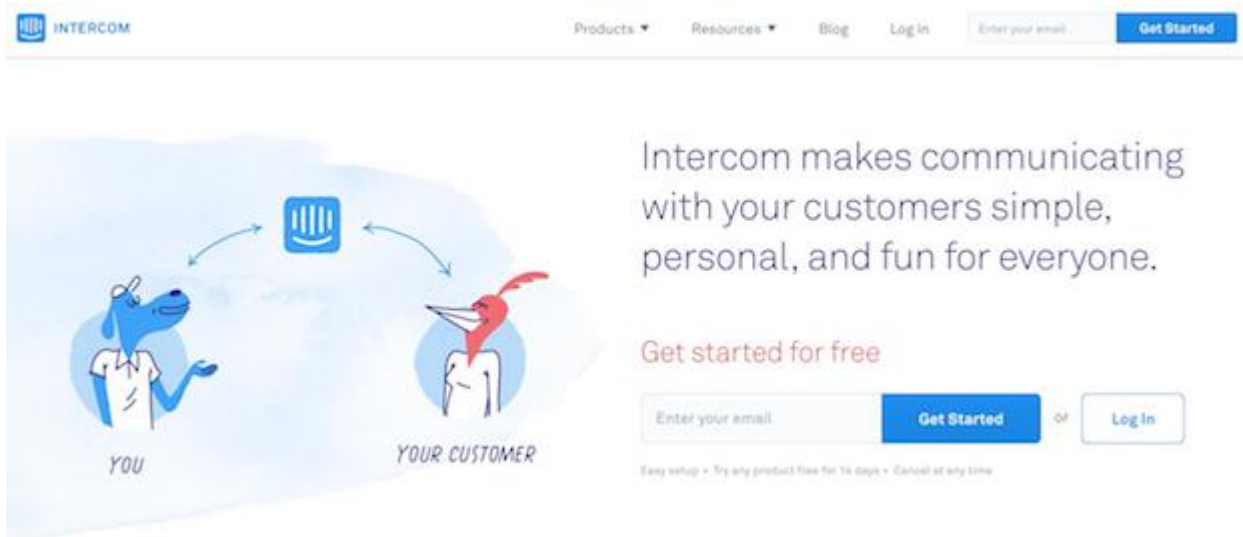
Contactually is one of the neatest tools on the list. It's a CRM platform that focuses on vetting contacts. It gathers contacts from your email inbox, website, and social media profiles, and then gathers as much information as it possibly can to guide your messaging.

14. HubSpot



HubSpot is consistently ranked as one of the top marketing automation tools across a spectrum of tasks. One of its top uses involves streamlining email marketing through the use of automated workflows.

15. Intercom



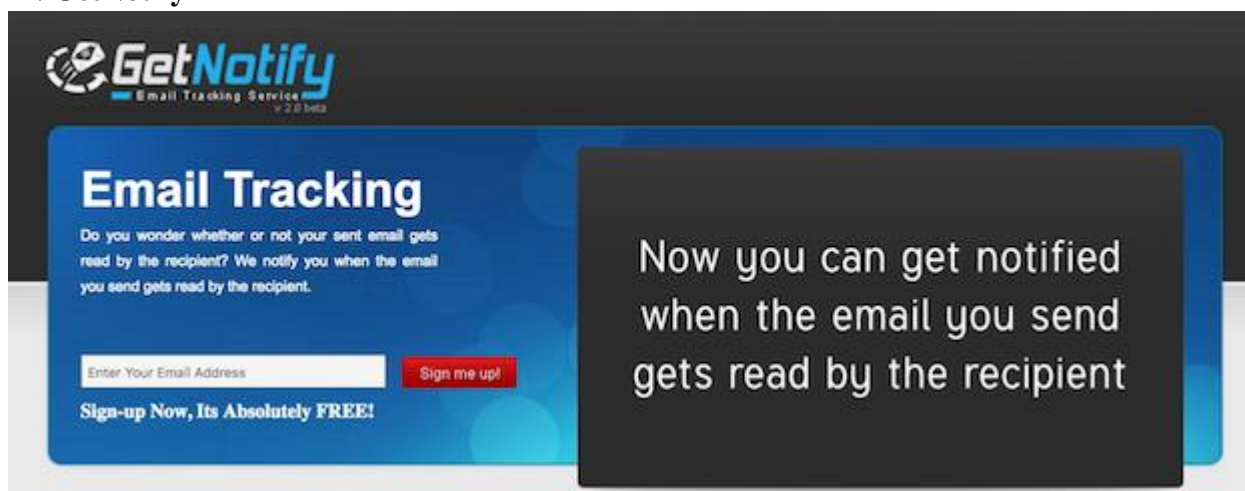
If you're trying to teach your customers/users about your app, **Intercom** lets you send automated email conversations directly in the app. This gives them assistance where they're most likely to see it.

16. Hatchback



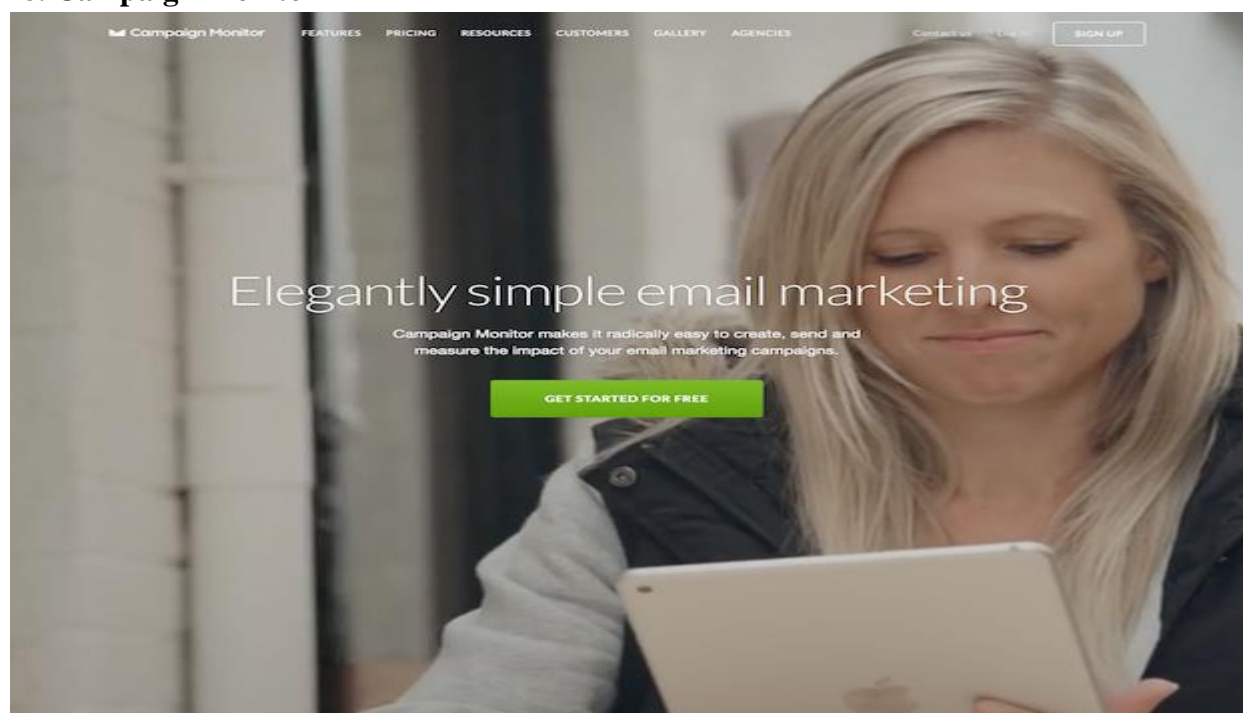
Just like Gmail now uses tags to optimize messages, so does **Hatchback**. You can create tags and assign them to specific contacts based on their interests and the stage of the funnel they're currently in.

17. GetNotify



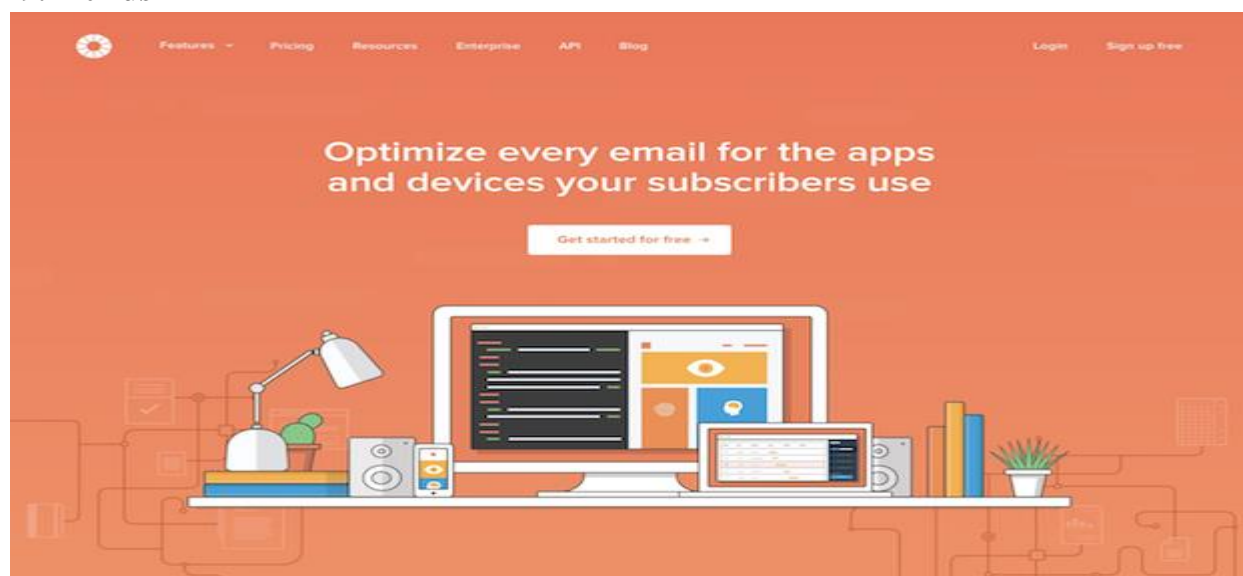
GetNotify is a free tool that notifies you the instant your email gets read by the recipient. You just send your emails like your normally would, but add ".getnotify.com" to the recipient's email address. Your recipient will not see this, and they will not know that you are tracking their opens.

18. Campaign Monitor



What good is an email marketing campaign if you can't automate things like testing, tracking, and optimizing? With **Campaign Monitor**, you can. It features interactive analytics that are easy to review and act upon.

19. Litmus



Litmus is one of the top tools for render testing emails on any device. You can test up to 40 clients and devices with one single click, which cuts down on the time it takes for you to review each and every email combination.

20. Reach Mail



The **Reach Mail** testing feature lets users compare direct performance metrics on up to five individual email campaigns at once. It also accounts for things like subject lines, content, and images to show you which emails will perform best.

Email tracking:

Email marketing allows you to easily track the effectiveness of your campaigns. When you send out a direct mailing through the post office, for example, you have no way to know how many recipients opened your mail. An email message, though, shows you how many people received it, how many opened it and how many clicked through to your links and made a purchase.

Types of Tracking Reports

Depending on the ESP you use, you have a great deal of data and to track and analyze. The kinds of data you can track include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Email bounce rates
- Who opened emails
- What links were clicked
- Customers that unsubscribe
- Email forwards

Let's take a closer look at the most commonly used types of tracking reports. As we go through the types of reports, they will become more and more specific

1. **Bounce Rates/Non-Bounce Rates** - Bounce rate refers to the amount of emails that were not received by recipients. It is the equivalent of having a mailed letter sent back to the sender. This number is expressed as a percentage of total emails sent and requires a

simple calculation. Calculating the bounce rate means taking the number of bounced emails (which a tracking report will tell you) and dividing that by the total number of emails you sent to a particular category on your list. You will get a small number (less than one) expressed in decimal form. To get the percent number, move the decimal to the right two places. As an example, if you get 0.25 from your division equation, moving the decimal over two spots gives you 25%.

Bounces can happen for a number of reasons, like firewalls or a full inbox. Most of the time, though, it is out of your control and there is little you can do to fix it. However, you can check for certain things like misspelled email addresses to see if the problem is in your hands and is fixable.

Non-Bounce rates, on the other hand, are the percentage of emails that did get sent through, regardless of whether or not the recipient opened them. This is a very useful number because it is used to let you know detailed information that we will discuss in the next few sections. Calculating the non-bounce rate is also simple. If you already have the bounce rate, all you have to do is subtract the percentage number from 100 to get the non-bounce rate.

2. **Open Rates** - Open rates are the number of interactions your email server gets as a result of a recipient opening an email. This number only comes from the non-bounce rate and not the total number of emails you sent out. Your ESP will know when an email has opened because of one of the following:
 - The images were displayed in an opened email
 - A recipient clicked a link in an email

The reason these actions indicate an opened email is because images are stored on the ESP's server and accessed from the server when an email is opened. A link within an email is tracked because clicks are easily trackable. This is another reason why putting images and links into an email is important for your email marketing strategy.

3. **Click-Through Rates** - Click-through rates are the percentage of users clicking on links in an email. This number is taken from the number of opened, non-bounced emails. As you can already see, these tracking data get more and more specific, building off of one another. The click-through rate number will be displayed and calculated by your ESPs software tools. Some ESP software will allow you to view exactly which links were clicked in addition to the number of times each one was clicked.
Click-through rates are especially beneficial for customizing the interests of your customers. It extends beyond the email as well, being used on websites to track who clicks on what links. Since it is easy to track what exactly your customers click on, you can make well-educated assumptions about what they would prefer for you to send them in the future. You can also use click-through rates to recommend other types data to the customer to get them more involved in your company's other marketing channels.

You can also use click-through rates as a means of testing out different versions of an email. Separate a list in two and send out a different version of the same email to each list. Analyze which list has more click-through rates and if necessary, make adjustments

to the emails. Keep testing them out until you feel you have an optimal and effective email.

- 4. Additional Tracking Reports** - In addition to the tracking data we have already mentioned, there are a few other points of data you can view and perhaps even use to improve the effectiveness of your email marketing strategy. You can see how many people unsubscribed and keep their data in a category of your email list. It is a good practice to keep this data because if the customer decides to subscribe to your email list once more, you do not have to do any additional research on their information. Remember, though, that you cannot send them any emails unless they grant permission again.

You can also use tracking reports to see if anyone has forwarded your email to other email addresses. If your email marketing strategy calls for you to get people to spread the word about your organization or something it has to say, this is a very useful type of data to track.

Email Tracking Data – Offline

You might come across an instance where you want to track how well your emails are doing for certain components of your entire marketing strategy. In some cases, though, using click-through or open rates will do little to help you track your progress and success. Some situations where you will want to know if your emails are effective include:

- In-Store Purchases
- Phone Calls
- Event Attendance

Sometimes, an organization wants to know if their emails are enticing people to participate in actions such as these listed.

Their participation cannot be tracked by software, so being able to track this kind of data involves some participation on the part of your email recipients. The best way to determine the effectiveness of your emails is to have your email recipients give you their email address when they make a purchase at a store or call your organization. For event attendance, you might give them some kind of special code that gets them into the event and can only be viewed from an email.

Email Tracking Tools:

1. ContactMonkey:

ContactMonkey provides email tracking and a Salesforce-integrated sidebar in Gmail or Outlook email clients. The reporting dashboard gives you analytics on how many sends, opens, reads, and interactions your emails receive. Use the merge feature to send to multiple recipients based on a pre-built or on-the-fly list. ContactMonkey's predictive engine provides insight into how your contacts open their emails by device and time, so you know when to send for the best response.

2. ToutApp:

ToutApp combines CRM, phone, and email client integrations into a single platform. You can build email templates and drip campaigns and log real-time customer interactions with emails so your team can jump on opportunities. Playbooks help your team choose the best sales-focused actions for each customer interaction. In-team messaging and notifications are also available. All of these features are accessible directly from your connected CRM, so you don't have to spend a lot of time updating notes and copy-pasting data from one platform to another. ToutApp is built for the enterprise, with privacy settings and full integrations for most of your technology stack.

3. Yesware:

Yesware offers email tracking that drives prescriptive sales analytics. Prescriptive data helps your sales team anticipate customer behavior and better target warm leads. Contextual data reports show you what the best reps are doing so you can duplicate it across your team. An "Activity vs. Engagement" report shows customer engagement with your content, instead of shallow interest. Individual team member reporting shows where your team can improve and where they're lagging. Yesware offers a native connection with Salesforce to help you build customer lists for use in your email campaigns.

4. Clearslide

Clearslide integrates with any existing email client. Build a sales library with your most successful templates, and use Clearslide's customized, real-time tracking to follow customer engagement with all of your content, including your website. You can automatically upload content into your email templates and scale email blasts with customer segments from your CRM. All of your email client work auto-logs into your CRM, so (again) you don't have to duplicate information.

Unit – III

Mobile Marketing

Growth in Mobile Marketing, Benefits of Mobile Marketing, Mobile Marketing Goals, Creating a mobile Website, App Creation Strategy, Mobile Search Ads.

What is Mobile Marketing?

Mobile marketing is a multi-channel, digital marketing strategy aimed at reaching a target audience on their smartphones, tablets, and/or other mobile devices, via websites, email, SMS and MMS, social media, and apps.

Mobile is disrupting the way people engage with brands. Everything that can be done on a desktop computer is now available on a mobile device. From opening an email to visiting your website to reading your content, it's all accessible through a small mobile screen. Consider:

- 80% of internet users own a smartphone.
- Mobile platforms, such as smartphones and tablets, host up to 60% of digital media time for users in the U.S.
- Google anticipates search queries on mobile devices to surpass desktop searches by the end of 2015.

Effective mobile advertising means understanding your mobile audience, designing content with mobile platforms in mind, and making strategic use of SMS/MMS marketing and mobile apps.

According to Mobile Marketing Report 2018, there are over 3.5 billion individual mobile Internet users. Users spend an average of 69% of their media time on smart phone devices. Mobile is the dominant platform for searches, as 48% of buyers use smartphones to start searching with a search engine. Mobile devices drive 80% percent of global Internet usage.

