

A Stickyeyes Whitepaper

Redefining “SEO”:

What your agency should be telling you in 2016.

Jonny Artis, Search Director & Mike McDougall, Head of SEO, Stickyeyes

Contents

Executive Summary..... 3

The changing face of SEO 4

Building the perfect strategy 12

Engaging your audiences 16

What to expect from your agency in 2016 20

Further Reading 24

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Executive Summary

Organic search is one of the key consumer touch-points and as a result, it has an enormous influence on the digital success of any brand.

But the way in which we think about organic search, and search engine optimisation, has changed dramatically. SEO, as a marketing discipline, has taken on an entirely new role and has become a critical component of a brand's entire digital strategy. It's no longer possible to see search engine optimisation as an isolated activity, kept separately from a brand's other core marketing and communication channels. Instead, SEO has become an integral part of that marketing and communications strategy.

Google algorithm updates that specifically targeted what it deemed to be manipulative optimisation tactics, cynically deployed in order to game search rankings, had a profound impact on the notion of SEO. Many brands found themselves falling foul of Google's Panda and Penguin updates, putting these 'Black Hat' techniques under the spotlight.

But search marketing, or at least, modern, sustainable search marketing is almost unrecognisable from what it was at the time Penguin and Panda ravaged the search rankings. SEO has become much more considered, much more focused on the needs of the end user and, ultimately, much more of an embedded marketing discipline.

In short, "SEO" has been completely redefined.

What you will get from this guide.

This guide will highlight just how "SEO" has been transformed from an isolated, technical discipline into a fundamental part of a brand marketing and communication strategy. It will highlight why your brand needs to embrace this new attitude towards SEO and explain the skills and the approach that your brand, and your agency, needs in order to deliver a strategy that delivers sustainable return on investment.

- **Why "SEO" cannot be seen as an isolated element of your marketing strategy.**

- **How you can ensure that your agency partners are delivering a modern and sustainable digital strategy.**

- **How audience insight is critical to ensuring that your digital strategy is performing across all platforms and customer touch-points.**

- **What skills you need to deploy an effective digital strategy that delivers a return on investment.**

- **How to identify when your digital agency is failing to understand how your audiences interact with your brand online.**

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Out with the old, in with the new: The changing face of SEO.

The old world of SEO

Search engine optimisation used to be relatively simple. By and large, digital marketers needed to simply understand a rather limited number of ranking factors, build a strategy to satisfy those factors and their websites would usually rank.

In the early days of Google, some proficiency in code and some keyword heavy content was largely all that was necessary to achieve a meaningful ranking on search results.

Unsurprisingly, with such a limited number of ranking factors, it wasn't particularly difficult for a brand or individual to manipulate the search results to suit their own agenda. In an attempt to address this, Google expanded its algorithm to consider additional factors; most notably, links. Google used links as an effective 'vote of favour' in a particular website; the logic being that a website, publisher or blogger would only link to a page if they deemed the content on that page to be of a high standard.

The policy of 'links as votes' essentially turned SEO into a numbers game. Generally speaking, the more links one could achieve, the better. And if those links could be incentivised in one way or another, the quicker and easier the process.

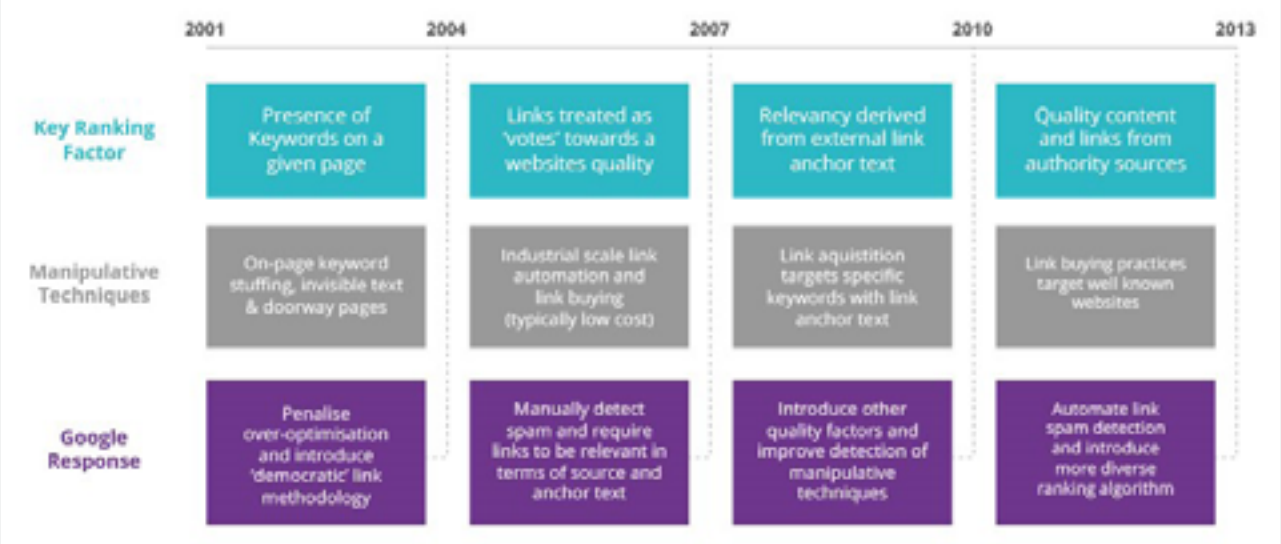
It was this practice that essentially led to Google rolling out the Penguin algorithm updates. Penguin was specifically designed to penalise those websites that had engaged in unnatural link manufacturing in a deliberate attempt to manipulate the search rankings.

