

By: Ian Western, Ty Downing and Morgan Jones



Introduction

Digital marketing is a dynamic industry that evolves at a break-neck pace. Businesses have two options: keep up with relevant trends, or lose out on digitally generated revenue. Sounds intimidating, right? Don't worry—we've got your back. We at [SayItSocial](#) are obsessed with staying atop digital marketing trends. Not only is it fascinating to learn about how technological evolutions influence consumer psychology and purchase behavior, but our research keeps us (and our clients) ahead of the curve. We are constantly on the lookout for opportunities to implement new technologies and insights into our ongoing marketing campaigns. That's why we've prepared this comprehensive guide to digital marketing for 2015. We hope you enjoy it, and strongly encourage you to reach out to us with feedback, questions, and corrections!

Be Easy,



Ian Western

Editor



About the Authors

Ian Western



Digital Analyst and Account Executive

Ian joins SayItSocial with an arsenal of brand, sports and digital marketing experience. He feverishly devours all kinds of media - digital or otherwise - which adds to his unique perspective on millennial marketing. When unplugging, Ian can be found blasting house music while riding atop some type of bike, board or boat.

Ty Downing



CEO

Ty has a long history in Internet marketing, with a strong background in search engine optimization, and interactive marketing. With a combined 20 years of teaching, he has spoken and trained at national & international events on the topic of digital business, and enjoys chillaxin in his snuggie.

Morgan Jones



Digital Account Executive

Morgan is a graduate from the University of North Carolina Wilmington with a BA in Communication Studies and a minor in journalism. She brings to the table a vivacious spirit and unique creative energy that she uses in all things SayItSocial. When she isn't being an awesome Digital Account Executive, you can find her running the Wrightsville Beach loop with her dog Grizzly, out on the beach, or on her front porch reading her nook.



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Content Marketing For 2015

Surprise, surprise - content will still be king in 2015. In order to stay relevant and generate sustained growth through promotional awareness, brands must develop and execute a [custom tailored content marketing strategy](#) that attracts, engages, and retains their customers. Below are some key considerations for your 2015 content marketing strategy:

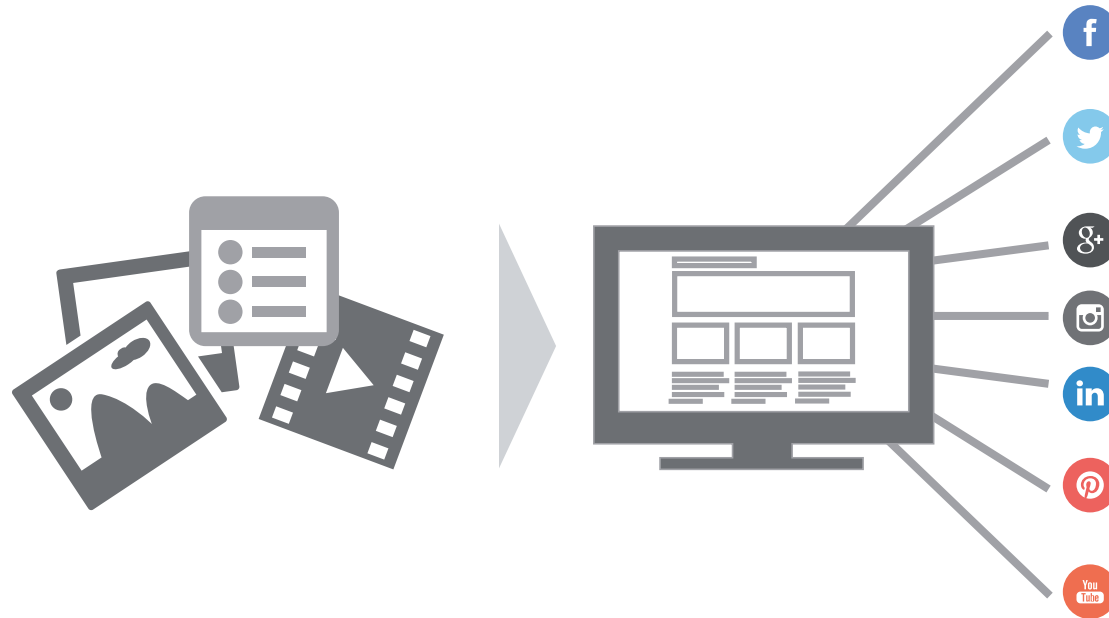
- **Define your Target Audience:** Keep a target market persona visible within your workspace. Detail your target market's demographics, psychographics, interests, media consumption habits, social behaviors, and motivation for purchasing your product/service. Your target audience profile should drive your content marketing strategy.
- **Define your Content Marketing Objectives:** Define what business objectives your content marketing strategy aims to address. Create a [content marketing mission statement](#) that describes your audience, what types of content will be delivered to your audience, and why this content is valuable.
- **Optimize Distribution Methodology:** Decide the optimal channels for your business to publish and broadcast its content – your decision should depend on your target audience's media consumption habits and web/social/email analytics that reveal which channels effectively captivate your audience's attention.
- **Establish Company Wide Content Creation and Monitoring Strategy:** [Sound Familiar?](#) Delegate management responsibility for your companies' media channels (web, social, email, mobile, etc.). Define a focus for blogging and create standards for reaching, writing, and editing processes. Here are some awesome [Tips on Growing In-House Content from BrightEdge!](#)

Content will still be king!