Technology in the mobile marketing space evolves fast. The feature phone ecosystem from just a few years ago was a highly fragmented space and channels like SMS were popular due to their ubiquity. But now, the popularity of Android and iOS smart devices has radically transformed the mobile marketing environment, blurring PC, Web, and mobile channels. New data on consumer behavior shows that apps are now a preferred channel for consumers. Time Spent on Mobile is Mostly in Apps In a new survey from eMarketer, mobile now accounts for 12% of Americans' media consumption, triple what it was in 2009. The shift towards apps from mobile web is now also very clear, with the average smartphone owner spending 127 minutes per day in apps. That's over two hours per day

How Does Mobile Marketing Work?

Mobile marketing consists of ads that appear on mobile smartphones, tablets, or other mobile devices. Mobile marketing ad formats, customization, and styles can vary, as many social media platforms, websites, and mobile apps offer their own unique and tailored mobile ad options.

Growth in Mobile Industry:

Only a few years ago, mobile devices were seen simply as a way to communicate on the go. The concept of smartphones either did not exist or were in R&D blueprints and marketers were content with reaching masses of consumers rather than engaging in 1:1 personalized conversation. Fast forward to today, and we are at the precipice of the mobile revolution. Mobile has transformed from an accessory to a necessity in the eyes of consumers, with 75% of the world having at least one phone. Beyond the rapid consumer adoption and usage of mobile phones, is the opportunity they offer for brands to connect more meaningfully and personally with consumers. Consider it your direct line and immediate connection with audience. Because there is no communications channel tool that offers the same advantage today.

Mobile is clearly the future of media, but marketers have some catching up to do with where their customers are and to truly optimize marketing, with mobile at the heart of their strategy. Most brands spend less than one percent of their marketing budget on mobile. We've all heard the argument that the one percent spend level is too low, given the fact that most consumers devote about 10% of their media attention to their mobile devices¹.

A study conducted by Marketing Evolution (August 2012) takes this hypothesis one step further and, through an algebraic formula of measuring reach and frequency with the installed base of smartphones and other ROI data, found that marketers would have better results if they optimized their marketing mix by allocating an average of seven percent of their media spend to mobile². This is the first empirical data that guides marketers on why they should rebalance their budgets with mobile to achieve higher ROIs.

Future of the Mobile Device Market (including emerging trends and technology)

- The future will probably play out to a maximum of four major mobile operating system players.
- Although there has been massive growth in mobile applications, the next growth trend will be towards app services. Users will get access to proprietary content or be provided a service for a monthly subscription fee beyond the application itself. Such examples include multiplayer online mobile gaming, stock services, information alerts, magazine publications and music streaming.
- With mobile applications being developed so rapidly, more and more search companies are coming up with “app search” software capabilities. • According to a recent report by Forrester Research, mobile access to business applications will drive the next big wave of user adoption.
- New development technologies such as HTML 5 will be introduced into mobile phone browsers.
- Tablets represent the next evolution in the advancement of mobile computing and will play a major role in publishing, video and art creativity.
- Mobile-cloud hybrid computing will emerge. It will be neither all cloud-based nor all mobile-based, but a combination of the two. Google's Gmail and Google Voice for iPhone are just two of the well-known mobile cloud apps.

- Mobile cloud computing will change how work is done and the speed at which tasks are completed, especially for those in sales and marketing.
- In time, consumers will become less worried about the security of mobile commerce as payment systems become more enhanced. We will see more consumers embrace this method of payment in the same way they have with regular website commerce.
- Near field communications (NFC) (e-wallet) mobile phones are becoming the new “credit card”. NFC is a short-range wireless connectivity standard that uses magnetic fields to enable communication between devices when they’re touched together, or brought within a few centimetres of each other. Uses of NFC include contactless card transactions such as ‘Google Wallet’, ‘MastercardPayPass’ or ‘American Express serve’. It can also be used for reading RFID tags (radio frequency identification) for interactive marketing campaigns and P2P (person to person) data exchange. Jupiter Research suggests that this market will grow two- to-three times over the next five years.
- Augmented Reality (AR) blurs the line between what’s real and what’s computer-generated by enhancing what we see, hear and feel. AR provides a 3D effect by layering images or videos on top of real world objects seen either on the computer screen or mobile. Both video games and cell phones are driving the development and progression of augmented reality and within the next few years, it will become a lot more prominent in our everyday lives. AR will remain a mobile technology, but will develop to the point where you no longer have to actually hold a device.

Benefits of Mobile Marketing:

In the present world, mobile phones are easily accessible by every class and agegroup of people; therefore, a mobile advertisement offers following advantages:

- Reach – Mobile phone is reaching people by 15% more than internet. Mobile marketing is drawing more clicks than internet marketing. Advertisers have high expectations with mobile advertising.
- Accessibility - Mobile comes handy to users. Mobile advertising follows people everywhere.
- Time factor - People are available on mobile round the clock, which may not be possible with desktops. Cost – Mobile advertising cost much lesser than other types of advertising.

It is lighter on your pocket, thus allowing you to advertise more on the same expense. Personalized – You can tailor your ad in a message. People find messages more intimate than other internet marketing methods.

- **Mobile Marketing Reaches a Broader Market**
Smartphones and tablets are cheaper, smaller, and more portable than traditional PC’s and laptops. This means that people who previously were not able to be online are no longer restricted by financial, geographical, or technological barriers.

- **Instantaneous results**

We always carry our mobile phones. Like our wallet or keys, we never leave home without them. And, most of the time, our mobile phone is ON, which means, we receive the message at the very moment it is sent. You can use mobile tactics to get your marketing message out immediately.

➤ **Easy to work with**

The creation of elements for mobile devices is simpler and less costly compared to desktops or laptops. This medium also makes it easier to issue promotions and marketing incentive services to us, the users. We can keep this information handy until the time we need to use it. For example, we can download a coupon to our phone, and then show that coupon at checkout - without an internet connection - to receive the discount.

➤ **Convenient to use**

Since the screen size of a mobile phone is small, it limits the scope of content that can be displayed. This makes it convenient for the creators of the content, who can keep it basic and simple. Also, simpler content will adapt itself better to the various mobile platforms.

➤ **Tracking response**

User response can be tracked almost instantaneously. Mobile marketing is an effective way to collect user data. Databases that use phone numbers, as unique IDs are more effective, since many people generally keep their phone numbers for a longer period of time, unlike their email addresses. This helps the mobile advertiser better understand and analyze user behavior and create buyer personas.

➤ **Huge viral potential**

Here you have the domino effect. Since mobile content can be easily shared among users, mobile marketing enhances the potential for virality, or a piece of content - usually a video - "going viral." Users more than likely will share good information and offers with their friends and family, so companies get a lot more exposure with no extra effort.

➤ **Mass communication made easy**

Since a lot more people own mobile phones than desktops or laptops, mobile marketing helps the marketer reach a far wider and more diverse audience, either by SMS or push notifications. Mobile marketing also gives the advantage of targeting capabilities. You can geo-target by sending location-specific messages to those using GPS and Bluetooth technology, or demographic targeting, so you can reach the right audience via age and gender information.

➤ **Micro blogging benefits**

Social media platforms such as Instagram and Twitter, have literally put the power of influence in the hands of everyday people. From moms to fashion bloggers to people who really just like pictures of dogs with food, anyone can be an influencer. In fact, you are an influencer to your friends and family on social media, whether you realize it or not.

➤ **Mobile payment**

The latest mobile payment facility is very convenient for the users today. Here, users are offered a secure online payment environment, which works via advanced mobile Web systems. This means that the user does not need to cough up physical currency each time he wants to make a mobile purchase or pay a bill online.

Disadvantages of Mobile Marketing

➤ Platforms too diverse

Mobile devices do not have any particular standard, as compared to PCs and laptops. Mobile phones come in many shapes and sizes, so screen size is never constant. Also, mobile platforms use different operating systems and browsers. Hence, creating one campaign for all of them can get difficult.

➤ Privacy issues

This is always in question on any network or device. Savvy mobile marketers need to understand and respect the fact that users would like their privacy. So they should offer clear instructions for opting out of marketing communications should the user want to do that.

➤ Navigation on a mobile phone

The mobile phone usually comes with a small screen and no mouse. This means that navigation on a mobile phone may get difficult for the user, even if it has a touch screen. In such a case, most ads may go untouched, as the user may find it too tedious to look in detail through each one of them.

Mobile Marketing Goals:

Mobile commerce is commonly referred to as the ability to undertake commercial transactions through a wireless internet-enabled device. The mobile revolution in the last decade has re-created a new era of an always-connected society which has reshaped the retail industry, including the clothing sector, in a major way (Euromonitor, 2013). Mobile devices becoming more powerful with their own operating systems, has given rise to a new marketing strategy enabling companies to connect to their consumers on the go and on a 24-hour basis.

A rapid growth in internet-enabled devices including smartphones has taken place in recent years, allowing many tasks to be performed online. One of the major activities taking place on these online platforms is shopping. Indeed, shopping has changed the landscape of consumption from visiting conventional physical shops to consuming products and services in a digital arena. Most of the consumers are willing to reach for their smartphones first when the idea of shopping strikes. This global phenomenon is affecting different parts of the world. A survey conducted in June 2013 by E-Marketer (2013), shows that China is the leading country in terms of internet users purchasing via mobile devices followed by India and the United Kingdom.

Understanding the tools in the mobile marketing toolbox is only part of the battle. The other part is to understand the key elements of a successful campaign. What follows are the characteristics we've derived based on more than 60 in-depth interviews with Mobile Marketing Association members and the Board of Directors. These characteristics have also been distilled based on a review of the winners of the most recent Smartie™ Awards and sponsored by the Mobile Marketing Association:

1. **Think “Mobile First”:** The most successful campaigns are developed with a mobilefirst mentality. By starting with a mobile perspective and working from there, campaigns have

a stronger foundation and are more likely to succeed. Consider mobile the connective tissue to all media as it supports and strengthens all channels.

2. **Leverage Multi-Screen Usage Patterns in Mobile:** Smartphone and tablet users often juggle multiple devices and work across screens. For example, someone watching ESPN on TV may also be using an ESPN app to keep track of the scores on other games. Or someone watching American Idol may also be using their smartphone to tweet comments to friends. Cross-screen usage is leveraged by many brands to engage and capture the attention of mobile users across many screens.
3. **Utilize the Full Spectrum of Mobile Tools and Applications:** Mobile isn't just about a mobile website or a mobile display campaign or a mobile app. It's about a mobile website and a mobile display campaign and a mobile app and much, much more. Explore ways to utilize the full suite of tools before you develop and launch your campaign.
4. **Integrate Your Mobile Campaign into Your Traditional Campaign:** Chevy was able to generate 39 million total views by integrating their Chevy Game Time App into the Super Bowl TV campaign that was running concurrently. Mobile campaigns shouldn't be produced in a silo. Instead, they should be integrated into the complete marketing program.
5. **Create a Campaign that Works Across Multiple Screens:** Mobile isn't just about smartphones. Nor is it just about tablets. The most successful mobile marketing campaigns are developed with an understanding of the environment. For example, tablet users are often at the top of the sales funnel and doing in-depth initial research while smartphone users are often at the bottom of the sales funnel and ready to make a purchase.
6. **Leverage Every Phase of the Sales Funnel:** One of the unique aspects of mobile marketing is that mobile visitors use it for search and discovery as well as for purchase and connecting with the brand. Mobile is not just about the top of the sales funnel nor is it just about the bottom of the sales funnel. Instead, it's about every phase of the sales funnel.
7. **Test Your Way to Success:** Mobile is digital in nature, which makes it a perfect tool to track and measure the effectiveness of your campaign. But that's only half the battle. The second half is to sift through those insights and make adjustments to improve the performance of future campaigns. By testing your way into success, you'll be in a position to continuously improve the ROI of your mobile marketing programs.

In the end, mobile isn't simply a new sales channel or marketing tool. Instead, it's a revolutionary new medium that is transforming not only the way consumers connect with brands, but how those consumers make purchases and stay engaged with those brands. The sophisticated marketer will leverage the power of mobile today and tomorrow to differentiate their brand and stay ahead of their competitors.

Creating a Mobile Website:

From a technology standpoint, setting up your mobile website is an important first step. Equally important is designing your mobile website so that it provides a positive user experience for your visitor. With that in mind, here are several important things to consider as you design your site:

- 1. Be Thumb-Friendly:** Many visitors to your mobile site will be navigating through it with their thumbs or fingers. Be sure to design your mobile site with that in mind. Large, easy-to-press links and buttons ensure the user experience starts off right.
- 2. Streamline the Navigation:** In addition to being thumb-friendly, your site should have the fewest number of links and pages possible. In general, mobile visitors aren't interested in detailed bios, mission statements or press releases. Instead, they want key information like location, contact information and click-to-call buttons.
- 3. Minimize the Graphics:** Remember, you're not designing for a desktop/broadband experience. You're designing for a mobile visitor who is using up valuable bandwidth to access your site. With that in mind, be sure you keep graphics small and to a minimum.
- 4. Honor Your Brand:** Your mobile site should have the same branding elements as your desktop site. Ideally, a user will feel as though your mobile site is a cousin to your desktop site. It may not have all the same content, but the look and feel will be very similar.
- 5. Include a Link to the Desktop Site:** Some visitors will be interested in viewing your desktop site, even though they're on a mobile device. It's always a good idea to provide them a link to the full site so they can visit that, too.
- 6. Test Your Site:** There are a number of good ways to test the functionality of your mobile website. Do a search for mobile website emulator and you'll find plenty of them. Be sure to test using more than one emulator since different emulators will provide different suggestions on improving the site.

Creating a mobile website is only half the battle. The next step is to encourage people to visit your site from their mobile device. There are a number of ways to do this, including placing a reminder that you have a mobile site on your desktop site. This can come in the form of a banner ad, a graphic or simply a blog post announcing the launch of your mobile site.

We can also use a mobile technology such as a response code to drive people to your mobile site. The response code can be placed on your desktop site or on point-of-purchase materials, collateral and even in keynote presentations.

Whether you use a response code to drive visitors to your site or simply provide a URL, the key is to reward them once they're at your site. After all, the mobile visitor is typically en-route, so you want to give them every reason possible to stay engaged with your site and, when relevant, visit your location.

Designing a mobile landing page that rewards the visitor for visiting the site is an important first step. This can be a page that provides a coupon that can be redeemed in-store or it can be a page that allows them to have a product shipped to their home. Response codes can drive incremental traffic to your mobile site. This code links to a post called "50 Insanely Simple Ways to Use Mobile Marketing to Grow Your Business." address. It can be a click-to-call phone number that

puts them in touch with a customer service representative, or it can be a map that provides them directions to your location.

No matter what you design your mobile landing page with, remember that 70% of all mobile searches result in action within one hour (vs. 30% for regular desktop searches).

If you have a smart phone (i.e. one that can access the web) you can browse through all websites that are available on your PC or Laptop. However, generally these types of websites are not suitable for browsing on a phone as they have not been designed for a phone. With a phone your screen is a lot smaller so and generally you behave differently.

For example, we may spend hours browsing and reading on the web but with a mobile phone we generally will only read a small amount of information over short periods of time. So how the information is displayed and the amount of this information needs to be considered.

When designing a mobile website consider some of the following:

- You can only view one screen at a time so design your navigation to take this into account.
- There is not much room for text, so don't use much!
- Use large buttons for key calls to action
- Think about your usage of fonts, make sure important stuff really stands out Try to make sure your website behaves consistently with what is expected from similar applications on the web. Users have very low tolerance so don't put them off.

Type of Functionality to Include

When on the phone I would expect functionality similar to the following:

- Location aware directions
- Reviews/Testimonials
- Pictures/Videos
- Clear calls to action
- Booking Engine

Mobile Application

A lot of smartphones provide a mobile application development environment that allows you to develop a purpose built application specific to that environment. For example, you can develop an iPhone application that works specifically on an iPhone. There are several reasons you may consider developing a mobile application:

- The interface (how it looks) will be what the user is used to as they probably have other applications already on their phone.
- You may need to access phone specific functionality (e.g. navigation, camera etc) and this may not be available to you if you develop a mobile website.
- Applications are downloaded to your phone so you have an icon on your mobile desktop so it's likely that you will use it more often.
- Because you download the application a lot of the interaction with the application can be offline which means there are no roaming charges. The big disadvantage with a mobile application is the cost. It can be very expensive to build an iPhone or android application and if you want to attract smartphone users you really need to develop both.

Sample Mobile Applications

There are many examples of useful and popular mobile applications. When visitors are active on social media tools they will generally use them on their mobile when they are travelling. There are many applications available for the popular social media tools such as Twitter and Facebook. For example, customers could be using Facebook Places to check in to locations. It's important to monitor and respond to this as soon as possible. Visit Dublin has an iPhone/Android application for visitors coming to Dublin.

This application has extensive functionality including:

- Audio Descriptions — explanations and history for over 80 points of interest around the city.
- Special Offers in retail, restaurants and tours offering you fantastic value and options. Simply show the voucher on your phone and receive the offer!
- Use the 'Point to Call' function to phone a restaurant, tour and make your booking direct.
- 'What's That? / What's Nearby?' — Not sure what that building is in front of you? Point at the real world point of interest and retrieve information about it!
- Daily Bulletin — receive a daily update to your phone on what is happening in Dublin

QR Codes QR stands for Quick Response. A QR code is a useful way of marketing your services. By providing a visual code, such as the following, potential customers can scan this code in using their smartphone and this will display them relevant information. So how can this be used? You put an advertisement in a newspaper and include a QR code. When a user has an application on their phone that allows it to read and understand the code they scan their phone over this code.

The phone will then automatically bring them to a web address, which, for example, could be the web page where you have more details of the offer. This is similar to when a check out operator in a supermarket scans a bar code. As more and more phones will be smartphones the QR codes could become increasingly popular.

App Creation Strategy:

If you have a smartphone (i.e. one that can access the web) you can browse through all websites that are available on your PC or Laptop. However, generally these types of websites are not suitable for browsing on a phone as they have not been designed for a phone.

With a phone your screen is a lot smaller so and generally you behave differently. For example, I may spend hours browsing and reading on the web but with a mobile phone I generally will only read a small amount of information over short periods of time. So how the information is displayed and the amount of this information needs to be considered.

When designing a mobile website consider some of the following:

- You can only view one screen at a time so design your navigation to take this into account.
- There is not much room for text, so don't use much!
- Use large buttons for key calls to action
- Think about your usage of fonts, make sure important stuff really stands out

There are a variety of app business models, some of which include free apps that are supported by ads, paid apps that are supported by download fees, premium apps that are supported by in-app commerce and free apps that are supported by brands interested in connecting with customers.