A second update, Panda, was also introduced to the algorithm to lower the rank of websites that, in Google's eyes, had very poor quality or 'thin' levels of content.

The changing face of Google

As digital channels have evolved, search has also evolved. Google's algorithm has changed considerably in recent years to ensure that search results are relevant, have integrity (in being free from manipulation), and allow Google to generate revenue from paid ad placements.

Google makes around 500-600 algorithm updates every year, and the most notable of these in recent years have focused on protecting search results from manipulation from external sources. Essentially, Google wants to prevent any one organisation or individual from influencing search results to their benefit and the detriment of users.



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As a result, Google has shifted away from an algorithm that was based largely on a system of technical competence and backlinks, to a system that is much more focused around the quality of a website or page. This principally includes qualitative issues such as on-site engagement, quality and depth of content, social engagement and brand prominence. Technical competence and backlinks do remain a part of the algorithm, but they are now just part of a much broader spectrum of considerations.

This means that SEO, and digital in general, now has to be a consideration for multiple departments across any enterprise-level organisation.

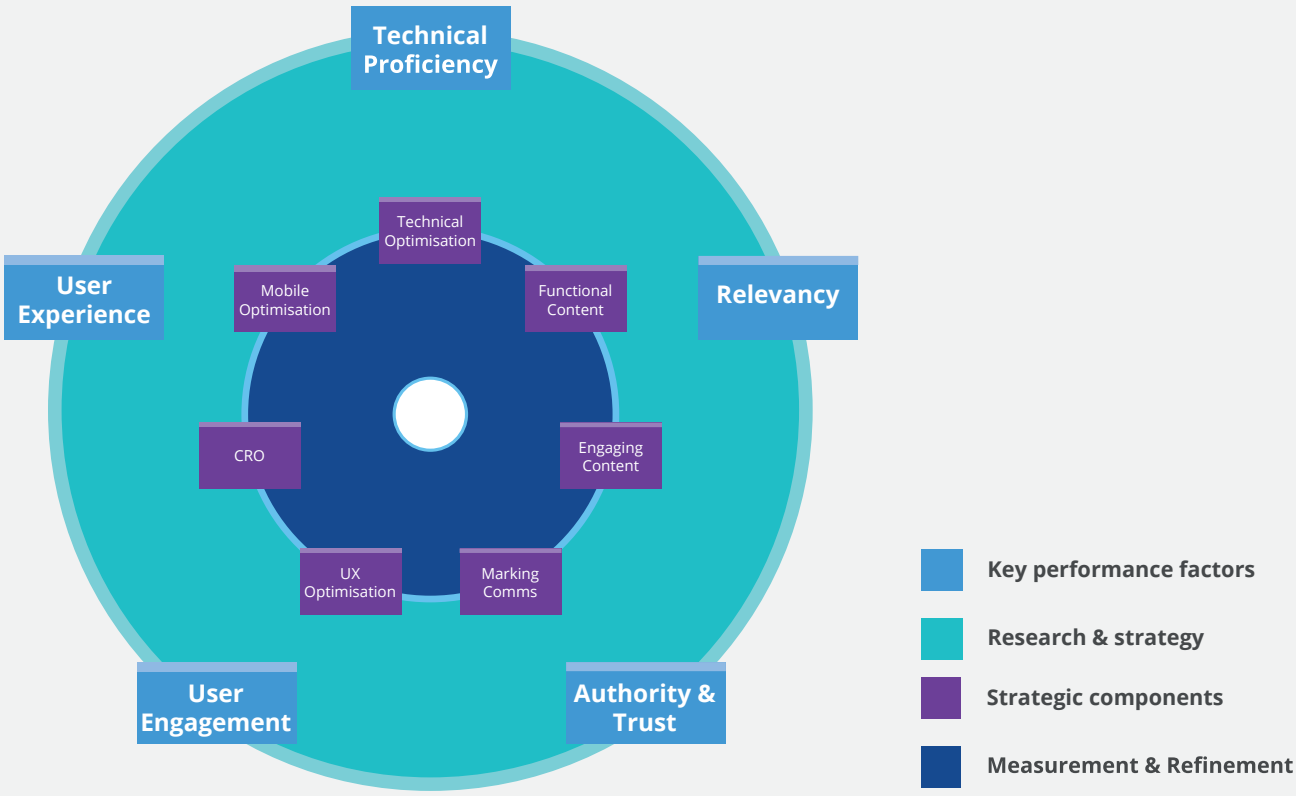
However, in many large organisations, digital marketing and investment has not scaled up in line with a market driven to transact and deal online. This can lead to that digital expertise being kept in a silo and not being integrated into business-wide marketing plans.