Content Marketing For 2015 (cont'd)

- **Create and Publish Valuable and Engaging Content:** Always ask yourself “Who will engage with and share this content and why?” when creating new branded assets. Be able to articulate the consumer and business values for each piece of content you set out to produce – *don't just post for the sake of posting*. Give your brand some authenticity by publishing useful and entertaining content that showcases your passion and expertise in your industry!
- **Measure Your Success, Analyze, and Adjust:** Generate and analyze regular analytics reports to evaluate the success of your content marketing strategies, and make adjustments when necessary. (See: “Measuring Your Digital Marketing Efforts” on Page 32)

Sources: MarketingProfs, Content Marketing Institute and Mashable



Visual Storytelling

The power of using visual assets to market your brand is undeniable. Consumers expect high quality visual entertainment every time they use a connected device. Some of our favorite stats on the power of visuals are below:

- # 90% of the information sent to the brain is visual, and visuals are processed 60,000x faster than text
- # One minute of video communicates the equivalent of roughly 1.8 million words
- # Videos are shared 12x more than links and text combined across all social networks
- # Photos are shared 2x more than text updates
- # Instagram now boasts a 300 million active user base and 70 million photos uploaded per day
- # On average, Pinterest users follow more brands than Facebook or Twitter users



BRAND EVALUATION



CONTENT CREATION



DELIVERY METHOD



CONSUMER ATTENTION

Visual Storytelling (cont'd)

Despite these numbers, countless businesses neglect the visual storytelling arm of their marketing mix. Below are some tips to help you along your businesses visual storytelling journey:

- **Determine desired impact of visual content.** Your visual story needs to be relevant to both your target audience and business objectives. Be sure to answer the questions “Why will my audience care about my brand’s visual content? What specific value will my visual content provide my followers and potential customers?” Remember that your visual content should be direct, unique, interesting, and mobile friendly!
- **Optimize Processes of Creating and Publishing Professional Quality Visual Content.** Pick and manage a team (in-house or an agency of professionals responsible for creating, publishing, and promoting your brands visual story. Remember to use proper image formatting when posting to multiple channels!
- **Keep Videos Short on Facebook.** Videos that are organically uploaded to Facebook typically generate a better reach than links to videos on external platforms like Youtube or Vimeo. That being said, Facebook users typically desire to view “[snackable](#)” entertainment when scrolling through their feeds, so keep videos on Facebook short. We recommend posting videos that are 1 minute or less to Facebook, and uploading longer videos to Youtube – a channel that users browse with the goal and mindset of watching videos.

Sources: 60SecondMarketer, Instagram Blog, Convince&Convert, and JeffBullas.com

Visual Storytelling (cont'd)

A Note on Hiring a Content Marketing Agency

A lot of businesses don't have internal resources for creating high quality content necessary for competitive digital marketing. In this case, partnering with a creative agency may be cost effective. [Zerys](#) has prepared an [extensive guide](#) to help you define your content creation goals and agency selection criteria. If it's within your budget to hire experts who can produce high-quality content, your business could stand to gain some return on its content marketing investments by partnering with a creative agency. You can also use the [Content Marketing Association's Service Advance](#) free of charge to help you on your quest of choosing a partner!

Comparison of Most Effective B2C Content Marketers with Least Effective B2C Content Marketers

	MOST EFFECTIVE	OVERALL/AVERAGE	LEAST EFFECTIVE
Has a documented content strategy	60%	39%	12%
Has someone who oversees content marketing strategy	85%	67%	50%
Average number of tactics used	14	12	9
Average number of social media platforms used	7	6	5
Percent of marketing budget spent on content marketing	32%	24%	10%
Challenged with lack of budget	36%	48%	67%
Challenge with lack of knowledge and training	14%	33%	66%

* "Most Effective" = Respondents who rated their organization's use of content marketing as 4 or 5 in terms of effectiveness (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being "Very Effective")

** "Least Effective" = Respondents who rated their organization's use of content marketing as 1 or 2 in terms of effectiveness (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "Not At All Effective")

2014 B2C Content Marketing Trends-North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Source: Content Marketing Institute

Visual Storytelling (cont'd)

In House VS Outsourced Content Creation Comparison

Comparison Overview

Options	Assigned To	Time	Cost	When to Use	Advantages	Things to Consider
In-House	Yourself	⌚ ⌚ ⌚ ⌚ ⌚	💰 💰 💰	<p>You have the time and ability to write high quality content.</p> <p>You have the specialized knowledge required for the topic.</p> <p>You have access to good editors for polishing</p>	<p>Your content will be more authoritative</p> <p>You can build a connection with your audience</p>	<p>The people with the most expertise are typically the people with the least amount of time to spend on content.</p> <p>If you do write it yourself, it's helpful to hire an editor.</p>
In-House	Team Member	⌚ ⌚ ⌚ ⌚	💰 💰 💰	<p>Team members have the time, talent and knowledge to handle the topic.</p> <p>You have access to good editors for polishing.</p>	<p>Still create content that is authoritative while saving you time.</p> <p>You know which team members are best suited for each topic.</p> <p>You trust your team members to provide quality content</p>	<p>Be opened minded and realistic when it comes to assigning topics to the right person.</p> <p>Find writers in your team with specialized knowledge on the topic.</p> <p>You'll still need to spend time planning, outlining and reviewing/editing content.</p>

Visual Storytelling (cont'd)

In House VS Outsourced Content Creation Comparison

Outsource	Freelance Writer Direct	⌚ ⌚	💰 💰	<p>When you or your team don't have enough time/talent/knowledge to cover a subject.</p> <p>You still prefer to manage the planning, writer assignment, production and editorial process.</p>	<p>Larger pool of writing talent with a vastly wider range of expertise.</p> <p>Will save the bulk of time required to produce content in-house</p>	<p>The right platform makes the process of finding, hiring, managing and paying writers simpler and more efficient.</p> <p>Requires some time upfront to sample writers to build a trusted team.</p> <p>You'll still need to spend time planning, outlining and reviewing/editing content.</p>
Outsource	Content Agency	⌚	💰 💰 💰 💰	<p>You have very little time or resources to spend internally on content creation.</p> <p>You or your team doesn't have the time/talent/knowledge</p> <p>You prefer to have the planning and creation process handling by someone else.</p>	<p>Saves you time, it's the most hands-off solution</p> <p>Perfect for those with limited experience in the content creation process.</p>	<p>Will be more expensive than other options since you are paying for project management in addition to content creation.</p> <p>Still requires some of your time and feedback in the process. Not 100% hands free.</p>