Here are several things to keep in mind when we are creating an app for your product or service:

- 1) **Make Sure Your App Solves a Problem** - The most effective apps solve some sort of problem for the user. They facilitate a purchase (e.g., Wal-Mart, Lowe's or Sam's Club apps), provide content (e.g., The New York Times, CNN or USA Today apps), create brand preference (e.g., Coca-Cola, Band-Aid or Nike apps) or some combination of the above. Analyze which of these problems you'd like your app to solve and begin your design process based on that.
- 2) **Get Inside the Mind of Your User** - The first step for any mobile app (or any mobile marketing campaign, for that matter) is to understand how your user will engage with the app. Will they be at home? Will they be in the office? Do they want information? Or do they simply want to engage with the brand?
- 3) **Design with the End in Mind** - Is the purpose simply to create brand preference? Is the purpose to facilitate a financial transaction? Is it to reduce customer churn? Or all of the above?
- 4) **Don't Underestimate the Budget** - Sometimes, very simple design changes can make the difference between an app that takes a few dozen hours to create and an app that takes a few hundred hours to create.
- 5) **Analyze Your Competitors' Apps** - What apps have your competitors already created? Do you like what they've created? If so, what can you borrow from their experience? Also, don't hesitate to examine apps that are outside of your industry segment. **Consider**
- 6) **HTML5 as an Alternative** - HTML5 works across many phones and may be a simpler solution for many sites. The downside is that there is no app store for HTML apps and they have some limitations in functionality.
- 7) **Recognize that the App is only Part of the Picture** - When brands sponsor NASCAR drivers, only half the budget is allocated to the sponsorship. The other half is used to let people know about the sponsorship

By keeping the above-mentioned guidelines top-of-mind, the app that is developed for your product or service will have a greater likelihood of success. And most importantly, consumers will enjoy engaging with your app and therefore your brand.

The functionality of an app doesn't have to be confined to the user-brand experience. Many brands choose to run ads within a mobile app in order to build awareness and generate demand.

There are three primary ways ads can be leveraged within an app for the benefit of the brand:

1. The first is when the owner of a mobile app decides to sell advertising inventory within their app. Major content publishers such as CNN.com or ESPN.com choose to use this model to offset the costs of providing content to their readers or to generate a healthy profit for their divisions.
2. The second is when an app publisher chooses to run ads that promote upgrades to paid versions of their apps or that cross-promote similar apps within a portfolio. The free

versions of many apps include display ads within the apps that encourage users to upgrade to an ad-free or enhanced version of the app.

3. The third is when an app publisher runs ads on behalf of other advertisers. Many of the major content providers including The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal and others run ads on behalf of other brands. In most cases, brands will work through mobile ad networks to facilitate in-app advertising.

Working with a specialist is often the most efficient and effective way to navigate the complexities of running and managing in-app ads and achieve success.

Types of Mobile Marketing Strategies

There's a healthy way of mobile marketing strategies to try. The kind that works best for your business will depend on your industry, target audience, and budget.

1. **App-based marketing:** This is mobile advertising involving mobile apps. While 80% of mobile time is spent engaged with apps, you don't have to create an app yourself to get in on the action. Services like [Google AdMob](#) help advertisers create mobile ads that appear within third-party mobile apps.

Facebook also allows advertisers to create ads that are integrated into Facebook's mobile app. Facebook's mobile [Promoted Post ads](#) integrate so seamlessly with Facebook's news feed that users often don't realize they're looking at ads.

2. **In-game mobile marketing:** In-game mobile marketing refers to mobile ads that appear within mobile games, like in the example below. In-game ads can appear as banner pop-ups, full-page image ads or even [video ads](#) that appear between loading screens.



3.

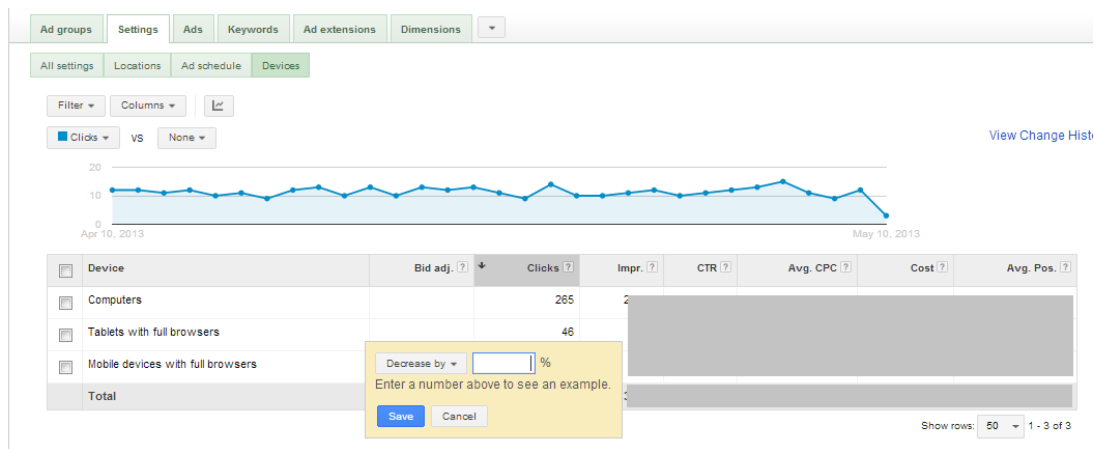
4. *Example of an in-game mobile marketing ad*

5. **QR codes:** QR codes are scanned by users, who are then taken to a specific webpage that the QR code is attached to. QR codes are often aligned with mobile gamification and have an element of mystery to them, since users who scan them don't always know exactly which rabbit hole they're jumping down.
6. **Location-based marketing:** Location-based mobile ads are ads that appear on mobile devices based upon a user's location relative to a specific area or business. For example, some advertisers may only want their mobile ads to appear when users are within a 1-mile radius of their business.
7. **Mobile search ads:** These are basic Google search ads built for mobile, often featuring extra add-on extensions like click-to-call or maps.

8. **Mobile image ads:** Image-based ads designed to appear on mobile devices.
9. **SMS:** SMS marketing involves capturing a user's phone number and sending them text offers. This is considered somewhat passé.
10. **Mobile Marketing: Google AdWords Enhanced Campaigns**

On July 12, Google rolled out [Enhanced Campaigns](#) for all AdWords users, integrating mobile advertising options with classic online AdWords advertising.

Enhanced Campaigns allow advertisers to manage their AdWords bids across various devices in one single campaign, rather than make separate campaigns for mobile vs. desktop. AdWords advertisers can simply take the Google search ads they already use, and then set bids to adjust for mobile devices. To increase bids for mobile devices, users can set a positive bid adjustment, such as +20%, and vice versa – a bid adjustment of -10% reduces the bid by 10% for mobile devices.

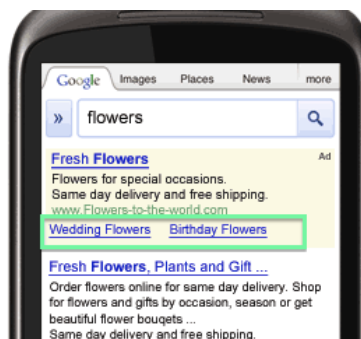


Enhanced Campaigns image via siteproppc.com

11. Google Mobile Ad Extensions

Creating mobile search ads with Google also lets you take advantage of Google's nifty mobile ad extensions, which include features like:

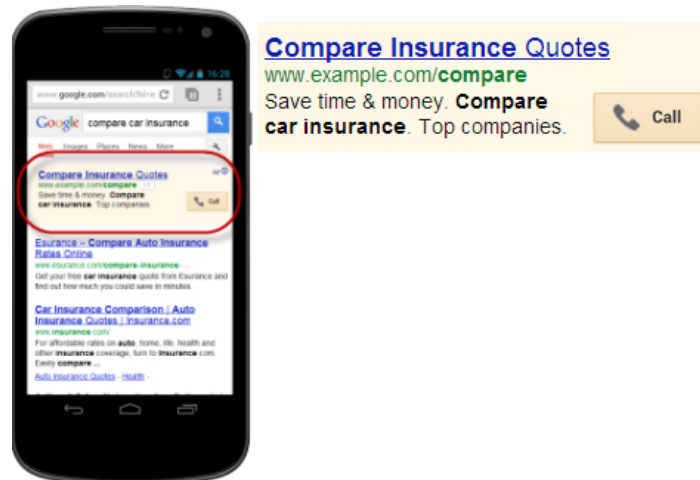
12. **Mobile Site Links:** Mobile site links make it easy for mobile users to jump to specific pages of your site without wandering around. Site links are especially useful in mobile marketing, as it's much more convenient for users on mobile devices.



Mobile sitelinks on AdWords

- 13. Click-to-Call Mobile Ad Extension:** The click-to-call extension puts a “call” button directly beneath an ad. Clicking the button automatically generates a business’s phone number on a user’s mobile device.

While this handy ad extension makes it easy for searchers to get in contact with your business and drives users down the conversion funnel, it’s best to only have the click-to-call mobile ad extension appear when your business is open and able to answer the phone.



AdWords mobile call extensions

- 14. Google Offers for Mobile:** The Google Offers mobile ad extension lets advertisers post a discount offer or coupon beneath their ad. These special offers can capture the attention of users who might otherwise ignore an ad.



15. Google offers for mobile

- 16. Click-to-Download Ad Extension:** The click-to-download ad extension is similar to the click-to-call, only instead of generating a phone number, clicking the “download” button takes users to the download page of the advertiser’s pre-selected app.



17. Click-to-download mobile ad extensions

18. Local Ad Extensions: Local ad extensions are probably the most important extensions for mobile, considering that [1 in 3 mobile searches have local intent](#). Considering how many mobile searches are questions looking for a local solution, local mobile marketing needs to be a key aspect of your mobile strategy. Local mobile marketing extensions often involve a phone number or link to Google Maps.



Local ad extensions on mobile

Mobile Marketing Best Practices

- **Be Clear and Concise:** Mobile devices have small screens, which means words should be used sparingly. Cluttered and crowded ads will just drive users to scroll past. When it comes to mobile, it's best to keep things simple.
- **Optimize for Local:** Be sure to remember that 1 in 3 mobile searches have local intent. Users often use mobile devices to complement their immediate worldly interactions – where is the nearest gas station? Is there a nearby coffee shop that has wi-fi? Optimize for local mobile marketing to make sure you are aligning with users' queries.
- **Consider Your Audience:** The type of audience you're hoping to reach should influence the kind of mobile ads you use. Are they gamers? Then try taking advantage of in-game

ads. Are they young and tech-savvy? Mobile Facebook Promoted Posts might be more likely to get their attention.

- **Experiment with Different Strategies:** There's a lot of room for experimentation when it comes to mobile marketing. Don't be afraid to test out some ad extensions with your AdWords Enhanced Campaigns – try the Google Offers ad extension, or the click-to-call extension, and see how they work for you.
- **Benchmark Your Results:** Experimenting is great, but there's no point in trying new techniques if you're not tracking your results to see what works and what doesn't. [Try the AdWords Grader](#) to see how your [mobile PPC ads](#) are performing.

Why You Need a Mobile Marketing Strategy

Your business needs a mobile marketing strategy for the same reason that you need a computer and wi-fi access – this is the age in which we live! Walk around any major city and you'll find more than just a few folks with faces glued to their smartphone screens. According to recent reports, [40% of users' internet time](#) is spent on mobile devices, which means simply ignoring the rise of mobile just isn't an option.

Some other interesting mobile marketing statistics:

- [80% of mobile device time](#) is spent on apps, with game apps eating up the largest percent of app time
- People browse [70% more web pages on tablets](#) than smartphones
- Retail conversion rates are [2.2% on tablets](#), considerably higher than 0.7% on smartphones, but traditional PC conversion rates are still highest at 3.3%
- Mobile searches have increased [200% year over year](#) in 2012
- Mobile is [predicted to surpass desktop](#) in 2014

Mobile Search Ads:

Mobile display ads (aka mobile banner ads) are a very effective tool that can be used to build brand awareness, generate clicks, leads and conversions for your business. These ads don't necessarily have to link to a static landing page. Instead, they can link to a dynamic page or experience that results in improved customer engagement and higher conversions. There are a variety of techniques that can be used to help drive customers to your business, some of which are outlined below:

1. **Click-to-Call:** According to recent research, click-to-call ads drive a 6% to 8% average increase in click-through rates. This technique simply displays a phone number that users can click to be connected directly to a call center or sales center.
2. **Interstitials:** These are interactive ads that appear within an app. Once the user opens the app, an interstitial is displayed. Users can click through on the ad to visit a landing page or they can close the ad to continue using the app.
3. **Click-to-Map:** Geo-targeting can be used to send marketing messages to users in a specific location. Once the prospect clicks on an ad, he or she can be driven through to a map that identifies a store nearest his or her current location. When the prospect clicks on the map, the contact information is displayed on the smartphone.

4. **Canvas and Expandable Ads:** When a user clicks on an expandable ad, the ad grows to cover the entire phone screen. Ads can be animated or can incorporate rich media to enhance the user experience.
5. **Click-to-Email:** When a user clicks on a display ad, an email is displayed that the user can send to friends. The email includes a discount code that can be redeemed at the retail location. By including this “viral” email component in the campaign, marketers can increase the reach and frequency of the display ad program.
6. **Click-to-Video:** Rich media is an effective sales tool, whether it’s viewed on a tablet or a smartphone. Display ads that link to video marketing messages increase engagement and deepen the relationship with the prospective customer.
7. **Click-to-Download App:** Companies interested in driving adoption of a branded app can use display ads to link directly to the app located in an app store. Users are driven to app landing pages where they can download the app instantly.
8. **Click-to-Social:** If you’re interested in integrating a social component to your mobile campaign, you can incorporate a click-to-social aspect to it. Visitors can let friends and others know about their affinity to your brand by connecting them to your social networks via a mobile display ad.

Mobile display ads can be purchased on a cost-per-thousand (CPM), cost-per-click (CPC), cost-per-acquisition (CPA) or a cost-per-install (CPI) basis. Ads bought on a CPM basis guarantee a certain number of impressions for your brand.

It’s a good idea to remember that consumers use their smartphones at many different points in their purchase path. According to a recent study from Google, 41% of those who use their mobile phones to help with shopping said they made a purchase directly on their smartphone. 46% said they researched an item on their smartphone then went to a store to make a purchase. 37% said they researched an item on their smartphone then made the purchase online⁸. The bottom line is that mobile display can be used at every step of the purchase cycle to engage consumers and drive conversions.

In this case, you pay only when someone actually buys your product or service. In some cases, cost-per-acquisition ads involve some sort of set-up fee and shouldn’t be considered “free advertising” simply because you pay only when someone buys your product or service. Organizations participating in cost-per-acquisition campaigns should understand the nuances completely before they participate.

Cost-per-install ads are bought based on the number of times your ad is displayed within a mobile app. This is particularly effective for brands that want to target a very “The customer journey has 4 phases: Awareness, Engagement, Transaction and Loyalty. We are always trying to advance someone from Awareness to Engagement or Engagement to Transaction

There are a variety of ways to use display ads to target prospects, either before, during or after their purchase. Using these techniques will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of your campaigns.

Placement targeting allows you to pick the specific sites on which your ads run. You can show your ad on specific web pages, games, mobile videos and mobile websites. Contextual targeting allows you to place your ads on sites that are discussing topics that would be relevant to your product or service.

And remarketing allows you to connect with people who have previously visited pages on your website. For example, you can target people who have visited your website several times in the

past, but have never made a purchase. By targeting prospects who are interested in your products while they're visiting other websites, you can improve the efficiency of your overall campaign. Ads can also be placed based on age, ethnicity, gender and other demographic data.

Ad scheduling gives you the ability to run ads during specific dayparts, which is perfect for certain businesses. For example, a coffee shop may want to run ads only before noon and a bar may want to run ads only after 5:00 pm. Some brands may choose to cap the number of times an individual can see your ad in one day, one week or one month. This gives you the ability to stretch your budget by focusing your campaign on people who haven't been over-exposed to your message.

Finally, you may want to exclude your display ads from running on sites that are inappropriate or irrelevant. You may also want to block your ads from running on competing sites or from places that simply aren't a good match.

Unit – IV

Social Media Marketing

What is Social Media Marketing, Seven Myths of SMM, Characteristics of Successful Social Media Marketer, Social Media Marketing Plan, Social Media marketing Tools, Publishing Blogs, Podcast and Webinars, Social Media Monitoring, Social Media: Facebook, Twitter.

What is Social Media Marketing?

Social media marketing, or SMM, is a form of internet marketing that involves creating and sharing content on social media networks in order to achieve your marketing and branding goals.

Social media marketing includes activities like posting text and image updates, videos, and other content that drives audience engagement, as well as paid social media advertising.

- The goal of SMM is to produce content that users will share with their social network to help a company increase brand exposure and broaden customer reach.
- One of the key components of SMM is social media optimization (SMO). Like search engine optimization (SEO), SMO is a strategy for drawing new and unique visitors to a website. SMO can be done two ways: adding social media links to content, such as RSS feeds and sharing buttons - or promoting activity through social media by updating statuses or tweets, or blog posts.
- SMM helps a company get direct feedback from customers (and potential customers) while making the company seem more personable. The interactive parts of social media give customers the opportunity to ask questions or voice complaints and feel they are being heard. This aspect of SMM is called social customer relationship management (social CRM).
- SMM became more common with the increased popularity of websites such as Twitter, Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn, and YouTube. In response, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has updated its rules to include SMM. If a company or its advertising agency provides a blogger or other online commenter with free products or other incentives to generate positive buzz for a product, the online comments will be treated legally as endorsements. Both the blogger and the company will be held responsible for ensuring that the incentives are clearly and conspicuously disclosed, and that the blogger's posts contain no misleading or unsubstantiated statements and otherwise complies with the FTC's rules concerning unfair or deceptive advertising.

Social media marketing (SMM) refers to techniques that target social networks and applications to spread brand awareness or promote particular products. Social media marketing campaigns usually center around:

- Establishing a social media presence on major platforms
- Creating shareable content and advertorials
- Cultivating customer feedback throughout the campaign through surveys and contests

Social media marketing is perceived as a more targeted type of advertising and is therefore believed to be very effective in creating brand awareness.