The traditional view of the "techie" SEO expert or developer, typically seen as very specialised and siloed into a specific technical role, doesn't necessarily fit within the ideal of a modern digital strategy. Whilst this role and these skills are still very important, not least in terms of understanding the nuances of the algorithm, this person must now draw upon a much broader range of specialist (typically creative) skills.

What SEO looks like in 2016

Search engine optimisation has evolved to a point where it is now a fundamental element of almost every aspect of a brand's marketing, communications and customer experience. It is no longer a single technical discipline, sat in silo from the rest of the business, nor is it some form of 'dark art' that relies upon masses of code manipulation or paid link placements. Instead, it is a discipline that requires the support of the entire business operation in order to deliver on key performance factors.

But above all, modern SEO requires **balance**. It's not enough to get one of these elements right in order to succeed - you need to be able to excel in all of the key performance factors.



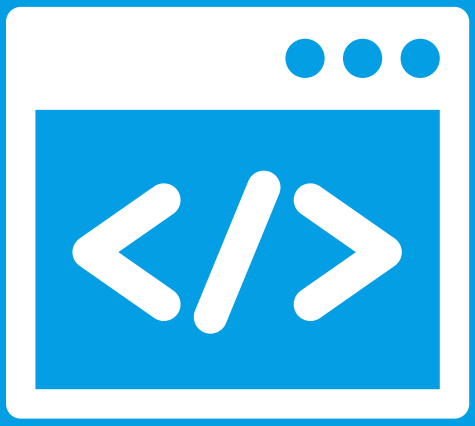
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Technical Proficiency

This is about ensuring that your pages are optimised from a technical perspective. It involves addressing errors in site code, optimising server speed and following technical best practice for the various elements of your site. You need to ensure that you are following best practice for technical optimisation, and your agency should still have this as a cornerstone of their strategy - it is easy to neglect this in favour of the more creative aspects of digital. There are a number of common pitfalls in this area. These include:



Site hierarchy & navigation architecture.

The way in which your site is structured goes a long way to determining your prospects in natural search. This is particularly important for large, complex database driven sites commonplace in retail and travel markets. Specifically, it is important to consider:

Site-wide authority flow

It is important to ensure that your most important pages competing for more competitive, higher volume keywords are prominently linked to and appear towards the top-end of the site’s hierarchy.

Your site’s structural capability to target relevant keywords

relevant content requires indexable pages upon which to sit. Does your structure adequately accommodate the biggest keyword opportunities, or are there gaps?

Duplicate and thin pages

Expanding site architecture to cater for a broader keyword spectrum can significantly increase organic visibility, however in doing so it is essential to avoid duplicate pages (pages which are identical or very similar to one another) and thin pages (pages light in useful content) which can do substantial damage to performance.

Over-indexation

Allowing too many of your sites pages into search engine indexes is one of the most common causes of duplicate and thin pages. Furthermore, over-indexation can dilute inherent authority and inhibit ranking potential for pages throughout the site.

Page load time

Website visitors hate slow, therefore Google hates it. If your website takes a long time to load its content, then that will be reflected in your Google search ranking. Use Google’s PageSpeed Tools to assess how quickly your website is, and how you can improve its performance.

Relevancy



If technical optimisation is about making sure that search engines can find and read your content, relevance is about making sure that search engines can actually make sense of what they do find and understand how that applies to a user’s search query.

You need to ensure that your website is delivering relevance to the user. You need to be representing a product or service that is relevant for the keywords that you are targeting, and your content needs to reflect this. If your pages aren’t relevant to the query, this creates a poor user experience.

The role of functional content

Functional SEO content is onsite copy that communicates information to search engines and is highly relevant to target search queries. Functional content should be designed to reflect brand authority on a subject, theme or area within its market.

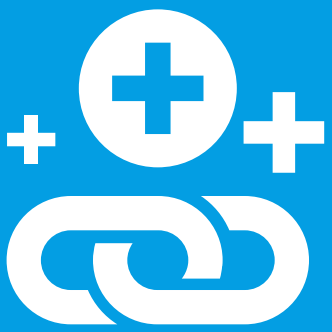
Functional content is very much the staple of your entire web presence, and can cover anything from your company information or your store or branch pages, through to the copy on your product and sales pages. The importance of this content is often overlooked, with many agencies instead directing their efforts into the more ‘creative’ forms of content that attract links, shares and column inches, but functional content plays a vital role in any digital strategy.