Source: Zerys

Adapting to Facebook's Algorithm Changes

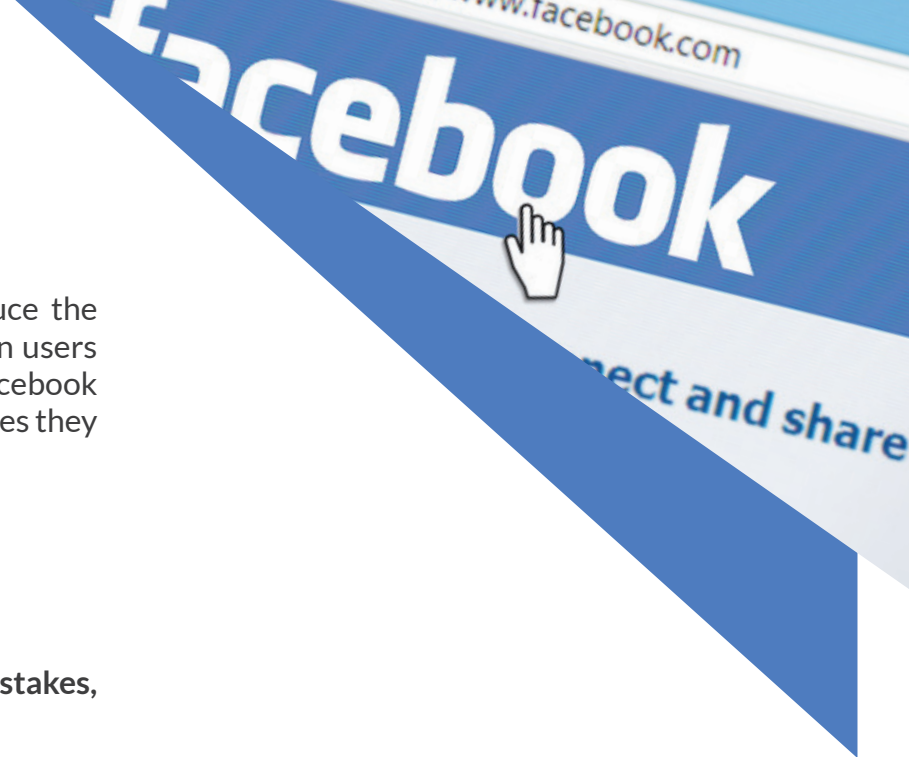
Facebook's new algorithm (set to fully roll out in January 2015) will reduce the amount of times that "overly promotional" posts from brand Pages appear in users newsfeeds. This algorithm change comes in response to a survey that Facebook conducted that revealed users want to see "more stories from friends and Pages they care about, and less promotional content."

Specifically, 3 types of organic posts will see a reduction in reach:

- Posts that push audiences to purchase a product or install an app
- Posts that encourage audiences to enter a promotional initiative (sweepstakes, contests, etc.) without disclosing the context of said initiative
- Posts that recycle/reuse ad content

The decrease in organic reach and impressions that will result from this algorithm change means that marketers will have to use [Facebook for Business](#) and setup paid ad campaigns to achieve significant reach (and engagement) for promotional posts. To effectively market themselves organically on Facebook, brands will now more than ever have to focus on delivering valuable, shareable, and engaging content to their audiences. [Hootsuite](#) also has some solid and specific Facebook/Social media marketing tactics that will help you adapt to these changes!

Sources: Facebook, Hootsuite



Paid Social Media Advertising

Facebook's algorithm change pretty much forces brands that want to generate significant online reach to utilize paid campaigns - a trend we at SayItSocial believe will carry over to other social platforms in the near future. Deciding which social media channels to invest in for paid advertising heavily depends on your brands' DNA, target market profile and social media consumption habits. It also depends on the type of content most conducive to marketing your brand. Moreover, each platform has different targeting/market segmentation options that can help you deliver different degrees of personalized ads to different audiences. Ads can be targeted to segments that are classified on audience interest, demographics, locations, and even browsing history. Example segments could be labeled "beach lovers", "college students", or "Coastal Carolina businesses". Check out [AdEspresso's "How to use Purchase Behavior Category to Target Facebook Users"](#) for more details!



Paid Social Media Advertising (cont'd)

Keep an eye out for a SIS blog covering the multitude of targeting options on social media in the future! For now, take a look at some general best practices for paid social media advertising across all channels:

- **Test multiple variations and combinations** of images and copy for your ads. Evaluate their individual performance, and the factor the findings of your analysis into creation of content for future ads.
- **Keep it personal!** Make the purpose of the ad transparent, and specific to a need in your target audience. Ideally, you can articulate the value of your products/services to your prospects in a transparent, yet clever and attention-grabbing manner. Include your businesses value proposition and a direct call to action that will motivate them to click on your ads.
- **Bid within the recommended PPC range** for each social media platform and for each campaign. Pricing will vary across social media channels, as will the frequency of clicks your ads receive should you choose to launch a multichannel paid social media advertising campaign – factor this knowledge into your paid ad budget allocation processes. Evaluate the success of bidding within recommended ranges upon the start of your campaign, and then “boost” your most successful ads with a higher bid where you see fit.
- **Optimize landing pages for your ads.** Ensure that the pages where your ads lead are relevant to both the ad content and target audience. Furthermore, ensure that various purchase pathways and calls to actions are prevalent on ad landing pages to provide prospects an easily navigable online experience.