Myths about Social Media Marketing:

Social media marketing has become one of the pillars of a successful digital marketing strategy, and one that every business needs in order to maximize online visibility. It is understandable that not everyone is social media savvy right out the box, and for most, a lot of learning and training is necessary in order to successfully DIY their business' social media efforts.

The good news is that should you need a bit of a crash course in social media, you can team up with a social media consultant to help you learn the ropes. There are also hundreds of informative articles and how-tos online that you can use as references. No matter which route

you go however, it's always important to know and understand what social media can and cannot do for your business so that you can manage your expectations and establish achievable objectives.

The social media myths that we'll be discussing today are actually quite common. There are lots of people who believe that these illusions are achievable and they expect their digital marketing agency to deliver these ridiculous goals. Let's get these out of the way.

1. Myth One: Just build it and the money will follow

Simply creating social media accounts is not enough to fulfill meaningful marketing objectives. Facebook pages and Twitter accounts don't just gain followers and fans simply by existing. You need to put in the work to promote your social media accounts and publish content that will retain and gain the right audience.

2. Myth Two: It's all about the numbers

It's a common misconception that the more people following your social media accounts the better your yields will be. The reality is that even if you have millions of followers on every social media platform, if none of them become loyal, paying customers, then what's the use of having them there? Quality over quantity should be your mantra.

3. Myth Three: Social media management is a day job

Do your fans and followers follow a 9 to 5 schedule when browsing their social media accounts? Nope. A follower may leave super damaging feedback on your page at 6 in the evening and if you wait until the following morning to address their concern, it may be too late. Timely interaction and engagement with your followers will help in creating a meaningful environment for your audience to linger in. Using scheduling tools and alerts will help you manage your social media accounts efficiently. Here are five tools that we highly recommend.

4. Myth Four: You need to be on every social media platform there is

A lot of social media DIY-ers make this mistake. They believe that they need to be visible on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, SnapChat, and 10 other platforms because that's what successful social media is all about. Wrong. You don't have to be on every platform, just on platforms that your target audience uses most frequently. You need to be smart and efficient about your time and resources and doing social media marketing on platforms that won't yield prime results will just be a waste of effort.

5. Myth Five: Publish the same type of content to get more views.

If you use effective analytics tools like Cyfe and Buffer, you'll be able to get an insight on the type of content that gets the most engagement and activity. A lot of people mistakenly think that they should publish the same type of content over and over again to replicate these results. Big no-no. Instead of sharing the same article and links day in and day out, add some variety to your content strategy. Give your followers a good reason to check your pages everyday.

6. Myth Six: When it comes to content, quantity over quality always.

Let me start off by saying no. It may be tempting to share scores of articles, links, photos and videos per day but there is a fine line between sharing content and spamming.

Cleverly space out your publishing schedule and don't over do it. Take the time to sift through your content and select the best and most relevant ones to share on your pages.

7. **Myth Seven: Delete negative feedback as soon as they are posted.**

While it is understandable why business owners would want to delete negative feedback about their products or services, doing so can open a can of worms and ruin your reputation more than the original feedback can. Instead, use these as an opportunity to provide excellent customer service by providing a clear plan of action on how their complaints will be fixed and addressed. Engage with your customers and others will see that you'll be taking care of their needs should they decide to patronize you.

8. **Myth Eight: You'll get instant results with social media.**

Actually, if you look at almost all types of digital marketing solutions, you won't find any type that will get you instant results. That's just the nature of digital marketing and it's the same for social media. It takes time for you to gain the visibility that would pave the way for your goals to be achieved (e.g. getting x number of likes, an article being shared x number of times). As long as you're hitting your desired metrics within a reasonable period of time, you should stay your course and continue in executing your social media strategy.

9. **Myth Nine: Social media is for hard promotion.**

While it's true that social media provides a great promotional avenue for your business, keep in mind that it may not be what your audience wants to see. You need to strike a balance between engaging your audience with relevant content and fun interactions and getting your name out there.

10. **Myth Ten: Social media performance can't be measured.**

There are plenty of tools out there – both free and premium – that can help you track your social media performance. As long as you first establish your social media objectives, it will be easy for you to determine whether you are hitting your marks. Some tools even give you insights on how to improve your social media strategy. Choosing the best tools for the job can give you invaluable information.

Characteristics of a Successful Social Media Marketer:

Social media can be a fun and effective way to reach your customers on a more personal level. Social media networks are mode of social interaction. It is a platform of sharing and discussing information among human beings. Social media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts and other multimedia communication elements. Social media sites are nothing but a group of special and user friendly websites.

Social Media Marketing is a very broad term. It is a technique of building a business using various social media networks. For instance, videos and blogs that gives exposure to your company.

When someone talks about social media marketing people often think that they may be talking about Facebook and Twitter. But social media networks also offer effective marketing tools that can bring more traffic to your website and improve your online popularity. Social media marketing has many characteristics. To attain a good marketing strategy, you need to have a look at the following SMM characteristics.

➤ **Participation**

Social media encourages contributions and feedback from everyone. Social media includes delivery of ideas at the time of online conversation. It tries to bridge the gap between companies and audience. With all the new channels of social media, people are enjoying this process of participation.

➤ **Openness**

Social media success requires honesty, transparency and authenticity. You should maintain a trust worthy relationship with your customers in your SMM (social media marketing) strategy. One fake or negative comment can destroy your online reputation.

➤ **Build relationships**

Social media is a two-way communication channel. It requires participation from both companies and customers. As a business owner, it is very important to make good connections with your target audience. Online conversation through various social media tools happen in real time with real people. You get a chance to interact with your target audience and you can answer to their queries. Answering to their queries is a good way to build relationship with customers.

➤ **Reliability**

To make your profile reliable, you need to consistently show your online presence. Effective social media marketer visits their targeted sites regularly. They also get involved with new users and promote their products. They talk to their target audience on a regular basis.

➤ **Build communities**

Social media sites allow you to build communities quickly, this helps you communicate more effectively. Communities share common interests, such as a love of photography, a political issue or a favorite TV show. These communities help you to know about your target audience. You can also support other communities which you think are good for your business.

➤ **Customer service**

It is very essential to take care of your customers. Social media networks are all about helping each others. It's about providing value to your customers, not just promotion.

➤ **Avoid spamming**

Don't give importance only to promoting your links. Also share insightful content about your company. Do not send the same message to your community again and again, it works as a spam and it may irritate your customers.

Social media marketing is the most powerful platform for small businesses. An effective social media marketing campaign grows your business and brings more traffic to your website. Social

media marketing is the best marketing strategy allows you to promote your company at the same time build relationships.

Social Media Marketing Plan:

Start With a Plan - Before we begin creating social media marketing campaigns, consider your business's goals. Starting a social media marketing campaign without a social strategy in mind is like wandering around a forest without a map—you might have fun, but you'll probably get lost.

Here are some questions to ask when defining your social media marketing goals:

- What are you hoping to achieve through social media marketing?
- Who is your target audience?
- Where would your target audience hang out and how would they use social media?
- What message do you want to send to your audience with social media marketing?

Social media marketing can help with a number of goals, such as:

- Increasing website traffic
- Building conversions
- Raising brand awareness
- Creating a brand identity and positive brand association
- Improving communication and interaction with key audiences

The bigger and more engaged your audience is on social media networks, the easier it will be for you to achieve every other marketing goal on your list!

Social media strategy:

A major strategy used in social media marketing is to develop messages and content that individual users will share with their family, friends and coworkers. This strategy relies on word of mouth and provides several benefits.

- First, it increases the message's reach to networks and users that a social media manager may not have been able to access otherwise.
- Second, shared content carries an implicit endorsement when sent by someone who the recipient knows and trusts.

While social media marketing can provide benefits, it also can create obstacles that companies may not have had to deal with otherwise. For example, a viral video claiming that a company's product causes consumers to become ill must be addressed by the company, regardless of whether the claim is true or false. Even if a company is able to set the message straight, consumers may be less likely to purchase from the company in the future.

Social Media Marketing Suggestions:

Here are a few social media marketing tips to kick off your social media campaigns.

- **Social Media Content Planning** — building 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** — Consistent with other areas of online marketing, content reigns supreme when it comes to social media marketing. 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** — Using social media for marketing enables your business to project your brand image across a variety of different social media platforms. While each platform has its own unique environment and voice, your business’s core identity, whether it's friendly, fun, or trustworthy, should stay consistent.
- **Social Media for Content Promotion** — Social media marketing is a perfect channel for sharing your best site and blog content with readers. Once you build a loyal following on social media, you'll be able to post all your new content and make sure your readers can find new stuff right away. Plus, great blog content will help you build more followers. It's a surprising way that content marketing and social media marketing benefit each other.
- **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** — It’s always important to keep an eye on competitors—they can 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!
- **Measuring Success with Analytics** —You can’t determine the success of your social media marketing strategies without tracking data. Google Analytics can be used as a great social media marketing tool that will help you measure your most triumphant social media marketing techniques, as well as determine which strategies are better off abandoned. Attach tracking tags to your social media marketing campaigns so that you can properly monitor them. And be sure to use the analytics within each social platform for even more insight into which of your social content is performing best with your audience.

Social Media Marketing Plan:

Here are few steps to follow in Social Media Marketing Plan of Action.

Step 1: Create Social Media Marketing Goals That Solve Your Biggest Challenges

- The first step to any strategy is to understand what you want out of your efforts. Social media marketing isn’t about flipping a switch and calling it a day. Instead, social media planning should be looked at like cooking your favorite dish.
- That’s why creating goals is so critical to the first part of your social media strategy. At the same time, it’s best to **set goals that you know are attainable**. Asking for 1 million

new Instagram followers in 2018 is unrealistic. With achievable goals, you're more likely to stick to the original plan and continue to take on new hurdles as you complete old ones.

- This is the same reason why brands should never take on every social media channel possible in their current marketing strategy. Try to choose the channels that have the most importance based on your brand's goals. Avoid over complicating a strategy with too many targets and objectives. Simplicity can take you a long way.
- And also, don't forget to document your social media goals. Not only is it important to help you benchmark where you are, but it also improves your chances of achieving them.

Social Media Goals to Consider in 20th Century:

Goal setting is a staple of all marketing and business strategies. Social media is no exception. Of course, with a range of social capabilities, it can be difficult to determine exactly what your objectives should be. For guidance, here are some common social media goals to consider:

- **Increase brand awareness:** To create authentic and lasting brand awareness, avoid a slew of promotional messages. Instead, focus on meaningful content and a strong brand personality through your social channels.
- **Higher quality of sales:** Digging through your social channels is nearly impossible without monitoring or listening to specific keywords, phrases or hashtags. Through more efficient social media targeting, you reach your core audience much faster.
- **Drive in-person sales:** Some retailers rely on social media marketing efforts to drive in-store sales. Is your brand promoting enough on social to reward those who come to you? What about alerting customers to what's going on in your stores?
- **Improve ROI:** There's not a brand on social media that doesn't want to increase its return on investment. But on social, this goal is specific to performing a thorough audit of your channels and ensuring cost of labor, advertisements and design stay on track.
- **Create a loyal fanbase:** Does your brand promote user-generated content? Do your followers react positively without any initiation? Getting to this point takes time and effort with creating a positive brand persona on social.
- **Better pulse on the industry:** What are your competitors doing that seems to be working? What strategies are they using to drive engagement or sales? Having a pulse on the industry could simply help you improve your efforts and take some tips from those doing well.

Step 2: Research Your Social Media Audience

Approximately **79% of adults use Facebook**—but are your customers actively engaging with your brand there? Understanding your audience is necessary to learn things like who buys your products, what age group is the toughest to sell and what income level makes up the most of your returning customers? As for social media, it's just as critical to know your audience.

First, your brand should look into the demographics of your most valuable social channels. Like we mentioned before, you should have a goal in mind for your social media marketing strategy. This is why you need to research the channels that correlate the most with your goals.

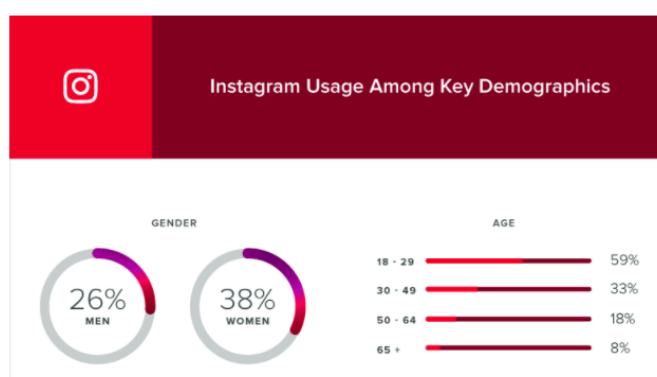
To help you find your focus channels: let's take a quick look at the essential demographics data for each major network:

- **Facebook's most popular demographics include:**

- Women users (89%)
- 18-29 year olds (88%)
- Urban- and rural-located users (81% each)
- Those earning less than \$30,000 (84%)
- Users with some college experience (82%)

- **Instagram's most popular demographics include:**

- Women users (38%)
- 18-29 year olds (59%),
- Urban-located users (39%)
- Those earning less than \$30,000 (38%)
- Users with some college experience (37%)



- **Twitter's most popular demographics include:**

- Women users (25%)
- 18-29 year olds (36%)
- Urban-located users (26%)
- Those earning \$50,000-\$74,999 (28%)
- Users with college experience or more (29%)

- **LinkedIn's most popular demographics include:**

- Men users (31%)
- 18-29 year olds (34%)
- Urban-located users (34%)
- Those earning \$75,000 or more (45%)
- Users with college experience or more (50%)

- **Snapchat and other auto-delete app's most popular demographics include:**

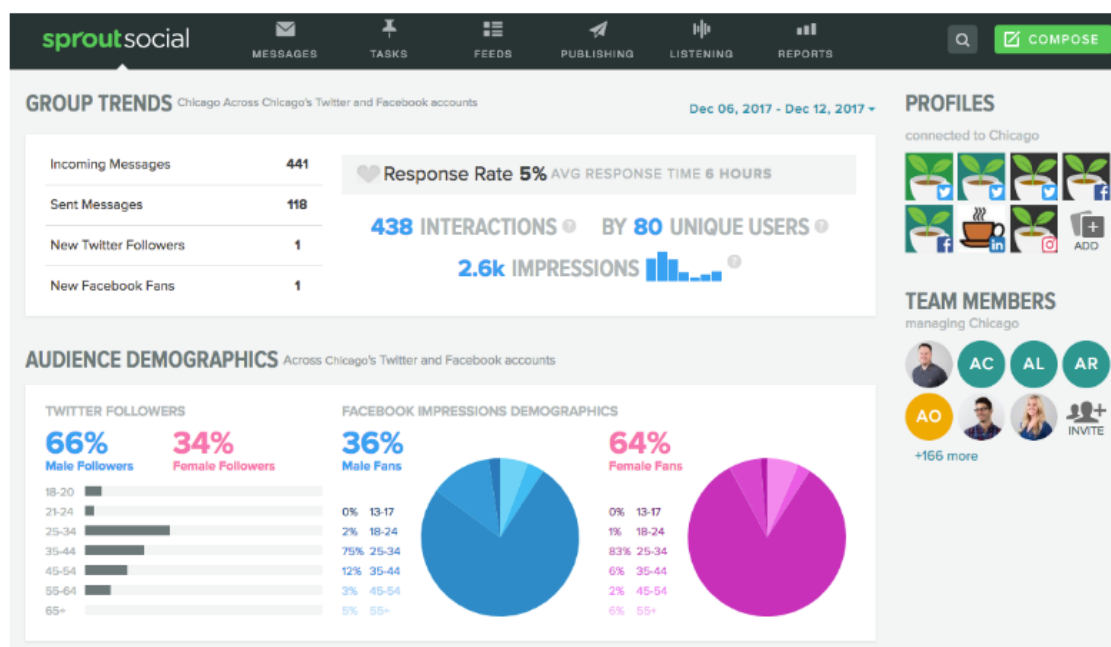
- Men users (24%)
- 18-29 year olds (56%)
- Those earning less than \$50,000 (27%)
- Users with some college experience (27%)

Identifying Customer Demographics

While the demographics data above gives you insight into each channel, what about your own customers? Further analysis has to be completed before you can truly know your customer demographics on social media.

That's why many brands use a **social media dashboard** that can provide an overview of who's following you and how they interact with you on each channel. Most brands today are using at least some sort of dashboard. However, does your dashboard address your specific goals?

Whether you're an agency providing insights for your clients or an enterprise company discovering your own demographics, an all-in-one dashboard solution is critical.



Sprout Social prides itself on the in-depth and essential demographics data for your social networks to help you identify your customers. Learn more with a [free 30-day trial](#) to uncover crucial data with Sprout!

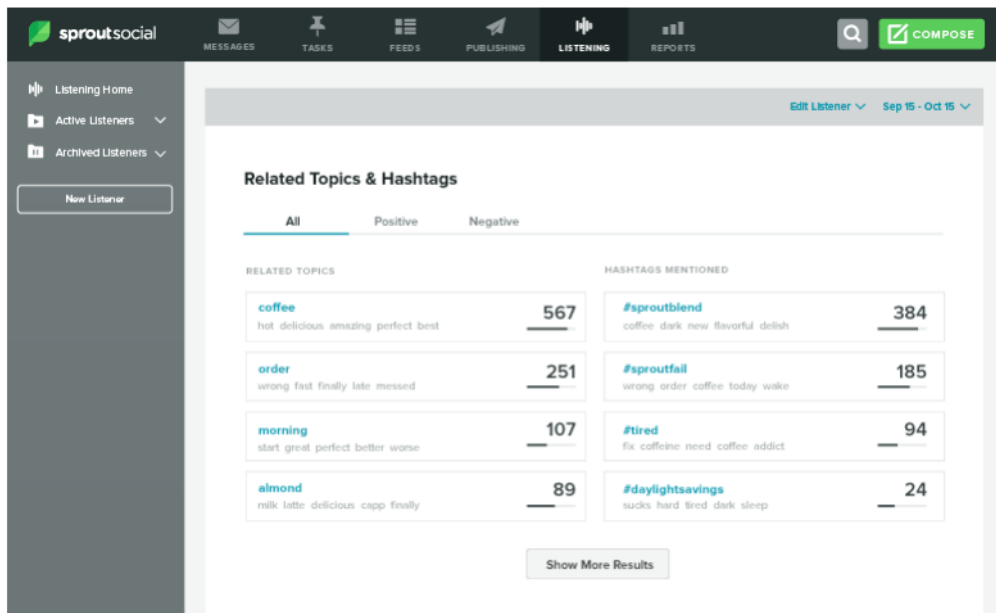
Step 3: Establish Your Most Important Metrics

While your targeted social media metrics might be the most important step of a strategy, it's often the spot most veer off the path. We often get wrapped up in viewing followers and likes as the truth to a campaign, but it's smart to take a step back and evaluate the social metrics associated with your overall goals.