Firstly, your functional content helps to establish relevancy for each and every page. If, for example, your organisation is one that tends to transact at a localised level (for instance, through local branches), the quality of your store finder pages can really help you to establish relevancy for geographic keyword searches (for instance, “building supplies in London” or “Heathrow car rental”). Your agency should be appraising all of your functional content to identify just how it is establishing relevancy for the keyword searches that are important to your brand, and identifying any potential gaps in coverage.

Secondly, your functional content is also what helps guide your customer to purchase, particularly product or sales copy. If your functional copy is uninspiring or unengaging, it is unlikely to drive a conversion. If your content is too thin or is merely stock content provided by the manufacturer, it is unlikely to portray relevancy to a search engine and, particularly in the era of Panda, is actually likely to put your pages at risk of penalty.

Authority & Trust

Is your brand an authority in its sector? Is it trusted by your audiences? You need to build and establish your brand as the leader at what you do.



There are a number of factors that can determine whether your brand is considered to be an ‘authority’ and trustworthy source. The prominence of your brand, the way it is discussed online and in the media and various engagement factors all come into play, but the nature of your link profile is also a significant contributing factor.

Building trust in your link profile

Your link profile is one factor that can determine whether your pages can be ‘trusted’ by search engines. Typically, highly authoritative and trustworthy pages will have an incredibly diverse link profile, with links of various quality coming from an incredibly wide range of domains. Those websites that are less trusted may have a much narrower link profile, with a small number of links all coming from a similar profile of website, or from a series of ‘networks’, which all point links towards each other. Many of these links may also have very little relevance to your page or brand.

Your agency should be conducting a thorough audit into your link profile and determining how trustworthy that profile is. In essence, your link profile needs to achieve these core aims:

- Links that are relevant to your brand, products and services.
- A diverse link profile, with links coming from a wide range of domains.
- A natural anchor text profile (i.e. links are not weighted towards generic keyword anchor text).
- Links that are embedded in relevant content (content that discuss topics relevant to your brand).
- Links that are from authoritative and trusted websites.
- Positive brand sentiment.

These factors all contribute to enhancing the authority of your page and domain, which is a key factor in helping search engines to determine whether a page is a trustworthy source to answer a user query. In most cases, your agency will measure this using a metric known as Domain Authority (DA).

Domain Authority is a website quality score calculated by Moz (www.moz.com) and is commonly used as a benchmark to compare and analyse performance. Improving Domain Authority is often a key goal within a brand’s search marketing strategy and whilst Moz has not shared a definitive list of elements that determine Domain Authority, it is thought that content, link quality and engagement metrics form a key part of the ranking.

User Engagement & Experience

Optimising your user experience is critical not just from the perspective of organic search visibility, but for customer engagement, conversion and brand reputation. You need to ensure that your content and website is visible on any device, that your site runs smoothly on both desktop and mobile, and that your navigation and conversion processes are as smooth as they can possibly be.



What factors influence user experience?

There are a number of elements that contribute to the user experience. Ultimately, this is about how easy you can make it for your users to find the content that they want, in a format that is accessible to them, and how you guide them towards their desired action. Key elements to this are:

- **Content** – Your content should be relevant to the user query or need.
- **Site aesthetics** – First impressions count.
- **Usability** – Your users should be able to navigate to the precise page or pages that they need, on any device. Mobile friendliness is now an important ranking factor.
- **Price point** – If your users are bouncing as soon as they see the price, this not only is bad for sales, but bad for your site engagement, which is reflected in search results.
- **Ease of conversion** – Optimise your checkout. Can your users complete their sales?

Your agency should be making clear recommendations on how your user experience can be enhanced, and how this will ultimately benefit your overall digital strategy.

Making each performance factor work

In order to ensure that a digital strategy is delivering on these key performance factors, any brand or agency needs to be taking a 'whole of business' view towards your digital strategy. Your agency needs to be engaging multiple stakeholders, not just a specific digital team, because the recommendations that they will make and the decisions that they need to take will ultimately depend on the support of any department that plays a role in delivering and enhancing the current proposition.

Stickyeyes monitors a range of individual ranking factors and, as we discuss further into this guide, there is a consistently growing correlation between user engagement factors and high organic search rankings.

This is the redefinition of SEO. Your agency shouldn't be talking to you about "SEO", it should be talking to you about "marketing".

Agency Checklist: What your agency should be telling you.



It’s all about balance

Your digital campaign has to balance all of the relevant ranking factors. If your strategy is weighted too heavily on a small number of factors, it is likely that you will miss a fundamental element that is critical to success.

A lot of agencies will focus their efforts very heavily on the creative elements of digital marketing and, whilst they are undoubtedly important, you have to ensure that the foundations are in place to make the most of this creative.



Each factor has to work in harmony

Not only do you need to address all of the elements of a sustainable strategy, you need to do so in a coherent and consistent manner. This activity cannot happen in silo and in most cases, this will mean engaging with stakeholders and departments that perhaps do not have digital strategy at the top of their priorities list.