Sources: Contently, Facebook, Social Media Examiner, AdEspresso

Multi-Channel Social Media Marketing

If brands want to successfully market themselves across multiple social networks in 2015, they can no longer publish the same content on each channel at the same time. Without diverse content, there will be no incentive for fans to follow you on multiple channels. The primary goal of multichannel social media marketing should be to deliver unique value to followers on each social profile. Remain mindful of the unique personas and mind states of users of different social networks, and tailor your content and messaging “voice” accordingly.

We think that [TED Talks](#), a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating and capturing presentations on “ideas worth spreading”, does an excellent job of providing diverse and relevant content across its various social media profiles. Check out the next 3 pages to see how TED Talks effectively diversifies content across its channels!



Multi-Channel Social Media Marketing (cont'd)



Facebook

TED Talks uses Facebook to share and facilitate discussion around its vast library of presentation videos. The post lures you in with a quote, and if it captures your interest – you can watch a whole video on the subject! Be sure to consistently deliver valuable content of all formats – links, photos, and videos – that your audience will value.



Twitter

Here we see TED Talks post a photo relevant to a current controversial issue – protestors in action in response to the Ferguson/Michael Brown incident. Instead of taking a political stance on the issue (a major no-no for brand marketing), TED provides its followers with an article containing various videos of speakers discussing “smart ways to think about racism”. This tweet illustrates the importance of delivering socially relevant content in a timely manner for engaging twitter followers.



Multi-Channel Social Media Marketing (cont'd)



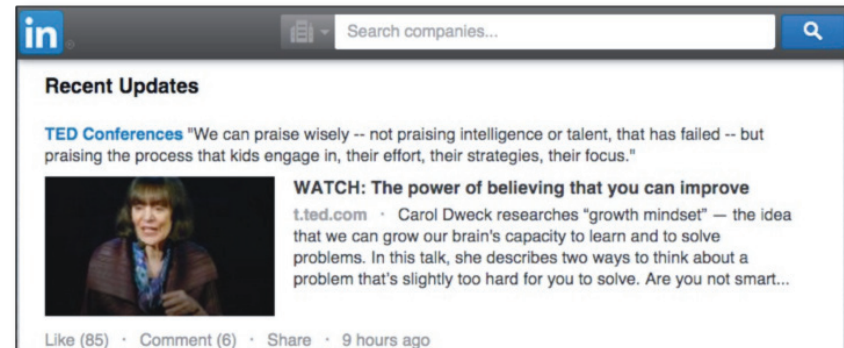
Instagram

We like to think of Instagram as a brand's "first person/in the field view." The focus of Instagram marketing should be delivering visually stunning photos using humanized perspective and voice in the caption. Posting promotional content on Instagram is a surefire way to lose followers. Instead, authentically tell your brand's visual story with Instagram! Again, TED Talks executes effectively with imagery relevant to a cause discussed in one of their presentations.



LinkedIn

TED Talks posts a video about self-improvement on LinkedIn. A smart move, considering that a great deal of regular LinkedIn users continuously strive to improve themselves and their careers. Think of LinkedIn as a prime place to market your brand's professional and authoritative content that people in your industry will benefit from. Additionally, be sure to market your business on LinkedIn for recruitment purposes – ensuring that the culture, success, and industry authority is prominently visible.

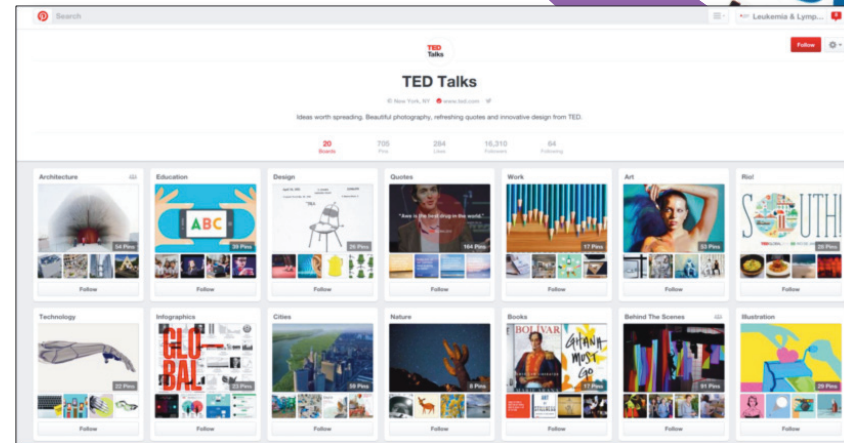


Multi-Channel Social Media Marketing (cont'd)



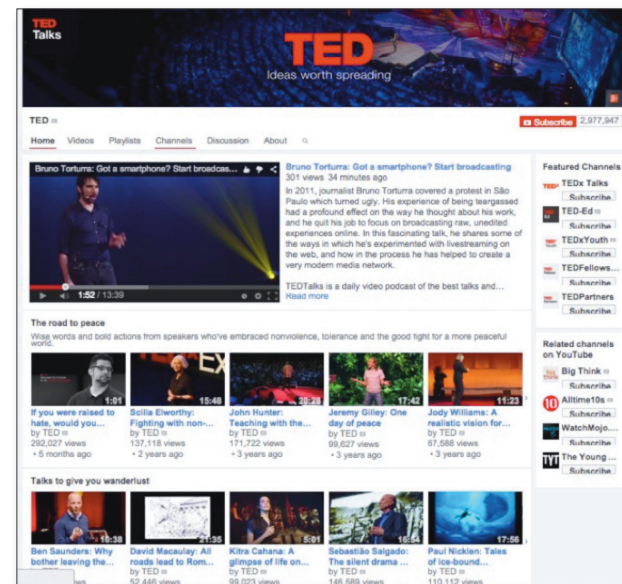
Pinterest

The TED Talk's Pinterest profile features a wide variety of boards that contain powerful images that are relevant to the various topics of discussion in their videos. Note both the diversity of subject matter and the precise focus of each board. Maintaining a variety of boards will give consumers the ability to follow aspects about your brand that they truly care about, and disregard those they don't. Giving your followers options on what types of content to follow humanizes your brand's identity and adds authenticity.