Large audiences and likable content is absolutely great, but here are **some other metrics** you might want to pursue in 2018:

- **Reach:** Post reach is the number of unique users who saw your post. How far is your content spreading across social? Is it actually reaching user's feeds?

- **Clicks:** This is the amount of clicks on your content, company name or logo. Link clicks are critical toward understanding how users move through your marketing funnel. Tracking clicks per campaign is essential to understand what drives curiosity or encourages people to buy.
- **Engagement:** The total number of social interactions divided by number of impressions. For engagement, it's about seeing who interacted and if it was a good ratio out of your total reach. This sheds light on how well your audience perceives you and their willingness to interact.
- **Hashtag performance:** What were your most used hashtags on your own side? Which hashtags were most associated with your brand? Or what hashtags created the most engagement?



- **Sentiment:** This is the measurement of how users reacted to your content, brand or hashtag. Did customers find your recent campaign offensive? What type of sentiment are people associating with your campaign hashtag? It's always better to dig deeper and find what people are saying.
- **Organic and paid likes:** More than just standard Likes, these likes are defined from paid or organic content. For channels like Facebook, organic engagement is much harder to gain traction, which is why many brands turn to **Facebook Ads**. However, earning organic likes on Instagram isn't quite as difficult.

Step 4: Research Your Social Competitive Landscape

Before you start creating content (we promise we're almost there!), it's really smart to investigate your competitors. We put this before the content creation process because you often find new ways to look at content by analyzing what's making your competitors successful.

Again, we'll always believe you shouldn't steal your competitors' ideas, but instead learn and grow from their success and failures. So how do you find that information? The first step is to find out who's your competition in the first place.

The simplest way to find competitors is through a simple Google search. Look up your most valuable keywords, phrases and industry terms to see who shows up.

Here you can see post break downs of text, images and video to see what your competitors are doing to drive the most engagement. Once you dig through the competitive analysis, you'll have a better idea of what your potential customers want.

Step 5: Build & Curate Engaging Social Media Content

Did someone say content? It's no lie—social media content is extremely important to your marketing strategy. However, it's best to follow the previous steps before planning out content (we caught you, blog skippers!) so you can start building more effective themes.

For starters, we recommend creating content that fits to your brand's identity. This means you should avoid things like reaching out to your unpopular demographics without a complete strategy in place.

It's necessary to find the perfect balance between target content and being overly promotional as well. In fact, **46% of users say they'll unfollow a brand** if there's too many promotional messages. Additionally, 41% of users say they'd unfollow a brand that shared too much irrelevant content.

Video Content or Bust

How important is video to your social media marketing strategy? Extremely—approximately **90% of online shoppers** believe product videos help them make a purchasing decision. Additionally, the average online video is completely watched end to end by **37% of viewers**.

These type of stats should only enforce your reasoning to **invest in social media video content**. Brands can reach users through Instagram Stories, Facebook Live and other in-the-moment media.

Build Content Themes

One of the toughest challenges to visual content is creating it on a day-to-day basis. A **Vennage infographic** showed 36.7% of marketers said their No.1 struggle with creating visual content was doing so consistently.

This truly shows how important highly-visual content is to marketers and the people they want to reach. That's why building content themes is a great approach to sectioning out your content. Instagram is one your premier channels to work off visual themes.

Step 6: Engage With Your Audience & Don't Ignore

Social media channels are built as networks. This means their main purpose is to be a space to converse, discuss topics and share content. Your brand can't forget these core elements of "networking" and it takes effort to ensure conversations or engagement opportunities aren't left unattended.

Through social media, you gain respect as a brand by just being present and talking to your audience. That's why **social customer care** is so important to brands wanting to increase audience awareness. It's all about engagement.

Designating teams to specific tasks can help your staff run like a well-oiled social media team, whether you're a group of one or 100.

Post at the Best Times to Engage

When is your brand available to engage and interact with customers? You might see some recommending times to post late in the evening. But if your brand isn't there to communicate, what's the point of posting at the preferred time?

Instead, try to ensure your social media or community managers are available and ready to answer any product questions or concerns when you tweet or post. It's smart to learn the **best times to post on social media**, but it's just as critical to engage after posting.

According to our Index, a brand's average response time is **around 10 hours**. But did you know that most users believe brands should respond to social media messages within four hours?

With all the updated algorithms, organic content has a tough time reaching the majority of your audience. The last thing you want to do is ignore those who engage and lose out on sending more down your marketing funnel.

Step 7: Track Your Efforts & Always Improve

So, how well did you do on your social media marketing strategy? Without continuously analyzing your efforts, you'll never know how one campaign did over another. Having a bird's-eye-view of your social media activity helps put things into perspective.

You've got down your most important goals, network preferences and metrics—now it's time to make sure you made the right decisions. Knowing you've made the right choices is still a difficult task in social media.

In fact, **46% of B2B marketers** are unsure if their social strategy actually created revenue for their brand. But marketers are always trying and looking for the perfect connection. That's why the most commonly used metric (80%) for marketers is engagement.

If you work at building lasting relationships, there's a lot less room for failure with your social media marketing strategy.

Use a Tool to Track Success

Sprout Social was created with social media marketing in mind. Our social media tools offer a full suite of analytics and reporting features to help you pinpoint exactly which posts, messages and hashtags perform the best.

It's easy to connect other critical tools to our dashboard like Google Analytics, which helps you see which posts drove the most traffic, conversions and overall revenue.

Social Media Marketing Tools:

In today's world, social media is one of the best ways for your business to stand out in its field and to reach a wider audience. Having an active presence on all major social networks, from Facebook to LinkedIn and beyond, is a necessity for any brand that wants to become an industry leader while engaging with its potential and current customers in new ways.

However, social media can be overwhelming if you don't have the proper knowledge or tools. Whether it's to create or repurpose content, to find the best way to engage with your online community or to create a comprehensive posting schedule, having the right social media management tools is crucial to your success. Here are few of the best social media management tools currently available and how they can help you make the most of your social presence.

1. HootSuite

Whether you are a user handling multiple accounts, or an agency that handles hundreds, HootSuite makes it easy. It's easy to add accounts, easy to schedule posts across all major platforms and easy to add account managers. In addition, the company also has a robust training platform that teaches not just the tools, but how to think about social marketing as a whole.

2. Hubspot

While there are a lot of tools out there that let you monitor and publish to social accounts, we recommend platforms such as Hubspot where you can not only monitor and publish but also get closed-loop reporting data. That means you're not just seeing what channels drive the most engagement, but you can track further down the funnel to see what posts and channels drive actual leads and sales.

3. MeetEdgar

There are countless tools that post for you and schedule posts but what about a system that re-shares evergreen posts? MeetEdgar is the one because it has the biggest impact on traffic by automatically re-sharing your evergreen content.

4. TweetDeck

TweetDeck has been around a long time now, and there's a reason for that: It's one of the best and best-priced (what can beat free?) ways out there to be a part of the Twittersphere. The multi-columned layout makes it easy to follow several conversations at once, and scheduling content is a snap. Twitter moves so fast, but TweetDeck makes it doable and even enjoyable.

5. IFTTT

IFTTT, or “If This Then That,” is a great automation tool that can help you save a lot of time on trying to manage social media platforms, apps and websites. The tool can link these services together based on a trigger and an action. Based on the trigger you create, it will start an action. For example, if you publish a blog (the trigger), then IFTTT will automate and create a tweet (the action).

6. Buffer

I’m a fan of Buffer. It lets you schedule and manage social media posts across all of the most widely used channels, and you can individually customize each post for all of the different platforms it gets posted to. Buffer also shares your content at the best possible times throughout the day and tracks links so that you can see what content gets the most traction.

7. Sprout Social

Our digital team utilizes Sprout Social for its social media management, which allows the team members to monitor clients’ social media mentions, engage with brand advocates, schedule content in advance, and utilize reporting tools to inform future strategies. As our hotel clients’ guests view social media as a virtual concierge, we find it essential to have a tool to streamline real-time communication.

8. Canva

What you can do with Canva: design presentations, social media graphics, and a heap of other things with thousands of beautiful layouts. It has everything you need for catching designs. Millions of stock photographs, vectors and illustrations. You can also upload your own visuals. Canva has preset filters and advanced photo editing tools to modify pictures. It gives you the possibility to use icons, shapes and elements, thousands of them. Hundreds of fonts perfect for every design are also ready to go and accessible within Canva.

9. Adobe Post

Adobe Post was created to give you a powerful tool to differentiate among the competitors and engage your followers with eye-catching posts. Create stunning social graphics in seconds with it. Get started quickly with handcrafted remixable design templates made for social sharing. Resize your text - beautiful typography will be automatically applied on-the-fly. Transform your text and photo into professional-looking graphics with a single tap.

10. Bundle Post

The tool is paid, but has a free 30-day trial period. Bundle Post is a content curation tool that aggregates and schedules social media content efficiently. Search, edit and schedule with a browser plugin or social media dashboard, then add hashtags. Keep your audience engaged and get results.

11. Babbly

Babbly is an awesome platform of quality content owners. It works as simple as follows: give a share - get a share. Share others content to get shares to your content. Share to multiple networks at once by just one click. Pause & play your content. Control when your content is visible to others on Babbly. Control when your content goes live. Schedule your posts. Schedule when your posts go live on babbly and your social media. The tool helps you in reaching the target audience at the right time. Relax and don't worry about flooding your follower base again. Auto spread shares to your social networks to go out in timed intervals.

12. Feedly

Organize, read, and share all the content that matters to you and your team at a single place. Don't miss a beat from any of the publications you trust. Dive deeper by following blogs from the latest movers, shakers, and thinkers. Follow any one on the web. See new videos from the YouTube channels you follow. Monitor news about your company, your product, your craft, and your competitors by plugging in Google Alerts. Crunch through more content in less time by organizing your feeds into easy-to-read collections. Secure access to private content from your company's internal portals, content management systems, and SaaS applications. Let the web work for you by arranging the content you rely on into easy-to-read collections. And do much more with Feedly.

13. Likeable Hub

Get access to thousands of engaging content ideas to share. Share stories with thousands of content ideas & news posts. Generate referrals & leads with your Likable Hub site. Manage your reputation with streamlined social listening. Amplify your reach with TURBOPOST technology & reverb. Save time and resources with Likable Hub scheduling & features. Measure your growth with success analytics.

14. Brand 24

The tool is paid, but has a 14-day free trial period. It serves for getting social insights. Discover what people are saying online about your brand. Brand24 gives you instant access to mentions about your brand across the web, from social networks to influential publishers. Therefore you can reach customers fast, react and engage quickly to real-time comments made about your brand, follow-up on positive comments from your brand ambassadors, or respond to a dissatisfied customer before the story gets ahead of you. Detect sales opportunities. 80% of consumers do research or ask online before making a buying decision. Brand24 gives you the listening tools to find these leads, identify where to promote products and find customers before they find you.

15. CrowdBooster

The tool offers a 30-day free trial. Measure & optimize your social media marketing with it. Improve your online presence. Have the right tools to make data-driven decisions. Save time on reporting, get real-time data that's always up-to-date, quickly report your key performance metrics, share them with your dashboard. Export graphs & tables, their dashboard creates editable, beautiful graphs & tables for you to view. You can export to CSV then drop the raw data in your own custom report. Schedule unlimited tweets posts for the most optimal time. The tool recommends the best time for you to get the most engagement out of your followers and fans. Find your most engaged fans & followers, learn to quickly adapt to your audience. CrowdBooster's technology provides your audience insight, suggests who you should engage with, and how to improve the content.

Publishing Blogs, Podcast and Webinars:

Publishing Blogs:

A blog is basically a 'weblog', a kind of website, a journal that is updated regularly. It is a discussion platform besides being a content achieve. People can discuss a topic on a blog and comment on posts. It is basically run by an individual or a small group.

Blogging

Every activity and skillset that is required to manage a blog comes under the purview of Blogging, for example, writing posts, publishing them, designing, social marketing, etc. In simple words, blogging is the process of adding new content to a blog and updating it at regular intervals.

- **Blogger (Person)** – Person involved in blogging is called a 'blogger'.
- **Blogger (Service)** – It is a service provided by Google that allows us to compose a post, edit, update, and manage it. You can customize your blogs easily with the help of a 'blogger'. It lets you share what is on your mind and earn money. It is a convenient platform for avid as well as novice users. No technical knowledge or coding is required. It runs directly on Google servers and is impossible to hack.
- **WordPress** – It's a free software to create and customize a search engine friendly website or a blog. A number of themes and plugins are available to transform your website as required. Approximately 70 million people are a part of WordPress community. WordPress is available in both free and premium plans.
- **Blogspot** – Blogspot is a free web hosting service gifted to web developers by Google. It helps Google Blogger in delivering its service. We cannot use any other platform to use it.
- **Tumblr** – It is a microblogging platform that allows us to make a blog and customize it. We may use stories, images, videos, audio, etc. Bloggers can either keep their blogs private or follow other blogs.

Advantages of Blogging

- ✓ Better online influence. It assists in making impressions in grabbing a good profile.
- ✓ It forms a good source of income. Pat Flynn earns \$100,000 per year from his blog 'Green Exam Academy'.
- ✓ Maintaining a blog can help improve your writing skills.
- ✓ A blogger can easily become a published author.
- ✓ You can get instant feedbacks in the form of comments, shares, etc.
- ✓ Bloggers can be sound learners, as they tend to read and engage more in such content.
- ✓ Get a long fan following list.
- ✓ Blogs can help you build a strong network.
- ✓ Maintaining a blog can help you improve your technical skills on Wordpress, SEO, etc.
- ✓ Sell Online – Blogs can be a great virtual store.

- ✓ Express yourself – Blogging is a great way to share your ideas through inspirational means.
- ✓ Blogging is an easy, yet a sure way to build trust online.

Setting a Blog using WordPress

You can create blogs on many platforms. They can be either free or paid. Here is how you can create a blog using WordPress –

- Create your account on WordPress.com. Enter your name and Email address and other required details.
- Select a web address; it can be either free or premium.
- Choose a suitable WordPress plan.
- Set up your profile and build your profile page.
- Configure site settings like Site Title and tagline.

Setting a Blog using Blogger

Blogger.com is a popular platform that is being used widely for creating ready-to-post blogs.

Follow the steps given below to create a blog using blogger –

- Sign up and create an account on www.blogger.com.
- Enter display name and click 'create your blog now'.
- Choose your blog title and URL. Verify whether it is available.
- Choose a desirable template from the given options.
- You would come across the 'posting' tab. Create post, edit posts, and page here.
- Enter the title of your post on the 'title' tab.
- The rest of your post goes in the 'Compose' text editor. You can customize your post by editing its font, size, text color, etc. 'Edit HTML' option is available to insert your content in HTML format.
- Select 'post option' if you want to enable readers' comment.
- Save once you are done with it. You can preview the final page before publishing it. Click 'Publish' to publish the post directly.

Blog Promotion

We can take the following measures to promote your blog –

- Connect your blog to Google+ to allow auto-sharing.
- Post quality content and post regularly.
- Write search engine friendly content.
- Have an Email button in order to receive feedback from your readers.
- Use your blog link in mail signatures.
- Enable site feed to let more and more people subscribe to your content.
- Add your blog to Blogger's listings. Submit your URL to blog directories.
- Actively comment on other's posts. This way, your profile gets more exposure.
- Participate in online forums.
- Use social media for branding.
- Hold a contest or a carnival.
- Write as a guest blogger. Write multiple pages and link them together.

Blog Commenting

Commenting on a blog is an art. You need to put some effort to post comments that catch users' attention.

- Add a few attractive phrases with exclamation mark to draw attention.
- Comment as early as possible, as the first few comments are the ones read by most.
- Refrain yourself from over-promoting.
- Don't be rude or use offensive language.
- Include questions in your comments. They seek more attention.
- Be influencing by updating an article.

Podcast:

A podcast is a digital audio file that is made available via Web syndication technologies such as RSS. Although strictly speaking, it's not social media, it's often classified as such because it allows anybody to easily syndicate their own audio content. You can use podcasts as a way to share information with your audiences. Podcasts typically don't form a whole SIM campaign in and of themselves, but work well with other SIM ones.

- Podcasting is the preparation and distribution of audio files using RSS to the computers of subscribed users. These files may then be uploaded to digital music or multimedia players like the iPod. A podcast can be easily created from a digital audio file. The podcaster first saves the file as an MP3 and then uploads it to the Web site of a service provider. The MP3 file gets its own URL, which is inserted into an RSS XML document as an enclosure within an XML tag.
- Once a podcast has been created, it can be registered with content aggregators, such as podcasting.net or ipodder.org, for inclusion in podcast directories. People can browse through the categories or subscribe to specific podcast RSS feeds which will download to their audio players automatically when they next connect. Although podcasts are generally audio files created for digital music players, the same technology can be used to prepare and transmit images, text, and video to any capable device.
- Podcasting has been likened to TiVo because it allows users to listen to their selected podcasts whenever they like, similarly to the way time-shifting lets viewers watch television programs when it suits them. Furthermore, because of the portability of the player devices, users can listen to audio files from the Internet as they go about their daily activities - for example, listening to a news blog entry while at the gym, commuting, or just walking around.
- Content producers are increasingly turning to podcasting as an inexpensive and user-friendly new distribution channel that has the potential to reach a large audience. Not surprisingly, musicians and bloggers are prevalent among the early adopters, but mainstream media organizations, including ZDNet and National Public Radio (NPR), are beginning to venture into podcasting as well.

- The cultural milieu supporting podcasting is sometimes referred to as the podosphere, just as the cultural environment surrounding the blog is called the blogosphere.

Webinars:

Webinars are taking the digital marketing world by storm. Also known as web conferencing, webinars are services that allow real-time, multicast video conferencing or audio conferencing events to occur even when participants come from remote locations. These are made possible through online technologies like TCP/IP. Some great examples of oft-cited webinar services include Google Hangouts, and ClickMeeting.