Your agency should be doing everything that they can to make it easy for you to sell the value of what you are doing to these stakeholders.



Do everything that you can to break through bottlenecks

IT and development bottlenecks remain one of the biggest frustrations for marketing professionals, but you need to do whatever you can to overcome these. The longer it takes to deliver these technical measures, the further you are likely to fall behind your competitors.

If you’re still struggling to make headway, challenge your agency to see if they can develop a more creative solution to get around some of those headaches.

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Why audience needs to be at the heart of everything you do.

The way that consumers behave online is evolving. Today's consumers are more agile, more demanding in their expectations of brands and more difficult to engage. They are less loyal to brands, they are driven by different things and they are very quick to express their opinions online.

Search engines have been incredibly quick to adapt to these changes, and Google in particular is incredibly agile at responding to new technologies or consumer trends. In fact, it is investing heavily in many of these new technologies itself.

For enterprise level organisations, this level of agility is somewhat more difficult. Multiple stakeholders, each with individual agendas, responsibilities and KPIs are often difficult to engage, and this makes difficult to force through cultural change. But digital is now everybody's responsibility.

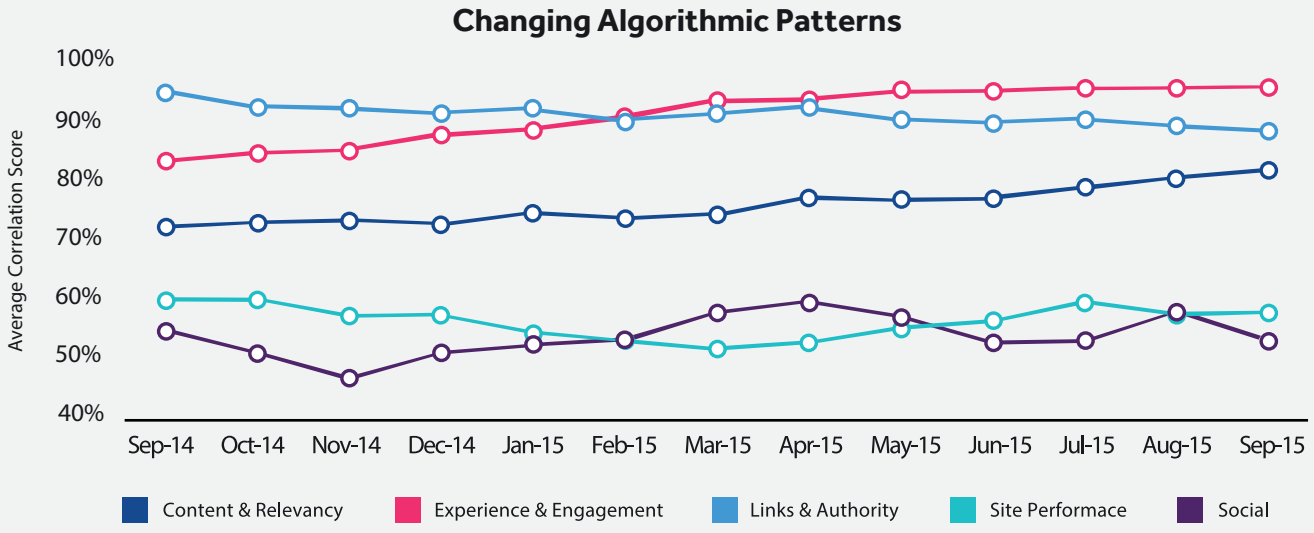
An audience-based algorithm

As Google looks to build search results that deliver the optimum experience for the user, it has moved

to a system that focuses heavily on behaviour factors that reflect a strong level of audience engagement.

We mentioned previously how we have been able to monitor and identify a stronger correlation between engagement factors and ranking performance.

The graph below comes from our proprietary analysis software, Roadmap, and it demonstrates the growing influence of factors that are based around delivering a better user experience. In particular, user experience, content relevancy and content quality have become more influential, whilst the influence of factors such as backlinks, whilst still a significant factor, is starting to decline.



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Understanding your audience.

Where this cross-team and cross-departmental collaboration becomes important is in the development of a strategy that works to enhance a website on these increasingly important ranking factors. A common challenge for those tasked with delivering digital growth is in aligning their needs with the needs of their colleagues in other departments, and relying on the skills and resources of other departments.

Content, PR, branding and customer experience does not work without a detailed understanding of who your audience is, where you can find them, and what they are actively looking for.

Close to one fifth of searches made on Google have never been made before, and it could be your customers who are making some of those brand new searches. That is both a challenge and an opportunity, but it requires targeted content to serve those users.

Pinpointing your customers.