Youtube

TED Talk's Youtube page, like Pinterest, is a highly organized library of categorized content – providing users quick and easy access to videos that will give them inspiration on a desired category. If your brand relies heavily on video content, be sure to organize its youtube channel, and post quality videos that deliver unique value and/or branded entertainment to your audience.



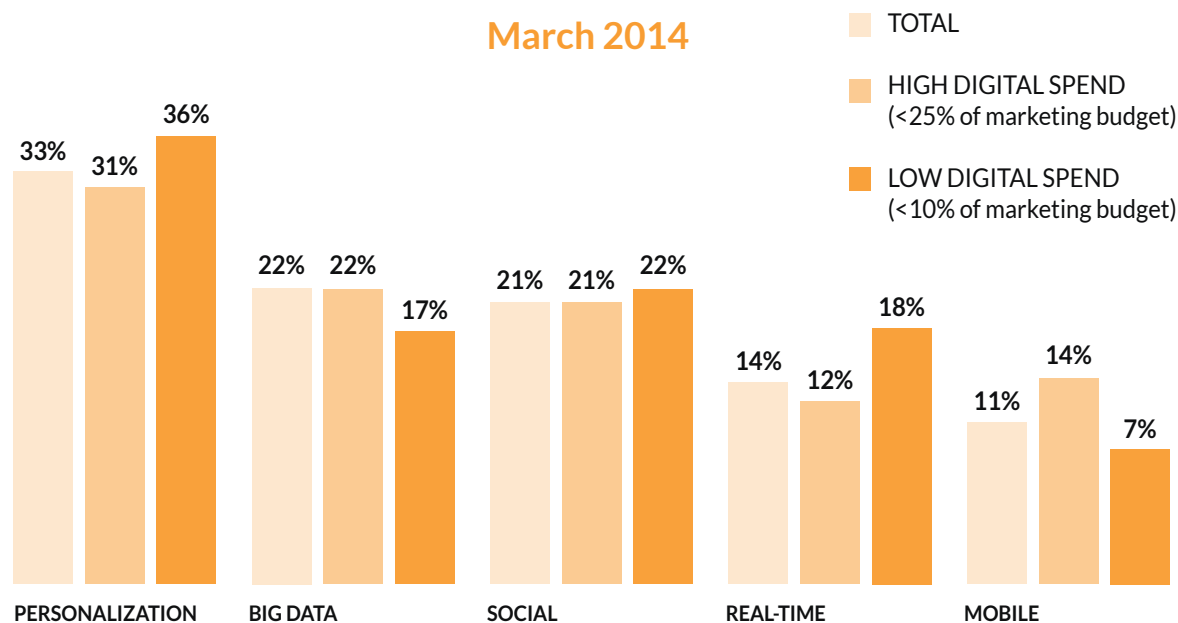
Sources: Instagram, Mashable, Social Media Examiner

6 Personalization

We all know the 4 P's of Marketing- Product, Place, Price, and Promotion. Well, in foreshadowing the year 2015 we are adding a fifth P into the mix due to its vital importance in the evolving digital marketing world- Personalization. Marketing has changed from company-based to client-based, and if you want your business to maintain relevancy, personalizing your brand's online experience is essential for digital marketing success. In a [recent survey conducted by Adobe](#), US marketers placed personalization at the top of their most important future marketing needs.

Most Important Future Area for US Marketers

"If you had to choose, which one area do you think will be most important to your company's marketing moving forward?"
% share of respondents



Source: Adobe

Personalization (cont'd)

How you personalize your marketing efforts will rely heavily on your brand and target audience persona. [Digital Marketing University's "Personalization 101"](#) contains valuable personalization tactics. Below are the necessities for effective online personalization:

- Meticulously research your target market
- Monitor trends and popular topics of conversation for your target market
- Utilize your brand's personality when creating content and proactively engaging with social media users
- Create web and mobile friendly purchase pathways that deliver information relevant to prospects interests or browsing history
- Utilize a [Retargeting service like AdRoll](#) to try and convert past web visitors
- Segment your Email Marketing list to deliver custom emails to prospects that have indicated specific interests (prior to doing so, ensure your website is conducive to identifying different needs of individual prospects)
- Utilize [Dynamic Insertion for Paid Ads](#)

The Fifth P is Here to Stay!

Sources: Adobe, Digital Marketing University, Wordstream

The Fifth P
is here to stay!

Staying Relevant & Real Time Engagement

Staying Relevant and Real Time Engagement

Ensure that your marketing content is relevant by monitoring newsfeeds, hashtags, and social conversation about topics relevant to your brand. A fantastic example of real-time creative social engagement came from a fan on Audi's behalf during the 2014 Winter Olympics:



"When 4 rings is all you need."