Many people today consider webinar as the next big thing in marketing since it offers real-time connectivity and interaction between the presenter or presenters plus guests and the audience that are interacting with them.

Importance of webinar marketing is growing rapidly nowadays. Webinars have quickly become the standard for the new marketing culture of so called “permission marketing.” For ones who are not familiar with the term, permission marketing is based, in short, on the knowing participation of potential consumers in the marketing process. Consumers do this because they think the marketing materials will help them in their business or personal attempts.

- There is no area that webinars cannot be helpful at. Almost any subject that you can think of can provide webinars through you can learn a lot. And they are aimed at all sorts of audiences, from clients to colleagues.
- However, the amount of knowledge and values vary from one area to another, for example you will probably get more following tech webinars than ones from another sector, but knowledge can be useful anyways. Therefore, no matter what industry you are at, you should definitely consider getting involved in them.
- Another positive aspect that makes webinars so important is how easy they are to use. Organizing webinar doesn't require nether the most advanced technology nor any other special requirement. Webinars don't require the time or expense of travel. It is based on the most simplest form, sharing your knowledge with others in fast and easy way. Therefore, all you have to do is to be an expert in certain area and provide the information that you audience needs in order for your webinar to be a success.
- Nowadays, due to so many information that are circulating all around us, consumers are getting smarter and started to demand knowledge instantly. Instead of searching for the right books or getting in touch to people from certain field, consumers are interested in getting the information the easiest way possible. So the Internet search seems like the most logical step. For that reason, your company or your personal project should be promoted there so that it can be reached faster than others. There is no better way to demonstrate your expertise or communicate to potential clients than promoting your brand or idea online.
- Your goal should be to provide all necessary information so that clients have the whole picture of what are you offering. And webinars seem simplest than writing a long posts or articles that no one probably have a time to go through.

- When it comes to organizing part, webinars give you almost all freedom of process. But there are still a couple of rules that you should be following. First of all, your main goal is to keep it interesting. Therefore, try to pick a topic that is not too wide so that your audience would not get boring listening general information. It's always better to go with a more specific topic so that you can engage people with the same interest and build your first client base. Speaking of that, another aspect should be making your audience active.
- Today, it's not enough to have listeners, you will need more active audience who would be able to spread information about your project everywhere. Therefore, try to keep them involved by appreciating and encouraging their feedback, answering their questions in a reasonable amount of time, incorporating them in your future marketing materials. That's how you can get the most of your webinar.

Here are the reasons why a webinar is a great marketing tool:

1. **Webinars are Convenient:** On-demand webinars are quite convenient to have because at this point, everyone has an online connection and a means to access it.
2. **Webinars Can Help with Your Promotions:** If you want to promote your site or company with the help of webinars, then it's all possible. Webinar presentations, even informational ones, can increase the exposure of your business or company altogether.
3. **Webinars Establish Your Credibility:** By having a webinar, you'll be able to give more credibility to your ideas. The simple act of putting on webinars will allow you, the people you're talking to, and the people who are watching, to understand your concepts and establish agreements.
4. **Webinars Have Huge Applications on Training and Education:** Webinar live streams and webcasts can include how-to videos that showcase training in various fields of study and concepts.
5. **Webinars Can Create and Increase Brand Awareness:** Brand awareness is a concept that involves making audiences more aware of a brand or product through consistent promotion, advertisements, marketing, and labeling focused on a single theme, message, or identity.
6. **The Consumer Reach of Webinars Is Quite Impressive:** Having a webinar, especially involving news and current events that are burning holes in everyone's minds, enables you to reach to most people, particularly your target audience if you play your cards right.
7. **Webinars Helps Build You a Bigger Audience and Contact List:** Just like with podcasts or simply having a YouTube channel, every webinar you made forges new contacts.
8. **Webinars Are Cost-Effective Solutions:** Webinars aren't that much expensive and some of them are even available for free.

Social Media Monitoring:

Social media monitoring is a process of using social media channels to track, gather and mine the information and data of certain individuals or groups, usually companies or organizations, to assess their reputation and discern how they are perceived online.

Social media monitoring is also known as social media listening and social media measurement.

Organizations use social media monitoring to reach out to customers and prospects for information gathering and front-end customer support. It is used to collect and mine data, especially by organizations seeking customer intelligence to determine current industry trends. The process has become easier - yet more tedious - due to free and readily available outlets, like blogs, wikis, news sites, social networking sites, forums, video/photo sharing sites and message boards.

- There are a variety of social media monitoring tools, but most are customized data mining software and Web crawlers. Large enterprises use these tools to search for specific keywords on various websites and blogs.
- The monitoring software transfers the desired words and phrases from unstructured to structured database data for analysis with traditional data mining techniques.
- Social media monitoring software provides functionality for listening, tracking, and gathering relevant content across wide ranges of social media.
- Social media monitoring products are used by social media, marketing, and communications teams to identify trends, track competitors, and understand customer sentiment.
- The products can also be used by researchers to gain information on social trends or by media outlets to identify breaking news. Social media monitoring tools allow marketers to personalize content to specific users or demographics, identify thought leaders or influencers, and respond to positive or negative mentions.
- Many social media products monitor posts in a variety of different languages and countries, allowing businesses to localize advertisements. These products are intended to provide demographic data, understand social media presence, identify negative mentions, engage users, and improve a brand's reputation.
- Social media monitoring products often provide information that benefits social media analytics software. Monitoring functionality can also be found within social media management software as a feature or social media suites as either a feature or standalone product. Many media monitoring products also monitor social media as well.

To qualify for inclusion in the Social Media Monitoring category, a product must:

- Listen for specific mentions across social media
- Identify trending topics or phrases
- Detail customer sentiment
- Organize customer information
- Identify thought leaders and influencers
-

1. Better Understanding of Listening & Monitoring - Another way social media monitoring can benefit your business is by learning the difference between monitoring and social listening. Far too often, the terms social media monitoring and social media listening are considered one in the same.

While it's easy to see why they're mixed together, monitoring and listening are both unique methods to view, measure and analyze your audience. Here's how we break down the difference between monitoring and listening:

- **Social media monitoring** is more so the process of collecting social messages into a single stream and to take a specific action in response to each message (via a like, comment or tasked message).
- **Social media listening** queries large volumes of social messages from specific keywords or topics that then requires your brand to reflect and draw analysis from the these actions.

Understanding the difference between social media monitoring and social media listening is critical to any social strategy. It's also important to know one is not more important than the other.

2. Become More Approachable to Your Customers

Providing excellent customer service is at the forefront of most brand's initiatives. Being an approachable organization means you have to consider every avenue of communication. And this most certainly includes social media.

Social media monitoring tools allow brands to become more approachable by finding customer inquiries and interactions faster.

Positive brand experiences can truly have an effect on customers in your sales funnel. It's always best to think of building strong communication with your customers as a long-term relationship. And what's the best way to open that line of communication? It starts with monitoring your social messages and providing the best customer experience.

3. Never Miss a Brand-Relevant Message

One of the best benefits to social media monitoring is discovering more opportunities to engage with customers. For organizations on social, this means you need to focus on incoming brand-relevant messages, whether you're directly mentioned or not.

And for a lot of brands, there are so many messages, it's easy to miss important questions because they didn't tag, @mention or use your hashtag. However, identifying your brand keywords in a social media monitoring platform, like Sprout Social, makes it simple.

You'll never miss an incoming message, hashtag, mention or even common misspellings by monitoring brand keywords and hashtags. Not only does this help you put all your incoming brand messages in one place, you can also analyze hashtag performance and see how users interact with your brand materials on social.

By identifying relevant keywords on social, you open yourself up to new discussions, blog and social media post ideas and see what topics your audience truly engages with the most.

4. Stay Organized With Marketing Campaigns Tags

An essential benefit of social media monitoring tools is the ability to organize campaigns. When incoming messages related to an important campaign come in, you need to be able to respond or engage in a timely manner. Start by setting up a brand keyword in Sprout that's associated with a specific campaign.

With the brand keyword saved, you'll be able to filter all incoming Tweets or Instagram hashtags with that specific phrase. For brands that receive a large volume of incoming messages for

customer support, people sharing your content and everything in between, the ability to filter conversations based on your brand keywords is a huge time saver.

Not only that, but it also guarantees that important messages don't get overlooked.

5. Interact With Your Top Brand Advocates & Key Customers

Brand advocates are essential to promoting your product and driving more engagement in smaller pockets of the market.

With the help of social media monitoring tools, you easily interact with influencers and brand advocates to truly move the engagement needle. On top of that, monitoring interactions and conversations from key customers can provide valuable instances of ways to include them in your marketing efforts.

Finding places to interact with key customers can make the difference between a small sale and a major win for your business. With monitoring tools, you can find and reply to those customers on the edge to make a purchase from you.

6. Understand What's Working (and Not Working) For Competitors

Social media monitoring isn't strictly limited to your brand. It also pays to understand what your competitors are doing and how they engage with their own fans.

Consider monitoring conversations that contain the names of your top competitors on social. For instance, T-Mobile might want to track conversations about Verizon. It could help them understand some of the pain points of Verizon customers. Then T-Mobile could use these Verizon customer issues in its own marketing messaging to speak more directly to the audience.

7. Win Back Lost Customers

As we mentioned earlier, quickly replying to customers can mean all the difference on social media. When an upset customer Tweets a complaint about your brand, you need to jump on it quickly to resolve the issue. Even if you can't fix their current situation, you could restore your chances of doing business with them in the future.

Don't let negative customer experiences go unnoticed on social media. While some bigger brands receive hundreds or thousands of messages a day, the right monitoring tool helps you dig through the noise and find the biggest issues to address.

Social Media: Face book, Twitter:

Facebook:

Facebook is a social networking service provider. It lets you invite and connect with friends, send messages and pictures, like and comment or share them. Facebook has seen outstanding growth since its inception and is poised to maintain its dominance in social networking.

History of Facebook

Facebook was founded by Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg on February 4, 2004. In May 2007, Facebook opened up its developer platform to allow third-party developers to build applications and widgets that, once approved, could be distributed through the Facebook community. In May 2008, Facebook engineers announced Facebook connect, a cross-site initiative that allows users to publish on third-party sites in their Facebook newsfeed. The site was redesigned in late 2008, intended to streamline the website and make it easier to see what friends were doing.

What is Facebook Marketing?

Facebook is undoubtedly the most popular social media platform available with many advantages associated with it. It is primarily a social networking site, however it can be used as a handy tool for promoting and advertising a business. We can use Facebook to promote a brand, market a company, or create awareness about a service or a product. Success with this form of marketing requires more than a fan page and a few friends. When used effectively, Facebook marketing can provide a business with exciting benefits and results. Facebook marketing can enable businessmen to greatly improve their brand awareness and reach out to a wider audience.

Grow Your Business with Facebook

Facebook is fast becoming a powerhouse of marketing activity due to the sheer number of engaging users on the site and the simplicity of connecting with them directly. Facebook can provide your business with a branding outpost on the web where customers, employees, and even the media can find information about your company, products, and services. Facebook connects you and your staff directly to your customers and fans. Facebook can generate new leads for your business by drawing users' attention towards what you are offering. Facebook helps in sharing links, images, and posts on a customizable page to project a better sense of your business. Facebook runs tactics like contests, sweepstakes, etc., that can increase fans and brand awareness of your business.

Latest Facebook Trends

The nature of social media marketing is ever-changing, so it is important to constantly stay updated with what the current market trends are. The latest Facebook trends that a business should be aware of are: using the cover photo for marketing, different types of Facebook posts, more pictures, etc. Facebook looks completely different from how it was a year ago, so it should not be surprising that marketing on the social network has also changed a great deal.

What are Adverts?

Adverts on Facebook are unique. They are shown to specific groups of highly engaged people. If your adverts have a great creative content and are well targeted, they get more likes, comments, and shares. When we boost our page posts or expand the audience for the adverts, more people will see them when they visit Facebook. Facebook ads allow us to promote our business, get more fans to our business page, and drive more leads for our sales team. Facebook ads allow us to advertise a website or content that we manage on Facebook (like a group, page, or event) To create an ad, go to: <http://www.facebook.com/advertising> And click "create an ad".

Facebook–Do's and Don'ts

Do's

- ✓ Use Facebook to stay in touch with your friends and make new ones.
- ✓ Use Facebook to advertise your organization's events.
- ✓ Use Facebook to get involved with the campus community and learn what is happening around.
- ✓ Use Facebook customer support page since it contains valuable information about privacy controls and other important safety information.
- ✓ Do check each friend request carefully after visiting their profile. • Do use "privacy settings" while building up your photo albums.

Don'ts

- ✓ Don't use your wall to announce your schedules, journey and planning.
- ✓ Don't use public walls as your own. Try to maintain the decorum of groups and fan pages.
- ✓ Don't accept friend requests from strangers.
- ✓ Don't use Facebook for ragging and bullying anyone.
- ✓ Don't post pictures of your friends without their permission.

Increase Facebook Likes for a Fan Page :

- Create a Facebook fan page with an instantly appealing image, as it will help in attracting more attention.
- Keep the Facebook fan page up to date by writing suitable description and posting interesting and friendly page titles. Always try to provide your readers with something fresh to read.
- If you are running a contest on your page, then ask your visitors to like your fan page. Facebook contests are the easiest way to get people excited, as the lure of a big prize compels your target customers to 'like' your page and become your fan.
- If you are running a business, then you should promote your fan page by using ads in the Facebook, as it is the easiest way to increase the visibility of your brand and reach out to a highly targeted audience.
- Promote your page on your official website because it helps you to get likes from new visitors on your site. Having a 'like' button on your website is an easy way to drive new likes over time.
- Synchronize your Facebook page with your other profiles on other social networking sites like Twitter, dig, etc. it will help you get more visitor response.
- Sometimes educational content is a better incentive for a 'like' than a discount offer or a prize, depending on your industry or the target audience. Providing free written content such as eBooks can drive tons of new fans and customers.

What are Facebook Apps?

Facebook apps are basically software programs that can be added to users' Facebook profiles. These interactive software applications are developed to utilize the core technologies of the Facebook platform. Applications for Facebook have gained massive popularity in the last few years due to its uniqueness and the ease of creating them.

Facebook apps integrate Facebook newsfeeds, notifications, various social channels, and other features to generate awareness and interest in the app by the Facebook users. Apps and games are normally developed to enhance your experience on Facebook.

Facebook Apps –Advantages

- ✓ Increased exposure to potential customers.
- ✓ Easily create new product or service campaigns online.

- ✓ Lower marketing expenses.
- ✓ Reach a targeted customer.
- ✓ Build brand loyalty.
- ✓ Provide multiple marketing platforms.
- ✓ Budget-friendly ads.
- ✓ Marketing strategy is low cost.
- ✓ Allows business to communicate with existing and prospective clients.
- ✓ Can easily update everyone at once about your business.

Twitter:

Twitter is another social networking platform that allows registered users to read and write 140-character messages called 'tweets'. It is available across all devices such as cell phones, desktops, laptops, and tablets.

History of Twitter

Jack Dorsey, an undergraduate student at New York University, introduced the idea of an individual using a message service to communicate with a small group. Twitter was launched as an SMS-based communication platform. Initially it was known as "twtr". On March 21, 2006, Jack Dorsey sent the first ever tweet: "just setting up my twtr".

What is Twitter Marketing?

Twitter marketing is a powerful tool for companies of every size and structure to reach out to new customers, promote their brand, and connect with the rest of the companies. Users can find out if customers are talking about them, and the business can accordingly respond. Tweets create another instance for the business that shows up in the search engine results. Twitter serves as a solid foundation for your business to branch out into other social sites. Twitter is a great platform for projecting what your company is doing and accessing a large audience, where your Tweets can promote products and events.

How to Increase Followers on Twitter?

- Grow your community by adding a follow button in your website and promote your username.
- Get noticed with hash tags like #smallbiz etc.
- Engage with your followers by collecting feedback to build a better business.
- Sync your email contacts with Twitter.
- Keep your bio updated with the events or the business campaign you are running.
- Embed your best tweets and tweet to people every day.
- You can promote your twitter account on any printed material, e.g., business cards.
- Follow people who follow you.
- Make sure you are engaging with your customers on twitter and not to your product.

What is Hash Tag?

The symbol hash tag (#) is used to mark keywords in a tweet. It was originally created by Twitter users. This symbol helps them to categorize the tweets and show them easily when people search for them. Hash tags can occur anywhere in a tweet – middle, end, or at the beginning. If you tweet with a hash tag on a public account, anyone who does a search for that hash tag will find you. A hash tag is a way for people to search for tweets having a common topic.

Sponsored Tweets and Hash Tags

Sponsored tweets are advertising platforms that connect companies with tweeters. Sponsored tweets allow brands to tap into a Twitter user's followers to reach out to new customers. By giving companies access to your twitter stream, tweeters are compensated for each advertisement they accept. The only thing tweeters need to do is to write a tweet based on some simple guidelines provided by the advertiser.

Sponsored Hash Tags place the tag of a customer's choice among the list of trending topics that users see when they access the social network through the web.

Tools to Integrate Twitter on Your Blog or Website

- Add the twitter widget to your site's sidebar as it's a great way to show your latest tweets on your website.
- Choose from 40 different well-designed twitter buttons to quickly create a badge to promote your account.
- **TwitThis** is a little button that can be placed in your HTML file or in your blog to allow your readers to quickly and easily share what they are reading with their twitter followers.
- **Chirrup** is another solution for pulling Twitter comments across any platform. It allows you to display all the references from Twitter on a given webpage.
- **Aweber** has an excellent feature for any newsletter marketer. Newsletter delivery service has actually created a way to convert RSS to email to tweet.
- **Twitterfeed** is a pioneer of website and Twitter integration which allows you to automatically insert tweets into your Twitter from any RSS feed.

Twitter Automation Tools

Following are some of the twitter automation tools that make your profile look like an announcement board.

- **Twitterfeed** is a service that allows you to set up RSS from your blog or website.
- **Social Oomph** is a tool to create an automated direct message for new followers.
- **Tweet Old Post** is a great plugin which allows you to connect a Twitter account with your blog and regularly tweet posts to your followers.
- **Hootsuite** is a free tool that you can use if you have fewer than five social profiles to manage. It offers an option to schedule updates to specific social media accounts.
- **Visibili** is a free service that lets you create a custom sharing bar that goes with any links to share through their service.
- **Twitter Showdown** is a tool that provides valuable insights on followerto-following ratio, level of Tweet engagement, tweet timing, and how two accounts compare.