Many organisations have a good idea of who their customers are, and this will usually be widely publicised throughout the business in the form of customer personas. Typically, they will look like this:

> ***"Our target demographic is female, 22-49, married with children, with a household income between £25k-£35k. Our value product is at the heart of their everyday lives."***

This kind of information is always useful, as it allows your marketing team, or agency, to see that they are on the right track.

But of course, your online audience might be a bit different to your customer demographic as a whole. So you need to use multiple data sources to help develop a more complete picture of your digital customer, their demographics, behaviours and interests. Do your audiences use particular social networks? Are they more likely to search via mobile? Do they gravitate towards certain content mediums more than others?

Stickyeyes uses a specialist tool called Pinpoint, to draw on a number of separate data and insights sources, including GlobalWebIndex, Experian Mosaic, YouGov, Hitwise, Social Network Insights and our own proprietary data sets. This level of data helps agencies and brands to develop insights into their online audiences, what content they consume and where they expect to find it. This is ultimately what drives your digital strategy.

"Content, PR, branding and customer experience does not work without a detailed understanding of who your audience is, where you can find them, and what they are actively looking for."

Agency Checklist: What your agency should be telling you.



Know your audiences inside out

Hunches and guesswork don’t cut it here. You need to know your audiences inside out. You need to know who they are, where they are and how they engage with brands online.

Your agency will have a lot of ideas about these things, but you should be asking them to back up those ideas with hard insight. They should be consulting multiple sources to build up a complete picture of your audiences and behaviours, and this is ultimately what will fuel your strategy.



Put audience at the heart of your activity

With engagement factors becoming increasingly influential as a ranking factor, you need to ensure that you are working hard to engage your audiences and emmerse them in your digital experience. If you’re producing something that isn’t going to enhance the experience of the audiences you want to attract, then you may need to question the rationale for doing so.



Don’t forget the fundamentals

Factors such as links and authority may be declining in influence, but they undoubtedly still carry an enormous amount of weight in the overall search marketing mix.

Don’t allow your agency to lose sight of just how important these factors are.

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Engaging your audiences.

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The audience insights that you develop are ultimately what will help you or your agency deliver an effective digital strategy. When armed with this insight, it is a much more compelling case for engaging stakeholders within an organisation who wouldn't necessarily see digital as part of their remit, or who wouldn't consider the needs of SEO as part of their objectives.

How is your brand communicating with your audiences right now?

Digital media has facilitated a significant shift in the way customers discover and interact with brands. Consumers are now not only making a shift towards digital, they are shifting to a multi-device, multichannel means of product discovery.

The channels that consumers use to engage with brands and products are becoming increasingly diverse, and consumers have adapted much more quickly to these new forms of communication. Consumers are now much more likely to seek a recommendation from a stranger on a review site, or a prominent blogger, than a friend of in-store advisor.

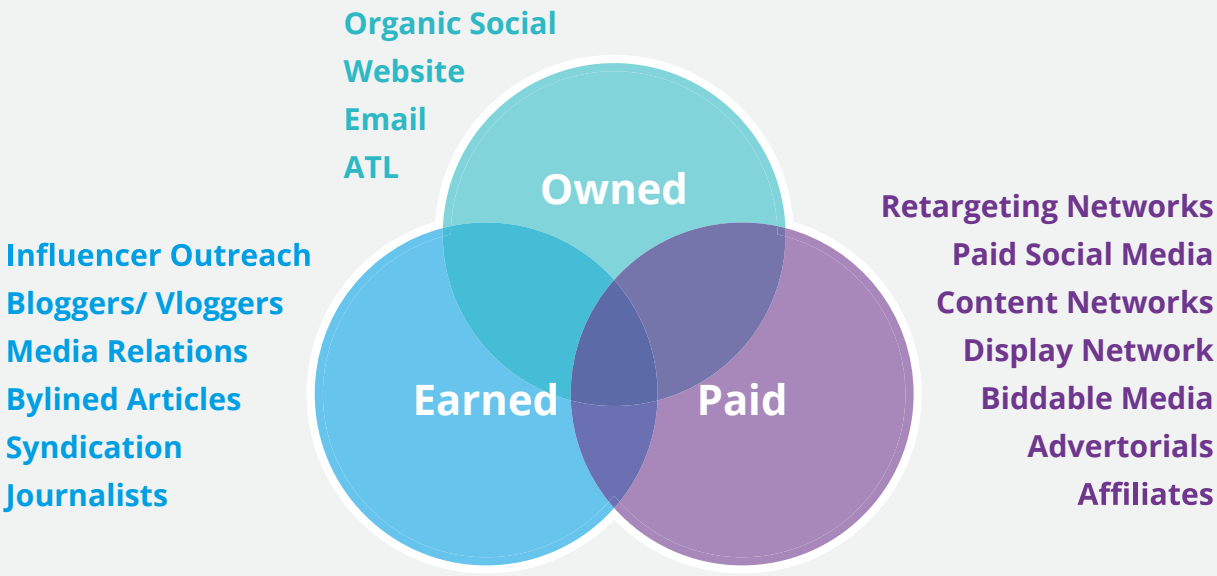
It means that the customer journey now spans over the three key areas of marketing communications; namely owned, earned and paid.