Staying Relevant & Real Time Engagement (cont'd)

In response to the failure of the 5th Olympic ring to open during the opening ceremony, this Audi fan quickly produced and published the above ad. The ad (primarily broadcast across Audi's social media channels) is a classic example of delivering timely, engaging, clever, branded content that is relevant to current events. Audi gained significant exposure from this specific piece of user-generated content- illustrating the effectiveness of creatively contributing to relevant social issues. Below is a list of tactics to help you brand stay relevant in social conversation.

- Follow trending hashtags and topics and (if possible) create unique, branded content that is relevant – deliver in a timely manner.
- Proactively research conversations relevant to your brand across all social channels, and engage! Offer unique opinions, provide a unique perspective and links to pertinent online resources – this will help establish brand authenticity and add more of a human voice to a marketing channel.
- Don't be afraid to post edgy and novel creative content & responses – just be sure to remain politically correct and avoid topics such as politics or religion.

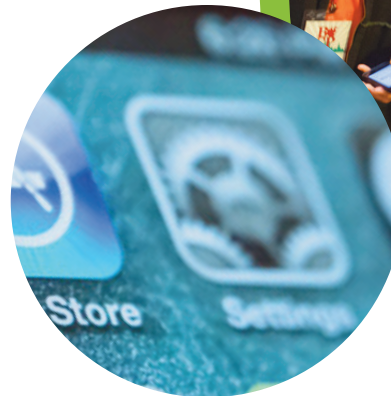
Sources: Mashable



Mobile Optimization

According to Ovum, a market leading analyst house focused on converging IT, telecoms and media markets, in 2015 [one billion people will use mobile as their only form of Internet access](#). Marketers can potentially reach consumers from the minute they pick up their smartphones to the minute they put them down before bed. Facebook's advertising revenue in Q3 2014 grew 64% to \$2.96 Billion – $\frac{2}{3}$ of that revenue was generated on mobile devices. The power of mobile is undeniable, and will continue to grow. Here's what you can do to ensure your business generates traffic via mobile:

- Ensure your website is mobile-friendly across all brands of devices and operating systems.
- Organize the content of your website in a manner that is easily navigable so that visitors so you can move them quickly along the path to purchase!
- Implement mobile specific advertising campaigns that utilize location based advertising
- Monitor trends and popularity surrounding mobile NFC payment options such as [Apple Pay](#) - be prepared to adopt Apple pay in your brick and mortar retailers if applicable.



Mobile Optimization (cont'd)

- Optimize your Ecommerce channels and integrate them with social media where appropriate.
- If cost effective and beneficial to your brand, create an app that makes it easy for brand loyal customers to make repeat visits and purchases.
- Optimize your Google+ profile so that mobile users can locate and research your business while on the go.
- Keep informed on the constantly evolving mobile advertising landscape.

“True lift (in mobile marketing) will be achieved by those who successfully combine these insights with techniques like audience segmentation and full funnel optimization.” Also, stay up-to-date with the constantly evolving mobile marketing best practices. The takeaway? Optimize and strategize specifically for mobile!”

– Dario Derna, Head of Online Marketing for Zen payroll

Sources: EConsultancy, Marketing Profs, Forbes, DataMonitor, SimplyMeasured



Wearable Tech & Personal Trackers

We predict that wearable technology will explode in late 2015 with releases of various smart watches, personal trackers, even wearable clothing and accessories with digital tracking capabilities. With this new technology will come a flood of personal data that consumers will use to improve their lives, and data that marketers will attempt to exploit in their pursuit of creating/delivering hyper-personalized advertising ([See past SIS Blog: "Quantification Fascination"](#)). The marketing opportunities that arise from tracker data will depend heavily on unique characteristics and value propositions of each brand. For example, fitness wearables and apps can provide timely ad opportunities for brands in the sports apparel and supplement industry. Similarly, location tracking focused apps allow for more precise geotargeting opportunities for businesses in the travel and tourism industry. Many ad opportunities arising from the [Quantified Self Movement](#) are yet to be discovered, so be sure to monitor the evolution of wearable technology!

"From a marketer's perspective, this new class of data is a goldmine. Just think what we can do with minute-by-minute tracking of body movements, physical reactions to external stimulus (like ads!), weight and body changes and geolocation. We'll have instant access to the data, in its raw and analyzed forms, linked to an awareness of how people are using the insights they develop to change their behavior and improve their lives."

- Todd Cullen, Global Chief Data Officer at Olgivy & Mather ([AdAge](#))

SAMSUNG

The full set of predictions from Samsung for 2015:

1. Wearable technology will create a new era of power dressing for business leaders
2. People will restructure their working lives around personal "Power Hours" – as technology reveals peak performance times
3. Virtual reality technology and the innovative use of displays will lead to a new generation of digital shops, allowing retailers to overcome space constraints and high rent
4. Automated home systems will move from 'geek' to 'chic' driven by a dramatically improved user experience
5. Every child born in the next 12 months will learn coding as a core subject alongside numeracy and literacy

Source: *The Verge*



Millennial Marketing

Millennials are the most tech-savvy and informed group of consumers to date. With access to multiple online reviews and product information, they have the knowledge and ability to make hyper-informed purchase decisions. Furthermore, Millennials can and will ignore overly promotional and irrelevant marketing content. Here are some considerations to keep in mind when marketing to Millennials in 2015:

- Millennials demand the most time efficient and mobile friendly online experiences available to use for shopping and researching – make sure your brand’s mobile and web presences can readily give prospects the information and rapid shopping experience they desire.
- Millennials embrace the idea of philanthropy and take pride in shopping/interacting with brands that publicly showcase their positive impact on the world. A [recent study by Cone Communications](#), found that “millennials are hyperaware of, and have high expectations for, corporate social responsibility efforts to make the world a better place -- for themselves and broader society.”
- Millennials are heavy social media users, and often turn to [social media as a method of procrastination](#) - make sure your social messaging and content strategy tailors to this procrastination mind-state to earn the attention of the millennial market. Ensure your content has social context and delivers concise, shareable value.
- When making purchase decisions, Millennials will almost always consider reviews from friends/family and online reviews – monitor relevant review platforms (Google+, Yelp, etc.) to control the quality of your online brand perception.
- Personalize your marketing content (see Personalization)