Unit – V
Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Understanding SEO, Search Engine Optimization Process - Goals, On-Page Optimization, Off-Page Optimization and Analyze, Search Engine Result Process (SERP), SEO Tools.

Understanding SEO:

Search engine optimization (SEO) refers to techniques that help your website rank higher in organic (or “natural”) search results, thus making your website more visible to people who are looking for your product or service via search engines.

- SEO is part of the broader topic of Search Engine Marketing (SEM), a term used to describe all marketing strategies for search. SEM entails both organic and paid search. With paid search, you can pay to list your website on a search engine so that your website shows up when someone types in a specific keyword or phrase.
- Organic and paid listings both appear on the search engine, but they are displayed in different locations on the page. So, why is it important for your business’s website to be listed on search engines? On Google alone, there are over 694,000 searches conducted every second. Every second that your website is not indexed on Google, you are potentially missing out on hundreds, if not thousands of opportunities for someone to visit your website, read your content, and potentially buy your product or service.
- Practicing SEO basics, as well as more advanced techniques after those, can drastically improve your website's ability to rank in the search engines and get found by your potential customers. Then about paid search, you can pay to have your website listed on the search engines. However, running paid search campaigns can be quite costly if you don't know what you're doing. Not to mention, about 88% of search engine users never click on paid search ads anyway.
- Because the sole purpose of a search engine is to provide you with relevant and useful information, it is in everyone's best interest (for the search engine, the searcher, and you) to ensure that your website is listed in the organic search listings. In fact, it is probably best to stay away from paid search all together until you feel you have a firm grasp on SEO and what it takes to rank organically.

How does a Search Engine Work?

Search engines perform several activities in order to deliver search results.

- **Crawling** - Process of fetching all the web pages linked to a website. This task is performed by a software called a crawler or a spider (or Googlebot, in case of Google).
- **Indexing** - Process of creating index for all the fetched web pages and keeping them into a giant database from where it can later be retrieved. Essentially, the process of indexing is identifying the words and expressions that best describe the page and assigning the page to particular keywords.
- **Processing** - When a search request comes, the search engine processes it, i.e., it compares the search string in the search request with the indexed pages in the database.
- **Calculating Relevancy** - It is likely that more than one page contains the search string, so the search engine starts calculating the relevancy of each of the pages in its index to the search string.
- **Retrieving Results** - The last step in search engine activities is retrieving the best matched results. Basically, it is nothing more than simply displaying them in the browser.

Search engines such as Google and Yahoo! often update their relevancy algorithm dozens of times per month. When you see changes in your rankings, it is due to an algorithmic shift or something else beyond your control.

Although the basic principle of operation of all search engines is the same, the minor differences between their relevancy algorithms lead to major changes in the relevancy of results.

What is Search Engine Rank?

When you search any keyword using a search engine, it displays thousands of results found in its database. A page ranking is measured by the position of web pages displayed in the search engine results.

If a search engine is putting your web page on the first position, then your web page rank will be number 1 and it will be assumed as the page with the highest rank. SEO is the process of designing and developing a website to attain a high rank in search engine results.

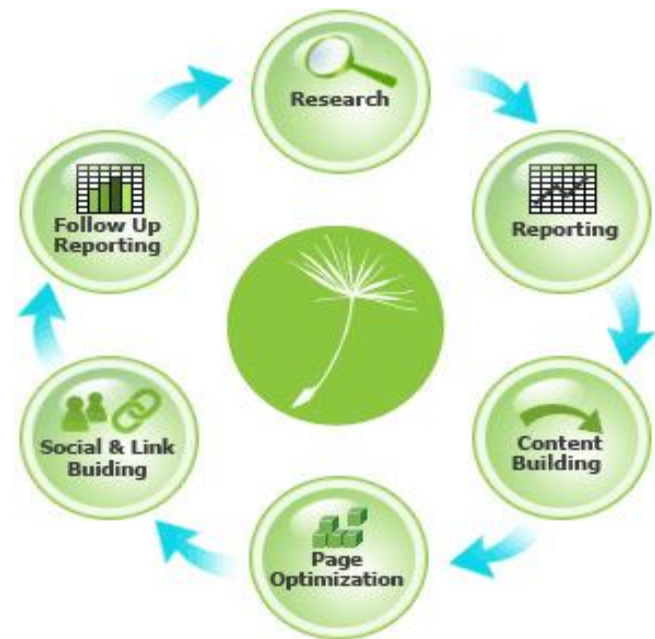
Search Engine Optimization Process & Goals:

Search Engine Optimization Process:

Before beginning a search engine optimization (SEO) project, it is important to understand the process involved in an effective SEO campaign. To that end, we break the process down into the six steps shown below and describe the activities involved in each of these steps.

One word on search engine optimization in general first, though. SEO does not start and finish with these steps and the initial work that we do. In order to have ongoing success, it is important to monitor results and build meaningful content on a continual basis.

1. Keyword Research
2. Reporting & Goal Setting
3. Content Building
4. Page Optimization
5. Social & Link Building
6. Follow Up Reporting & Analysis



1. Research

Keyword Research

Keyword phrase research involves identifying a group of keyword phrases that will be used in optimization. This step is critical and requires a considerable amount of time to find a good set of phrases that offer a balanced combination of two important factors: high usage by searchers and relatively low competition within the search engines.

Determining the most used phrase that contains your targeted keyword(s) is relatively easy. Online tools allow you to enter a particular keyword or words and will return all the ways in which that word(s) was used by searchers in the last month and in what volume. A more effective approach is to find a set of phrases that are heavily used by searchers but somewhat less competitive in terms of the total number of search results.

Competitive Research

Once armed with the target keyword phrases, we do a thorough competitive analysis of the subject site against its 7 – 10 biggest competitors (using both offline and online competitors). We use a series of SEO metrics, including indexed content, Alexa rating, inbound links, domain age, and social media following among others. Through this process, we are able to gauge the client site's starting position against its competition and identify areas requiring priority in the subsequent work.

For example, if we see that relative to the competition, the client's site has 50% less indexed content, then content building would be a priority in the goal setting that happens in the next phase.

2. Reporting & Goal Setting

After establishing your targeted keyword phrases and starting position relative to the site's competitive set, it is important to understand what the subject site's starting position is within the search engines. Doing so ensures that you know the specific areas that need work and provides a baseline against which to gauge the subsequent campaign's success.

Access to site traffic information is very important. These statistics show how searchers are finding and interacting with the subject site, e.g., which search engines, what keyword phrases are being used, bounce rates, most popular content, etc. Understanding the site's traffic level and the source of its referrals can also be a critical tool in making other online marketing decisions.

After developing a complete picture of the site's starting position, goals are set for the SEO plan. These goals are measurable (one big advantage of SEO over other advertising options) and tied to the specific business objectives of the site. In the ongoing progress of reporting and follow up, progress towards the plan's goals are analyzed and reported. Adjustments to the SEO plan can be made according to the findings of these progress reports.

3. Content Building

Content is king in search engine optimization. The search engines love text; high volume, high-quality content related to your business will serve you in a couple of important ways.

First, a site loaded with high-quality content of interest to site users will give them a reason to stay and a reason to come back. After all, the reason they came to your site was to find information. Second, you will receive the added benefit of serving up exactly what the search engines want – content. Search engines will have more information to store about your business and products; that information will translate directly into the ranking they give your site for related keyword phrases. For more information on content development and specific ideas about ways to expand your site's content, read our, [Content is Still King](#).

We often find in the Competitive Research phase that the client's site is falling behind its competitors in the amount of indexed content. In those cases, this phase of the process takes on additional importance.

4. Page Optimization

Following the addition of new, high quality content, we tackle on-page optimization.

- Page Titles
- Text-Based Navigation
- Prominence of Targeted Keyword Phrases
- Site Map
- ALT and META data
- Clean up the Code

5. Social & Link Building

Social Media - In marketing, you fish where the fish are. And, the fish are using social media in increasing numbers. The power of online sharing through social media provides tremendous opportunities for companies willing to commit the time to using it. During this phase of the process, we help clients establish a social media presence and consult with the client on how best to use those social media profiles to share site content and connect with customers and potential customers.

Building In-Bound Links - Each new, quality link to your site increases the likelihood of both the search engines' spiders running across your site as well as searchers looking for services or products like yours. Google views links to your site (as long as they are links from high quality sites) as votes for your site and rewards the site accordingly. You can check your link popularity with a variety of free online tools. In addition, Google's Webmaster Tools provides information regarding the inbound links to your site. We consult with our clients on ways to build their online reach and influence with new, high-quality inbound links.

6. Follow Up Reporting and Analysis

The same reporting done in the initial phase of the campaign is done again at regular intervals, post-optimization. Rankings, site traffic levels, social signals and other key metrics can then be compared to pre-optimization levels, giving measurable results to the SEO campaign. The specific metrics used in an SEO plan will depend on the goals of that site.

Search Engine Optimization Goals:

The ultimate goal of SEO is to increase the site's usability so that you can bring the right people in from the search engines. The purpose of your site should be clearly defined so that you can make sure your site achieves that purpose.

- When search engine visitors see that your site meets their expectations after they find you on a web search, this means your usability is solid. If visitors are disappointed, the site has missed its mark.
- The goal is to follow the best strategies possible for ranking in the search engines, and to do this you need to understand how they want things done. When the search engine crawls your site, the bots look for certain pieces of information. If the bots deem that the information is up to par, you'll be rewarded with better rankings. To insure that you understand what they're looking for, it helps to become familiar with their terms and conditions and Webmaster guidelines.
- Because of this constraint, the battle to get to the top of Google, Yahoo! Bing and the like has become quite a challenge. You need all the help that you can get! Proper SEO that use white hat techniques, or those that fall in line with what the search engines determine are their "best practices" will be a big step in the right direction.

SEO Strategies

- All search engine optimization spawns from diligent keyword research. This involves finding out just how people are coming to your website – what terms they use, what questions they ask, etc. If you know how people are looking for sites like yours, all you have to do is provide them with the answers they seek. This is all about appealing to your audience. You need to think of popular and related keywords that suit your sites content, then you can incorporate them into the content and the marketing techniques that you employ.
- Another part of SEO is link building, and it's always changing. Link building is where you have a link to your site appear on other sites. Instead, your focus should be on building content and let the linking occur naturally.
- Tactics that worked in the past, such as posted links on articles you write on other sites, are now considered spammy and if there are too many of these, your site can get a penalty.
- To fully understand SEO, you should consider getting some sort of consultant to guide you along. There are so many different marketing techniques out there, making it hard to find just the right one for you. You can use someone else's experience to narrow down your options and pinpoint the perfect strategy to help you reach your audience.

On-Page Optimization:

On-Page SEO refers to how well your website's content is presented to search engines. On page optimization involves ensuring whether a particular webpage is structured in a manner so that it gets found by the search engines for given keywords and key phrases. It not only helps in getting good search engine ranking but also increases overall readability of the site. The best part is that not much has changed about the on-page optimization approach. It can still be improved immediately by tweaking incorrect elements on a webpage.

There 5 key elements of a successful on page optimization:

1. Page Copy

A good content copy is really the key to your success. It is an open secret that you need to produce original, unique and high quality content of relevance on a continuous basis to perform well and rank high on search engines. There are few things you need to keep in mind while creating the content copy.

Keyword

Each piece of content should be created keeping the focus primarily on a single keyword or a key phrase. This word or phrase should at least be mentioned for a specific number of times in the whole content and this process is known as keyword density. Each content copy is supposed to maintain a keyword density of 3-5% as par industry standard. Keep a mix of primary and secondary keywords and key phrases in your content but optimize your content around only those keywords and phrases on which you desire to achieve top organic search rankings.

Quality over quantity

You don't essentially need longer articles for better search engine rankings. Web pages with more content intensity and depth have started performing better on search engine ranking since the 2011 Google algorithm update.

2. Title Tags

Arguably title tag is the most important element among the "big three", the other two being page copy and inbound links. Title tag contains the words which appear in the clickable link of the search engine result. Google has limited the page titles up to 70 characters, so it is extremely important that your title tags are keyword-relevant yet concise. For example, when looking up in Google for a query, you might have noticed the chopped off title tags in few results, that's because the title tags for that page are too long. To optimize the title tags primary keywords and



secondary keywords should be mentioned in the same order and the branded keywords at the end, this is a rule to follow except for the home page.

3. Meta Data

Meta data is a well-written description summarizing the content of a particular webpage. It used to be one of the most important factors affecting search engine optimization in pre-Panda era. Meta data completely lost its importance in influencing Search Engine rankings from September 2009 after Google's declaration. It was majorly devalued because of a wide practice of spam techniques. Google crawlers though look at the Meta keywords to get an idea about the topicality of the page content. Meta descriptions have to be created within a limit of 155- 160 characters which essentially should not include anything but alphanumeric characters. It can't influence search engine rankings but do help in getting a high click through rate.

Meta description works more as an ad copy for the organic search results which influences the readers to click on a particular link. It can also intelligently accommodate the primary keywords within it, Google especially highlights them if searched key phrase contains the exact key words.

4. Heading Tags

These are the tags which define the content of your page section wise, just like traditional headings and subheadings. There should be one <h1> tag every page, which should include the most relevant key phrase or key word. This tag can be created up till <h6>, though general practice is to use this till <h3>.

Apart from the primary keyword mentioned in the <h1>, you can include the other important keyphrases in <h2> and <h3> tags to define the other sections of the content. The <h1> tag should be optimized well as search engines still give this some value.

5. Interlinking

Strategically, linking one of your website pages to other similar pages on your website provides context to the search engine and to the readers as well. Some best practices are:

1. Include links in the main content of each page.
2. Paragraph links carry the most weight.
3. Use keyword-rich anchor text in links.
4. Avoid using non-descriptive anchor text (for example, read more, click here, etc).
5. Link to relevant, deep pages.
6. Use breadcrumb navigation on every page
7. Monitor your inbound links through Google Webmaster Tools.
8. Avoid multiple links to the same page from a single page.
9. Less links= More authority per link.

The most common practice of showing "related links" or "tags" at the end of a page or in a sidebar is done to thematically relate one page to another.

Off-Page Optimization:

Off-Page SEO refers to your website’s overall “authority” on the web determined by what other websites say about your site. Off-page optimization is a long-term process and takes the time to improve. Simply put, off page is all about your online reputation. Off page optimization includes acquiring backlinks to your page from the authority sites in your niche. Backlinks are the currency of any off-page strategy. And, unlike on-page optimization, off-page optimization efforts are not apparently visible on the webpage itself; it does the background work for a better search result.



But, after the recent Google Panda and Penguin updates, off-page optimization scenario has drastically changed. Many effective old school practices became obsolete and negatively affected many big websites with high page ranks. Off page optimization effort can be grossly divided into two parts:

1. Acquiring Backlinks

Acquiring backlinks to your pages from higher authority sites is now more important than ever. Search engines treat link popularity as one of the key factors for a better search engine ranking. Though, link popularity is not the top ranking factor anymore, as it can easily be manipulated. Nowadays, search engines focus more on the quality of your content and the level of engagement on the site, over the number of links pointing towards your site. So, the success factor is not building a long list of inbound links but building a trail of quality links for your site. Creating quality content that informs and educates your target audience is more important than ever.

TIP: Getting a number of links from multiple domains relevant in your industry are the key. Buying backlinks from non-related domains won’t earn you goodwill in search engine results and can even penalize you.

2. Leveraging social interaction with your site

Use of social metrics or social engagement as a ranking factor is an increasing trend. Besides backlinks, Google now gives prominence to social signals around your content. Whether it’s the number of people who tweet, ‘Like’, social bookmark, or “vote” via Google +1 for your content, your site’s social footprints has a direct relation with your rankings. SEO has now evolved into social.

3. Promote your content via social channels

Make sure to promote your content through multiple social media channels to obtain some social media traction. You can use multiple platforms to engage your audience, keeping the focus on the ones creating maximum buzz for you. There are various platforms at your exposure:

Facebook

Facebook is the social platform with the maximum number of active users at this moment. You can share your content there but don't use a promotional tone, rather keep it light as people come to Facebook mostly with an intention of socializing in a casual mood. Especially interesting and light topics with pictures get more attention in the form of Likes and Share on Facebook.

Twitter and LinkedIn

You can distribute your content on both these platforms. You can share your content in the form of an article, video, image or even in the form of a simple update. You can join relevant LinkedIn groups and share you articles there too. If you have content of great quality you'll surely be able to create buzz around it.

Google+

It has become very important to share any content you create on Google+, as it is from the search engine provider itself. Recently, there is a lot of noise that Google+ has a indirect correlation with your website's ranking in the search engine. Google also have introduced a new feature called **Google Authorship**. It shows the picture and name of an author with his articles in Google search results. This has come across as a major factor to counter the duplicate content by giving weightage to the authors and the content they have created.

Pinterest

Pinterest is the latest social media sensation. The image sharing website allows you to share pictures from your post to appeal to your target audience. If you have an e-commerce site, Pinterest can help you drive your sales.

Quora

This is a question & answer platform where a lot of people come searching for the solution to different problems and queries. You can post your content or your opinion in any of the relevant discussion thread and readers can up vote or down vote it. This is in fact the future of commenting. The platform can help you establish yourself as a subject matter expert in your field.

Video Sharing

You can create informational videos on topics like make-up tips or different marketing strategies to share them on free video hosting sites like Vimeo, YouTube etc. generating billions of unique viewers every month.

4. Add social book markings

Social bookmarking is one of those old yet useful off-page SEO techniques being used from the pre-Panda and Penguin age. There are many sites like Tumbler, Stumbleupon, Reddit, Delicious, Digg being the most prominent ones, where people come in searching for different content topics. You can add a social bookmarking panel to your website and share all the content you produce.

5. Guest Blogging

Another way of acquiring strong back links in post Panda era is guest blogging. You have to create relevant and high quality content and submit to the blogs with higher page ranks. If your article contains real good stuffs it will get published and to do that you have to observe the content types and categories your target blogs are covering, it's even great if there are some common or related categories both of you cater to.

For a long term and successful search engine optimization strategy, you need to work on your site structure as well as on building your online reputation by getting backlinks and creating the community around your content. And, ultimately, it boils down to creating interesting and informative content people would like to read and share. Content is still the King.

