

**DIGITAL
MARKETING
PLAN
FOR A NEW
BUSINESS**

Digital Marketing Plan for a New Business

While the marketing needs of each individual company vary, there are core digital marketing tasks that are more universal. We've outlined a basic digital marketing plan to assist start-up businesses or any business looking to include digital marketing as a part of a larger marketing plan.

When developing a digital marketing plan, three considerations should be made:

- The components of your campaign are low-risk, which includes a low entry price-tag and a high chance of success. Examples include building a website and launching an SEO and/or PPC campaign.
- The components of your campaign are scalar (they can grow as you grow).
- The components of your campaign can easily be terminated, ensuring that you are not tied-up in a long-term contract for a solution that is not working.
- The components of your campaign can be tracked, allowing you to measure your return on investment (ROI).

Put simply, your digital marketing plan should be affordable, have the ability to grow with you, allow for performance tracking and should be able to be executed easily. **Only one in three new businesses that are launched are successful after two years**, and your marketing plan is one of the most critical elements to being that one-in-three.

A Website that Works for your Business

First, you need a website. If you already have a website, it may need to be redesigned to ensure that it is mobile friendly, resourceful and that it looks as good as your competitor's websites. We recommend that you shop around for designers. Look at their portfolio, speak with their existing clients and work out the best pricing that you can. Pricing varies greatly between website design firms and a higher price tag does not always mean a better website. If your website is typical without the need for a lot of custom back-end programming, a 20 page website should cost less than \$3k, and the design firm should be reputable. However if there is more customization or design elements required that price can quickly go up. This is a critical component of any digital market plan, and something that you cannot allow to fail.

SEO for Your Growing Business

Once you pick your design firm, it is time to find an SEO company. Most people wait until after their website design is completed before finding an SEO firm, which is a mistake. Your SEO company will make sure that the new website that you are investing in will be SEO friendly. There are many ways to design a website that will suffer on Google, wasting your precious time and money. Be wary of website design firms that claim they know SEO; you'll get more out of an SEO firm that puts SEO on the top of their list of services they provide.

When choosing your SEO firm, be very thorough. Understand that most SEO organizations are either (1) malicious or (2) incompetent. Only about one in ten will truly be good at SEO. More so than finding a good design company, you need to be very careful when hunting for an SEO firm. Why find that new business owners will spend a lot on design and then look to get SEO and content for as little money as possible. Find search ranking examples, speak with their clients, talk with the owner of the SEO firm and get as technical as you can. You don't want to buy into a good sales pitch, you want to hire competency. The reward for your diligence will pay off in big ways. SEO is a key element to any digital marketing plan, and you must get this one right. The upside of SEO is that the overall ROI is likely to be the best out of all of the components of your digital marketing plan. The downside is that if you have a new website, and you are a new business, it could take a few months for it to start kicking-in. SEO is a long term strategy and there are not shortcuts in the process. And if implemented improperly the results can be quite costly to your long term search rankings.

Paid Search

Next, you will want to look at setting up a PPC (Google Adwords) campaign, preferably with Google AdWords. Google AdWords has the ability to generate significant volumes of business for you, and it also has the ability to drain your bank account dry. We recommend that you hire a professional, as running a well-tuned AdWords campaign can be remarkably complicated. PPC will do two things for you: (1) drive instant business and (2) allow for managed growth. While SEO can take time to get started, PPC will be quick. SEO and PPC are your core digital marketing plan components. If you have these working well for you, then your business has a good shot of making it. Master these solutions before embarking on other digital marketing tasks.

Higher Risk Digital Marketing Tasks

Once search is mastered (organic and PPC), you may want to explore other digital marketing ideas. These include Social Media, ReTargeting, Banner Advertising (Display ads) and Blogging. These are all hot topics and each has the potential to be profitable.

- Blogging/Content Marketing – Blogs are helpful in growing the footprint of your website. The more content that you have, the more there is out there to be found. It also can help to build your online reputation and to establish you as a thought-leader. The quality of your content is important, so make your blogs count. If the business owner or key employees can write their own content, then it will resonate better to the audience than outsourcing the blog. If you do outsource your blogs, make sure that the company you hire can produce quality, meaningful content that provides value for your website visitors.
- Social Media – Few companies actually have profitable social media campaigns. Yes, we know about all the buzz with social media. In certain circumstances, social media can be very effective, but for most it won't. Consider this: You hear water starting to gush in your basement and upon investigation you see that a pipe has burst. This is not the time that you start to follow a plumber on Twitter. What you do is grab your phone and search Google to find a plumber. The company you just found was delivered through either SEO or PPC, and not Twitter or Facebook. However, Social Media does have its upside. It helps your customers communicate with you. Happy clients can pass your information on to others (referrals) and it builds your overall online image. We recommend that you either (1) hire a social media firm for a low-end campaign or (2) tackle social media in-house, but be sure that you remain active (two posts per month minimum).
- ReTargeting – A good solution for a complex sales cycle. It also works better for companies with a strong-brand, which is not the case for small businesses or new

businesses. PPC generally produces a better ROI, so stick with PPC and use ReTargeting to expand beyond what PPC can do for you.

- Display Advertising – CPM based banner ads historically perform very poorly. It is unlikely that you'll maintain a profitable campaign. Big companies with big brand names can do better, but this is not a good place to start with a small or new business. If you do want to tackle display advertising, we recommend that you use Google AdWords, where you can pay on a cost-per-click performance basis, rather than on a CPM basis. Also be sure that you can track the performance of your campaign and follow the ROI of the different display networks that you engage in.

The solutions outlined above represent the core components of a digital marketing plan. There are certainly other things out there, but we recommend that you focus-in on the proven technologies before experimenting. Eventually, you'll come to master these components, and you'll have a sense of what will and will not work.

Banyan Creative specializes in small business marketing for businesses getting off the ground. Contact us today to get started.

www.banyancreativenc.com