Sources: *Forbes, MillennialMarketing, Entrepreneur.com, Cone Communications*

Marketing Automation Software

Hubspot (with whom [SayItSocial](#) is a certified partner) describes marketing automation as “software and tactics that allow businesses to nurture prospects with highly personalized and useful content that helps convert them into customers.” Essentially, marketing automation software can help streamline the processes of delivering the right content, to right prospects, at the right time and then provide these prospects with optimal pathways to purchase. It is important to note, however, that marketing automation software is primarily an enabler that automates traditional marketing process online. Any such software will require an investment of both time and money to set up, manage, and optimize. [Make sure your business is ready for Marketing Automation](#) before time of purchase, [implement the software](#) to your existing CRM and web platforms, and then remember the below considerations as you optimize your inbound marketing strategy in 2015:

- **Nurture Your Leads!** Personalize communications with leads - even those that aren't sales ready - to further qualify them move them along their purchase pathways and generate valuable, mutually beneficial conversation. Define customer segments and interests, then build follow up email templates for your sales teams to utilize when they reach out to leads for further qualification.
- **Utilize Lead Scoring.** Create a lead scoring model that fits your sales cycle and brand to ensure your sales force is spending its time efficiently by pursuing qualified leads.
- **Optimize Online Forms.** According to a Marketo study, short forms (5 fields or less) on websites outperform longer forms by 34%. If applicable and relevant, establish [progressive profiling](#) to assist in your lead qualification process.
- **Measure Marketing Automation Performance.** Set up goals and define impactful and insightful metrics to measure your automation goals!

Sources: CircleStudio, Hubspot, LeadLizard, Salesforce

Happy automating!

Marketing Automation Software

(cont'd)

Progressive Profiling Example


1st Visit to Website

First Name:

Last Name:

Email Address:

Comapny:


REQUEST REPORT | ► 

2nd Visit to Website

Name:

Email Address:

Job Title:


REQUEST REPORT | ► 

3rd Visit to Website

Email Address:

Phone Number:

Industry:

REQUEST REPORT | ► 

Pigeon, Panda and Penguin. Names of animals to some, but for SEO's, these represent Google's latest algorithms for 2014. We predict there will continue to be animal kingdom updates to the ever secret "algo". Search engines will continue to reward brands that publish high quality and authoritative content, and will also factor in social signals and hyper local directories into their ranking systems. Employ the below strategies for your 2015 digital marketing strategies, or be prepared to experience a dramatic dip in search traffic.

Content – In addition to marketing your brand, content creation is becoming increasingly important for SEO. Google will increase the intelligence of its algorithm to detect spammy or spun content. Invest in creative, authoritative writers that create industry related blogs, whitepapers, site copy and more to give search engines and users what they crave- consistently released, substantial content. When publishing your content, be sure to publish it on multiple social aggregators such as LinkedIn Pulse, Slideshare, and BuzzFeed.

Citations and Brand Mentions – Link building is still critical, but Google is pretty much fed up with black hat tactics and paid links. Receiving mentions/links from legitimate citations and brands, however, will prove more valuable in 2015. Ensure your website or blog contains "link bait" in order to generate mentions and citations from external parties.

Social Signals – 2014 proved to be the year of another failed Google initiative, Google+ Authorship. What's left? You guessed it, Twitter and Facebook. Although you likely won't see a partnership with these guys (Thanks to Bing), expect Google to factor in the content and engagement of your social platforms when indexing authority and legitimacy for search rankings.

Sources: MarketingLand, SEOmoz



Hyper-Local SEO

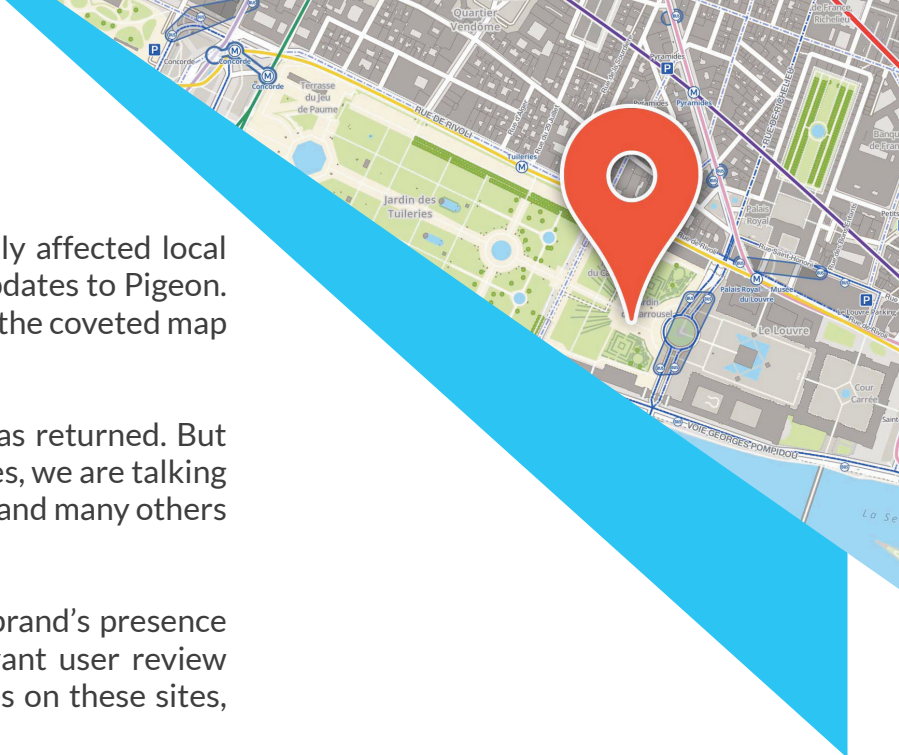
In July 2014, Google created a stir with its “Pigeon” update that dramatically affected local search results. Many agencies are still struggling to abide by the algorithm updates to Pigeon. In 2015, your business must not rest on its laurels- now is the time to fight for the coveted map positions by considering the following strategies.