Search Engine Result Process (SERP):

A **Search Engine Results Page**, or SERP, is the web page that appears in a browser window when a keyword query is put into a search field on a search engine page.

- The list of results generally includes a list of links to pages that are ranked from the most popular to the least popular from the number of hits for the particular keyword.
- The list will include not only the links, but also a short description of each page, and of course, the titles of the webpage. The term “search engine results page” may refer to a single page of links returned by a query or the entire set of links returned.
- Many search engine results pages have different types of listings. These types of SERPs are found most commonly in larger search engines, such as Google.com and Yahoo!.

They include results such as:

- Contextual
 - Algorithmic
 - Sponsored listings
 - Images
 - Maps
 - Organic search listings
 - Definitions
 - Suggested search query refinements
- ✓ Major search engines can also offer **specific search engine results pages** that pertain to specific the specific types of listings. Search engine results pages can also be the results page for an image search, a map search, a news search, a blog search, or many of the other options major search engines offer.

The main elements of SERP are:

1. Direct search results, consisting of links to sites. This is the natural issuance of search engines, where sites are struggling for the highest positions. The search results page contains, by default, 10 links, but the number can be changed in the search settings;
2. Blocks with contextual advertising;
3. Small fields before search results. They can contain typing errors, a quick response to a user request, a calculator, and so on;

4. Pictures are issued in response to a particular search query;
5. Related queries – the search query is refined. The user is offered word forms or similar requests;
6. Elements of management – this includes links to go to the site, prompts when entering a user request.

A search engine results page (SERP) is the list of results that a search engine returns in response to a specific word or phrase query. Each listing includes the linked Web page title, the linked page URL (Uniform Resource Locator), a brief description of the page content and, in some cases, links to points of interest within the website.

There are three main types of results on a SERP:

1. Pages that the search engine spider has crawled and indexed;
2. pages that have been manually added to the search engine's directory;
3. and pages that appear as a result of paid inclusion.

The highest-ranking hits generally link to the most useful information; links grow less relevant as they move farther down the list.

Search Engine Results Pages: What They Are and How They Work

Search engine results pages are web pages served to users when they search for something online using a search engine, such as Google. The user enters their search query (often using specific terms and phrases known as keywords), upon which the search engine presents them with a SERP.

Every SERP is unique, even for search queries performed on the same search engine using the same keywords or search queries. This is because virtually all search engines customize the experience for their users by presenting results based on a wide range of factors beyond their search terms, such as the user's physical location, browsing history, and social settings. Two SERPs may appear identical, and contain many of the same results, but will often feature subtle differences.

The appearance of search engine results pages is constantly in flux due to experiments conducted by Google, Bing, and other search engine providers to offer their users a more intuitive, responsive experience. This, combined with emerging and rapidly developing technologies in the search space, mean that the SERPs of today differ greatly in appearance from their older predecessors.

SERPs typically contain two types of content – “organic” results and paid results.

1. ‘Organic’ Results

Organic results are listings of web pages that appear as a result of the search engine's algorithm. Search engine optimization professionals, commonly known as SEOs, specialize in optimizing web content and websites to rank more highly in organic search results.

In the following figure, the highlighted results are all organic results:

The image shows a Google search for "Abraham Lincoln". The search bar at the top contains the text "abraham lincoln" and a magnifying glass icon. Below the search bar, there are navigation tabs for "Web", "Images", "News", "Books", "Videos", "More", and "Search tools". The search results are displayed below, starting with "About 68,900,000 results (0.40 seconds)".

The organic search results on the left include:

- Abraham Lincoln - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia**: A link to the Wikipedia page for Abraham Lincoln, with a snippet of text: "Abraham Lincoln was born February 12, 1809, the second child of Thomas and Nancy Hanks Lincoln, in a one-room log cabin on the Sinking Spring Farm in ... Andrew Johnson - Assassination of Abraham - Sexuality - Robert Todd Lincoln".
- Abraham Lincoln on Twitter**: A link to a Twitter search for "Abraham Lincoln". Below this, there are two tweets:
 - From "History Pictures (@CombinedHistory)": "Top hat worn by Abraham Lincoln the night he was shot." (3 hours ago)
 - From "Michael Beschloss (@BeschlossDC)": "Abraham Lincoln, President-elect, 155 years ago next week: #LOC" (1 day ago)
- Abraham Lincoln | whitehouse.gov**: A link to the White House website, with a snippet: "Abraham Lincoln became the United States' 16th President in 1861, issuing the Emancipation Proclamation that declared forever free those slaves within the ...".
- Abraham Lincoln - Biography.com**: A link to the Biography.com page for Abraham Lincoln, with a snippet: "Abraham Lincoln was the 16th president of the United States. Abraham Lincoln -".

On the right side of the search results, there is a **Knowledge Graph** (also called the Knowledge Box) for Abraham Lincoln. It features a grid of images of Lincoln, including a large portrait and several smaller ones. Below the images, the text reads: "Abraham Lincoln", "16th U.S. President", and a brief biographical summary: "Abraham Lincoln / ˈɛbrəhæm ˈlɪŋkən/ was the 16th President of the United States, serving from March 1861 until his assassination in April 1865. Wikipedia". Further details include: "Born: February 12, 1809, Hodgenville, KY", "Height: 6' 4\"", "Assassinated: April 15, 1865, Washington, D.C.", "Party: National Union Party", and "Children: William Wallace Lincoln, Robert Todd Lincoln, Edward Baker Lincoln, Tad Lincoln".

Organic results on the SERP

The box on the right side of this SERP is known as the Knowledge Graph (also sometimes called the Knowledge Box). This is a feature that Google introduced in 2012 that pulls data to commonly asked questions from sources across the web to provide concise answers to questions in one central location on the SERP. In this case, you can see a wide range of information about Abraham Lincoln, such as the date and place of his birth, his height, the date on which he was assassinated, his political affiliation, and the names of his children – many of which facts have their own links to the relevant pages.

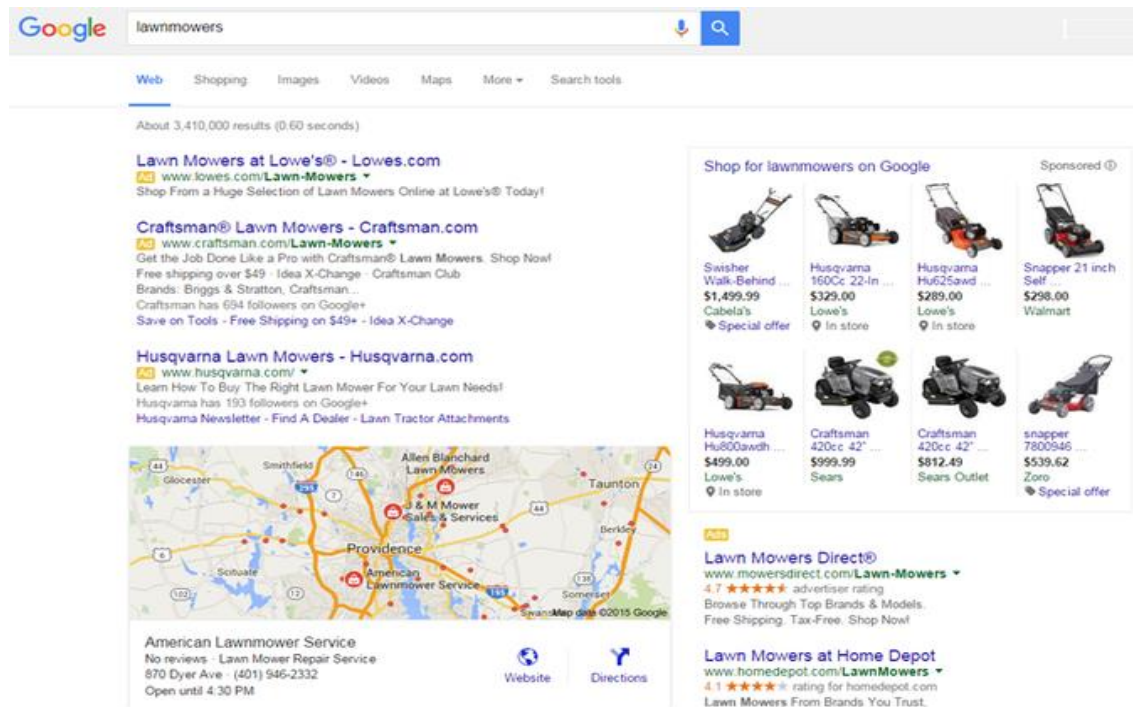
Some SERPs will feature significantly more organic results than others, such as the example above. This is due to the differing intent of various searches. There are three primary types of Internet search: Informational, Navigational and Transactional.

- **Informational searches** are those in which the user hopes to find information on a given topic, such as Abraham Lincoln.
- **Navigational queries** are those in which the user hopes to locate a specific website through their search. This may be the case for individuals searching for a specific website, trying to locate a website whose URL they can no longer remember, or another type of navigational objective.
- **Transactional searches** have high commercial intent, and search queries leading to transactional SERPs may include keywords such as “buy” and other terms that suggest a strong desire to make a purchase.

2. Paid Results

In contrast to organic results, paid results are those that have been paid to be displayed by an advertiser. In the past, paid results were almost exclusively limited to small, text-based ads that were typically displayed above and to the right of the organic results. Today, however, paid

results can take a wide range of forms, and there are dozens of advertising formats that cater to the needs of advertisers.



Some paid results on your SERP:

In the example above (a SERP for the search query “lawnmowers”), all of the results on the SERP – with the exception of the map and business listing beneath it – are paid results. The three large text-based ads at the top of the SERP are typical PPC ads.

Of those three ads, the lower two (for Craftsman.com and Husqvarna.com) both feature ad extensions allowing prospective customers to navigate to specific pages on their websites directly from the ads.

The image-based ads on the right of the page are Shopping ads, a feature offered on the Google AdWords platform that allows ecommerce retailers’ product information to be displayed alongside other results on the SERP. Shopping ads can contain a wide range of information, such as product availability, user reviews, special offers, and more.

There are two additional PPC ads directly beneath the **Shopping ads** that also feature the user review ad extensions, indicated by the star ratings directly beneath the destination URL.

The map and business listing are the only results on this SERP that are not explicitly paid results. This map is shown based on a user’s location, and feature listings for local businesses that have set up their free Google My Business listing.

Ranking Signals and Search Algorithms

Organic results are listings that have been indexed by the search engine based on a number of factors, also known as “ranking signals.”

For example, the search algorithm used by Google features hundreds of ranking factors, and while nobody outside of Google knows precisely what they are, some are thought to be more important than others. In the past, the link profile of a site – the number of external links that link to a specific website or web page from other websites – was an important ranking signal. It still

is to some extent (which is why Wikipedia ranks so prominently in organic results for so many queries), though search advances at such a rapid pace that ranking signals that were once crucial to the search algorithm may be less important today, a source of constant frustration to SEOs.

SEO Tools:

1. Google Page Speed Insights

Check the speed and usability of your site on multiple devices

Enter a URL, and this tool will test the loading time and performance for desktop and for mobile, plus identify opportunities to improve (and pat you on the back for what you're doing well). The mobile results also come with a user experience score, grading areas like tap targets and font sizes.

2. Moz Local Listing Score

See how your local business looks online

Moz crunches data from more than 15 different sources—including Google, Foursquare, and Facebook—to score your brick-and-mortar business on how it looks online. Results come complete with actionable fixes for inconsistent or incomplete listings.

3. Keywordtool.io

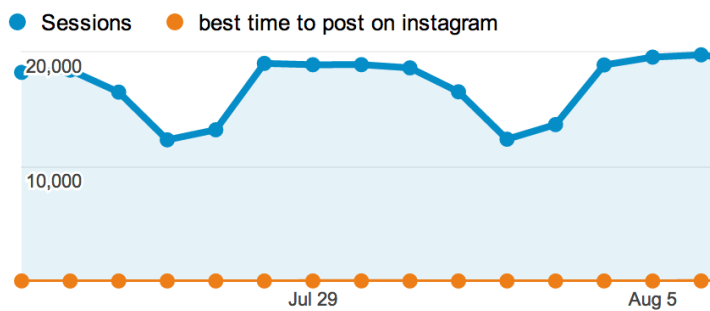
700+ keyword ideas based on a single keyword

Enter a keyword, and the Keyword Tool provides a huge handful of long-tail keyword opportunities, organized alphabetically.

4. Google Analytics

Complete web stats and search insights

In addition to tracking pretty much every bit of traffic you could imagine on your website, Analytics also surfaces many keyword insights as to which terms people use to land on your pages.



twitter tips	10	🔗
twitter tips		
twitter tips and tricks		
twitter tips for business		
twitter tips 2014		
twitter tips and tricks 2014		
twitter tips for nonprofits		
twitter tips for authors		
twitter tips for journalists		
twitter tips for small business		
twitter tips for newbies		

5. Google Webmaster Tools + Bing Webmaster Tools

Constant website analysis, alerts, and error reports

These webmaster tools help give you a taste of what the two top search engines think of your site. It's helpful to see any bugs, alerts, and indexing issues.

Each of these two tools requires a bit of installation on your site. If you've got a WordPress website, you can add the webmaster code automatically through a plugin like Jetpack or Yoast.

6. Open Site Explorer

Comprehensive link analysis

The free version of Open Site Explorer gives you a quick look a full range of link analysis, including a look at the most impactful links coming your way and your most linked-to pages.

7. Google Keyword Planner

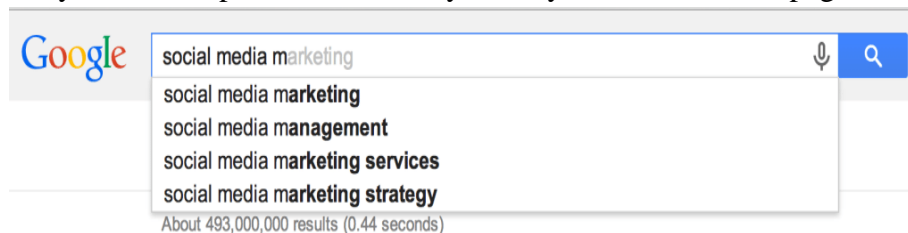
Know what people search for

Enter a keyword or group of keywords into the tool, and Google will return all sorts of helpful stats to guide your keyword strategy: monthly search volume, competition, and even suggested terms you might not have considered.

8. Google.com in an Incognito Window

Discover auto-fill opportunities

Searching Google.com in an incognito window will bring up that all-familiar list of autofill options, many of which can help guide your keyword research. The incognito ensures that any customized search data Google stores when you're signed in gets left out. Incognito may also be helpful to see where you truly rank on a results page for a certain term.



9. Google Trends

Changes in search volume for key terms

A quick browse or search through Google Trends can show you the hockey-stick rise of potential terms and SEO opportunities for your content.

10. QuickSprout Website Analyzer

Full analysis of your website

The QuickSprout tool does a comprehensive look at just about everything: SEO optimization, speed, tags, keywords, social, links, and even competitor comparisons.

Current Status

Crawl Errors



Site Errors

DNS



Server connectivity



Robots.txt fetch



URL Errors

1 Server error
1 Access denied
67 Not found

11. Schema Creator

Uber-customize the way your search results appear

Create custom code so that your reviews, events, organizations, and people are displayed the way you want on search pages. Once you've created your schema code, copy and paste to your website, or try [the free WordPress plugin](#) for an even easier implementation.

Here's an example of schema in action:

[Dragon Age: Origins for PC - Dragon Age: Origins PC Game - Dragon ...](#)

★★★★★ Review by GameSpot - Nov 3, 2009

Wii, **Dragon Age**, and Tiger Woods in this GameSpot news update for ... I had a great hope for **Dragon Age** Origins, but, it didn't turn out quite what I think ...

www.gamespot.com/pc/.../dragonage/index.html - 21 hours ago - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

12. SimilarWeb

View site stats for any domain

Use this tool to compare traffic between two websites, a helpful tool for competitor research.

13. SERPs Rank Checker

See where your site ranks for certain terms

You can run Rank Checker one of two ways: Input your keyword and your website and see where you land, or leave the website field blank to view the top-to-bottom list of results for a keyword.

14. XML Sitemaps

Build a sitemap

Simply enter your site's URL and some optional parameters, and XML Sitemaps will create a sitemap that you can upload to Google Webmaster Tools.

15. Browseo

See your website the way a search engine sees it

Enter your site, and this tool will strip out everything but the guts, revealing your website the way search spiders see it. This particular view can be helpful to see the hierarchy you've given particular elements (maybe without realizing it!).

16. SEO Site Checkup

Audit and score for your website

Site Checkup runs through a fast audit of your site, checking for proper tags and surfacing any errors that might come up.

17. Searchmetrics Website Analyzer

Performance dashboard for search and social rankings

The free version of the Searchmetrics report shows you a taste of how your website ranks in search and social, along with a preview of top terms.

18. Find Broken Links

Discover errors on your site

The link report from Ninja Internet Marketers combs through your whole site and highlights a number of link insights, including the internal and external links that need fixing.

19. Ahrefs' Site Explorer and Backlink Checker

Complete overview of your website, pages, and links

A free (and substantial) sampling of what ahrefs offers, the dashboards for referring pages and inbound links are rich and informative.

20. Copyscape

Check for duplicate content

Enter a URL for a blogpost or website, and Copyscape can tell you where else that content exists online. You might find results that you'll need to follow-up with to help get your SEO in order.

21. Moz toolbar

I've shied away from referencing any toolbars thus far, but the Moz toolbar is just too good to pass up. Once installed, the Moz toolbar can show you SEO insights from within Google search results pages and at any particular website.

22. Robots.txt Generator

Robots.txt files let the web robots know what to do with a website's pages. When a page is disallowed in robots.txt, that's instructions telling the robots to completely skip over those web pages. There are some exceptions in which case a robots.txt might be ignored, most notably malware robots that are looking for security issues.

23. Structured Data Testing Tool

Structured data helps to provide context to the information on your page. This tool from Google uses live data to validate the structured data for any web page, or you can copy/paste code to test it.

24. Microsoft Free SEO Toolkit

The Microsoft SEO Toolkit combines quite a few different tools into one. Used together, it can analyze your site and provide recommendations on how to make your site's content more SEO-friendly, including tweaks to your sitemap and robots.txt. Sorry to all of the Apple folks, this one seems to be Windows-only!