A brand's owned channels, including its website, social media channels and above the line marketing, are the foundation of your digital presence.

However, this alone is not enough to succeed in digital and increasingly, brands need to ensure that they are prominent on both earned media, which include mentions and recommendations from mass media, key influencers and editorial content, and paid marketing communications.

Paid in particular is becoming increasingly important. Social media algorithms continue to evolve in a way that reduces the potential organic reach of branded content in order to preserve the user experience, and to encourage brands to pay for promoted content. Facebook in particular has made very public statements that, following user feedback, its algorithm will favour personal content (ie, non-commercial) content in the newsfeeds of its users. This puts an even greater emphasis on paid communications for brands looking to get their content seen.

But as these channels diversify, and as consumers utilise them on multiple devices, brands need to find a way to get these channels working together if they are to deliver an effective and consistent brand experience.



The team and skills to deliver this strategy

Your digital strategy should be designed to optimise your website and your customer experience for these increasingly important and varied factors, and this cross-team and cross-departmental collaboration becomes incredibly important.

A common challenge for those tasked with delivering digital growth is in aligning their needs with the needs of their colleagues in other departments, and relying on the skills and resources of other departments. Your role as a digital strategist is to align a growing number of operational departments to work towards this goal of digital success, even if those departments do not have a specific marketing remit.

This would include marketing, branding, PR, customer services, IT, social media, data analytics, sales, logistics and a host of other core business functions.

These are the key skills that you need within your digital function but, as is often the case in large enterprises, it is often difficult to get these multiple departments to collaborate and work to a single common goal.

It is this challenge that has seen many large organisations (Adidas being one notable example) introduce a 'Digital Centre of Excellence' model, where a digital presence is embedded into each operational department. This is designed to break down the barriers that often exist between teams, and it ensures that digital expertise and skills are present within each department. You can read more about this model in our '**How to Build a Digital Centre of Excellence**' eBook.

The team tasked with delivering your strategy needs to be capable of engaging these multiple stakeholders and articulating the aims of your digital strategy.



Agency Checklist: What your agency should be telling you.



Make your content move

Content doesn’t work if it just stays still. You have to make your content move if you are going to get the reaction that you want.

It has never been easier for your audiences to avoid branded content and few will actively go and seek out your content, unless it is something truly remarkable. You need to take your content to them. If your agency doesn’t have this distribution plan, ask questions.



Budget for paid content

Too many brands and agencies that are investing in content marketing are investing in the production and creation of content, but not in the distribution. Put simply, you need to assign budget for paid content distribution in your strategy.

Earned coverage is great, but there are no guarantees, whilst organic alone is not going to give you the reach that you need. You should be presented with a plan for paid content distribution.



Aim for the sweet spot

Content distribution and audience engagement, like any other element of digital strategy, is all about balance. You need to be hitting the sweet spot between owned, earned and paid content distribution.

Your agency needs to providing you with it’s roadmap to getting your content to the audiences that you want to reach across all three channels.

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What to expect from your digital agency in 2016.

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Any organisation looking to drive a return on investment from organic search needs to be taking a modern approach to SEO, and this is particularly true for those brands operating in highly competitive markets where the battle for the most prominent search ranking positions is incredibly fierce.

It simply isn't enough for a digital agency to be taking a single-minded approach to search. Instead, you need to be looking for an agency that can engage stakeholders across all levels of an organisation, and essentially act as a full-service consultancy partner.

A modern, sustainable approach.

Google is very much focused on delivering the best possible user experience that it can, and both you and your agency needs to be able to deliver as strong a customer proposition as you can. Any brand or agency that attempts to simply game the system without delivering an enhanced user value proposition is ultimately going to get found out.

But above all, your strategy has to be delivered in a way that is sustainable. Whilst there will undoubtedly be 'quick win' opportunities for any brand, they need to be seen as part of a long-term strategy that is focused on building authority, creating engaging content and delivering a genuine customer proposition.

Going beyond content.

A lot of agencies, and a lot of marketers, will talk at length about the importance and the value of content. You'd expect them to, because content is undoubtedly a cornerstone of any digital marketing strategy.

However, content marketing alone does not constitute and SEO or a digital strategy.

You cannot allow your digital agency to neglect the fundamental technical and operational factors that also influence your organic search performance. What is critical here is a balanced approach and if you weight your strategy too heavily in one direction, you won't succeed.

Creativity that is grounded in reality.

If you are going to create content and a strategy that your audiences crave, then you need to understand exactly who they are, how they behave, how they consume content and where they are digitally active. Lots of agencies are full of creative ideas, but is this grounded in reality? Are these ideas based on sound reasoning and insight, or hunches and guesswork? Can they make sense of the data you have?