Directories – Yes, once a dead factor, and a spammed-to-tarnation tactic, has returned. But we are not talking about submitting your site to 100’s of automated directories, we are talking about high quality paid directories, including [Yellow Pages](#), [Best of The Web](#), and many others that are legitimate and NOT usually free.

Local Maps & User-Generated Content sites – Remember to manage your brand’s presence on Yelp, Google+ Local, Bing Maps, Yahoo local Maps, and any other relevant user review platforms. If you have not CLAIMED and taken ownership of your properties on these sites, expect a decrease in search rankings in 2015.

Google 360 Virtual Tours – If you have a brick and mortar business, you will want to invest in this [new product from Google](#). Think it doesn’t help your local SEO, and CTR (Click-Through-Rates)? Think again. You do want to dominate in 2015 right? Get one...

Sources: MarketingLand, SEOmoz



SEM

Sorry, you have no choice but to continue to advertise on search engines such as Google and Bing. There seems no trend change in 2015 but rather an impetus to explore the exciting and new Google Adwords offerings ([covered in a recent SIS blog post!](#)).

Perhaps the most exciting component of SEM for 2015 will be the evolving [AdWords Extension technologies](#). These extensions empower businesses to create automatically updated advertisements that use real time data to ensure that ad copy is more relevant than ever before. Using real time data from information regarding weather, inventory, sale length, wait time, the stock market, and more, this new technology promises to raise the bar of targeted ad accuracy. Moreover, Google claims that utilizing ad extensions often leads to a 20% lift in click through rates!

We'd like to leave you with 3 of Google's high level recommendations for success with SEM for 2015.

1. **Connect with Your Customers**
2. **Get Mobile**
3. **Track Everything**

Be sure to check out the [Google Partners Connect Video](#) for more insights about the future of SEM.

Source: Google

Measuring Digital Marketing Efforts

If you fail to measure any of the above initiatives, why bother implementing them? If there is one strategy that you take away from this paper, please, please measure the effectiveness your digital initiatives. The plethora of analytics tools at your disposal means that there are no excuses not to measure your campaigns. Take heed of the following metrics your business should be looking at in 2015, or your efforts and investment into digital will likely be doomed to failure:

Consumption metrics: Look at visitor behaviors to your website, social or digital content. Are they reading your content? Are they “lingering” on your posts? What pages have high bounce rates and what are possible causes for this?

- **Website or blog:** Look at unique sessions, page views, and average time on your site using Google Analytics or other site analytics you have.
- **Digital Assets:** Track the downloadable content on your website (eBooks, Whitepapers, etc.) to gauge success and popularity!
- **Social media:** Utilize native or third party social media analytics to evaluate your performance, and use tools like bit.ly links in social captions to measure click through action from social to your website!
- **Email:** Email marketing remains a powerful method of delivering content to your brand advocates and prospective customers. MailChimp, HubSpot, Marketo, Eloqua, and Constant Contact measure open rates, bounce rates, and clicks for your email campaigns.
- **Mobile:** Separate desktop from mobile (and tablet) metrics, then measure both mobile traffic and mobile content consumption while comparing to desktop in Google Analytics.



Measuring Digital Marketing Efforts (cont'd)

Retention metrics: Are you holding your audience's attention beyond the initial contact? Measure to find out!

- **Website or blog:** Measure the amount of unique visitors, repeat visitor count, time on site, pages per visit, and the bounce rate of the content pages of your website or blog.
- **Digital Ads:** Because you are spending marketing dollars here, utilize digital ad analytics to ensure your sending the right audience to the appropriate landing pages.
- **Social media:** Are you posting [snackable](#), engaging content that both engages your existing and helps increase your follower count?
- **Email:** Keep an eye on the number of people who unsubscribe or opt out from your email content when they do so – such information will reveal what emails inspired people to unsubscribe.
- **Social Sharing metrics:** Is your digital content being amplified? Shared? By whom, and where or how they are sharing it, mobile or desktop? Third party analytics providers such as Hootsuite, SimplyMeasured, and SocialBro provide both free and paid analytics modules.
- **Engagement metrics:** Does your content resonate with your followers? What kind of action (if any) are followers taking after consuming your content? Are they sharing, commenting, and regularly engaging around your new content?

The above list is merely a baseline of metrics to monitor, but each brand should define which channels and measuring methodologies are most valuable. Don't get caught up in the buzz around "Big Data"- just choose which metrics to monitor that align with your digital efforts, business objectives and your resources.



Conclusion

We'd like to extend a most sincere thank you for taking the time to read this White Paper, and hope that you walk away better prepared to market your business online in 2015. We are also confident that you will see modest digital success if you prioritize and combine the various strategies we have presented in this publication. Make sure you continuously measure and adjust, while staying atop emerging digital trends.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns, we are here to help! [SayItSocial](#) offers a wide array of digital marketing services and training programs. We'd love to hear from you and help you along your journey to reach digital nirvana.

Cheers,

Ian, Ty & Morgan

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*Much Success
in 2015!*