

E-MARKETING EXCELLENCE: PLANNING AND OPTIMIZING DIGITAL MARKETING

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the concept of E-marketing excellence. Digital Marketing is the talk of the town. Consumers have shifted online with the advent of new technology. Now what marketers need to do is analyze the consumers behavior and bring in the best of technology to gain edge in this fast paced digital world. The paper tells us how digital marketing initiatives should be planned and optimized in order to succeed.

Keywords — Digital marketing, AIDA model, Consumer engagement.

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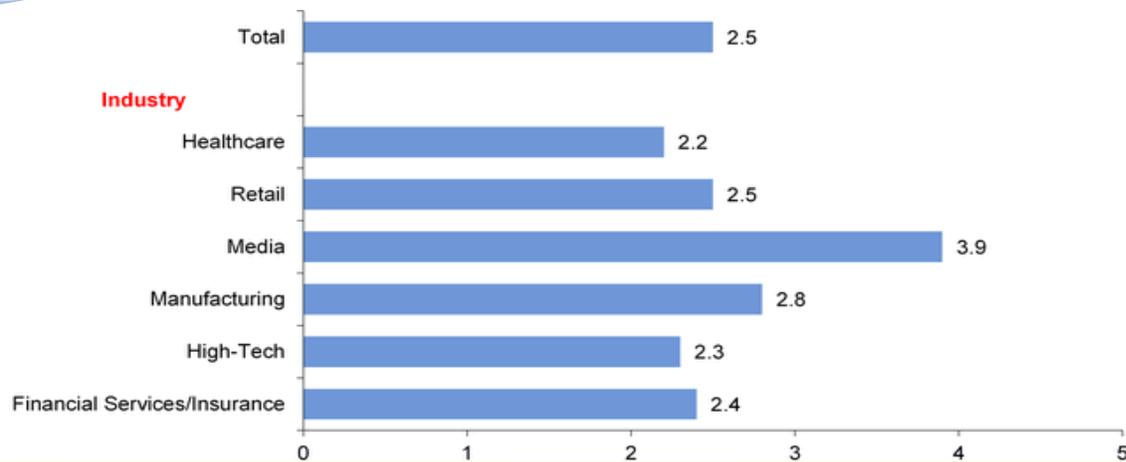
INTRODUCTION

The advent of the digital age has transformed marketing. Since consumers have shifted online, marketers have greater opportunities and along with it advertising activity and media follow. There is diversity in digital channel mediums and marketers need to understand and analyze how consumer loyalty can be maintained with the growing digital marketing initiatives.[1]

Digital marketing is a set of techniques, enabled by technology, which allows marketing to improve its processes to engage in a dynamic conversation with people who are influencers and buyers and ultimately target, acquire and retain customers.[2] It includes the ability to interactively communicate with customers through electronic channels, such as the Web, email, smart devices such as phones and tablets, and mobile applications. The four most recognized techniques of digital marketing are social, mobile, analytics and e-commerce.[8]

Simply, digital marketing helps marketers leverage digital channels to listen to what consumers say and respond. However, with the advent of technology the digital marketing environment has grown and has become more complex. Marketing campaigns now cover multiple markets , languages , media channels, and technology platforms. Marketers face dual challenges of measuring efficiency and effective consumer engagement.

According to U.S. digital Marketing Spending Survey, 2013, digital marketing budgets total 2.5% of revenue and will increase 9% this year. [8] Now what is important is getting the spending right. Marketers should effectively build digital assets, listen to the consumers, understand target market segments and engage them in various digital channels. They should bring the best of technology to gain edge in today's fast paced digital marketplace.



Digital Marketing Budget as Percentage of Company Revenue

Picture Source: Key findings from U.S. Digital Market Spending Survey, 2013
<http://www.gartner.com/technology/research/digital-marketing/digital-marketing-spending-report.jsp>

Marketing is all about reaching out to customers. Hence, marketers in order to survive in this competitive world must achieve goals faster and in the cheapest way possible. Firstly, marketers must develop effective market campaigns by interacting with external agencies, getting approvals from legal, finance, IT, and other agencies and working a complete checklist of campaign requirements. They must understand that digital marketing solutions address four primary requirements to drive efficiency in a digital marketing campaign: Configurability, Extensibility, personalization and contextualization, verticalization.[9]

- **Configurability** – To meet the requirements of varying geographies, processes, and products.
- **Extensibility** – To expand existing digital tools
- **Personalization and Contextualization** – To deliver smart user experiences for internal/external stakeholders.
- **Verticalization** – To enable tailored workflows to meet specific needs of different industries.

DIGITAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN

It is important to note that global enterprises host several websites which share web services. To drive efficiency and to minimize the need to develop the same code over and over again, companies must develop reusable web services.[9] By doing so marketers can create digital

property instantly by accessing the inventory and choosing the required services, bringing in speed and standardization.

Marketers must look at the corporate website and online advertising activities on a regular basis and must ensure that they are updated regularly and never run on autopilot mode. Research studies project that by 2015, digital marketing will influence as much as 80% of discretionary consumer spending. So it is necessary for the marketers to significantly invest time and create content for achieving digital marketing activities success. A consumer-focused strategy in the digital space will directly increase engagement levels, leading to higher response and conversion rates. Greater consumer engagement effectiveness can be enhanced by listening to the consumers, planning , analyzing the segments and engaging the consumers across multiple digital channels.[10]

LISTEN

There has been a paradigm shift in the way brands and customers interact. Companies are investing in digital solutions to track the voice of the consumer in the digital world. These listening tools mine consumer response on digital campaigns, including internet, emails, mobile phones, social media. However, the data generated through such tools tends to reside in silos and often present only fragmented and incomplete views of the consumer.[9] It is important to note that technological advancements have compounded this challenge in the form of multi-platform activity of the digital consumer, who converses, shops, and offers opinions across several digital channels. Tracking the consumers interests throws up huge volume of data that is hard to measure and integrate. With the advent of new technologies marketers can insert Tags based on desired parameters during the build phase. These can be used to listen to consumers across different channels. The gathered data is pushed into a single repository, giving marketers a 360 degree digital view of the consumer.

ANALYSING THE MARKET SEGMENT

Traditionally marketers approach to reach the target audience was “ one message for all audience” but with the advent of digital channels, they now have the potential to unleash creativity and tailor

the message to match consumer maturity in the buying lifecycle. Consumers maturity can be categorized based on the stage in the buying cycle: AIDA Model.[9]

Attention – Consumer is Aware of the brand.

Interest – Consumers show interest in the campaign/brand

Desire – Consumer moves to a deeper level of engagement by blogging and asking questions.

Action – Consumer shows intent and wants something based on the campaign from the organization or brand.

Another dimension is Loyalty – Consumer demonstrates commitment by purchasing the product and continues to be involved with the positive feedback about the brand, evolving into a marketing channel for the brand.

Marketers must understand that relationships are built over time through a series of customer engagements and experiences. If these experiences are positive, the relationship grows stronger. To effectively engage with customers across channels and over time, brands must carefully plan how to advance a customer through each stage of his or her life cycle. It is crucial that marketers customize messages for each stage to move the consumer to the next level. This enables the marketers to understand the consumer's stage in the buying lifecycle and messages accordingly.

CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT

Marketers face many challenges in day to day life. A key challenge that they face is to sustain the consistency of messaging across various channels. As consumers are scattered across different channels, it is critical that they are not confused by varied messages from the same brand. In this situation there may be chances of brand identity crisis.

Therefore by engaging the consumers across multiple digital channels marketers communicate with consumers homogeneously through integrated marketing tools which facilitate target campaigns and effective consumer engagement.

MEASURING SUCCESS

Optimizing digital marketing platform is very crucial as no field is changing more rapidly or continuously than digital marketing. Marketers measure the success of digital marketing initiatives by monitoring the dimensions they choose to monitor. Agency performance, brand performance across markets and channels, active programs and their status, consumer reactions to campaigns and their engagement level with the brand is measured. Marketers must calculate Return on Investment for digital marketing investments. ROI must be calculated based on all marketing efforts, not on a channel-by-channel basis.

The tools and options available for tagging, tracking and analyzing data are improving almost as quickly as the field itself is changing, making it possible to accurately determine ROI for digital marketing investments. This high degree of accountability is the reason for the continued robust growth in digital marketing – perhaps the most important trend of all. The base remains same, targeting customers with relevant content is critical to achieving ROI; clean, accurate data yields better results; identity resolution is essential; and delivering the right message to the right person at the right time is the key to success.

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