The right blend of creative and technical proficiency.

A lot of agencies will focus heavily on the creative side of digital, and neglect some fundamental technical elements that, whilst perhaps not as influential as they once were, are still massive important to any digital strategy. Your agency should still be advising you on your backlink profile, they should still be talking to you about functional content and they should still be looking to enhance your domain authority in a sustainable way.

What you should be looking for as a brand is a balanced approach to digital, not one that focuses too heavily on one particular element or discipline.

> **You need to look for an agency that can engage stakeholders at all levels of an organisation.**

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Agility to respond.

Every digital innovation has the potential to alter consumer behaviour, and this creates a significant challenge for brands. Consumers are usually much faster at embracing these developments than established organisations.Digital is an immensely powerful disruptive force and your organisation, and your partner agencies, need to be agile to respond to those changes before your customers do.

Many organisations are already finding that not only are they slower than their target audiences at adopting new technologies, but that they are also struggling to understand how their audiences use those technologies within the customer journey. If allowed to continue, that disconnect will become bigger and bigger, allowing smaller, more agile brands to engage those audiences.

> **Consumers are much faster to embrace new technology than established brands**

Ability to engage key stakeholders throughout the organisation.

Driving digital change in large organisations is a difficult task. Operational complexity and structure, large staff headcounts, multiple offices across different time zones (often supporting different languages and local cultures), multiple stakeholders and multiple external agencies can all create inertia throughout the operation. This can make ambitions of becoming a digitally focused business extremely hard to bring to life.

Digital is everybody’s business, so your agency needs to be capable of engaging the entire organisation, not just the marketing and IT teams.

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Final Thoughts

What we have discussed in this guide focuses on the things that you as an organisation should expect from any partner agency that is helping you to achieve your ambitions in digital, but every agency needs your support to deliver those aims. There are fundamental things that you can do as a client to get the most from your digital agency.

Get your agency involved with the whole organisation.

If your agency is going to succeed, it needs to be able to rely on the support of numerous stakeholders across the business.

Introduce your agency partners to these stakeholders. Allow them to explain what they’re looking to achieve, and how they need the support of each and every business operation to achieve these goals.

This will allow you and your agency to potentially alieviate any of the key obstacles and challenges in advance.

Sell their ideas internally.

Your agency may come up with ideas that represent something of a departure from how the organisation currently operates. These ideas may represent a bold move by your brand, and may come up against some resistance from other stakeholders.

Your agency should provide clear insight into the decisions that they have taken, but it is often helpful to have an advocate within the organisation.

The ideas that your agency will put to you represent what they believe is the best approach to achieving your brand’s aims and ambitions, so try to get your colleagues on board.

Give them a hand.

Nobody should know your organisation and your audiences more than you, so share this insight with your agency.

Your agency will do their own research and gather their own insights, but any information that you can share with them is always useful in building a more complete picture into your customers.

Don’t accept style over substance.

A lot of agencies will come to you with elaborate creative ideas, but don’t let them forget about the fundamentals.

This document has discussed many of these core best practice measures that, whilst perhaps not as influential as they once were, are still the foundations of any successful digital strategy. Your agency should be building a strategy for these just as it should be developing a strategy for your wider creative activity.



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Further Reading

How to create a Digital Centre of Excellence.

Customers are discovering and interacting with brands on multiple devices and through multiple channels, but it’s becoming increasingly difficult for brands to get these channels working together to deliver an effective and consistent brand experience.

This guide will explain how large, multi-national brands are adapting to this challenge and restructuring how they approach digital.

Download it now at www.stickyeyes.com/dcoe

Get Serious with Content Marketing.

This whitepaper will give you practical models for developing, deploying and refining your content marketing strategy using our ‘Five C’ framework.

Download it now at www.stickyeyes.com/getseriousaboutcontent

How to drive ROI from social advertising.

With click-through rates (CTR’s) for Facebook desktop ads more than eight times higher than a normal web ad, how do you ensure you’re optimising your social advertising spend?

Using real life case studies, this simple guide will explain how you can increase traffic through social ad campaigns, target the right audiences and increase revenue through social advertising.

Download it now at www.stickyeyes.com/socialroi

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About the Authors



Jonny Artis

Search Director, Stickyeyes

Jonny has been at Stickyeyes for more than ten years and in that time, has led Stickyeyes search marketing services through a series of innovations in the search engine market.

As Search Director, Jonny is responsible for leading Stickyeyes’ SEO strategy and developing search marketing solutions.

Jonny is part of Stickyeyes’ dedicated solutions team, which was created to ensure that Stickyeyes is delivering best of breed strategies and campaigns for some of the world’s leading brands.



Mike McDougall

Head of SEO, Stickyeyes

With over 14 years in digital, Mike has worked in a variety of roles in agencies in the UK & North America.

Mike has previously led search marketing teams for a number of leading agencies and has also worked client-side for a number of prominent online brands, including lastminute.com.

In his current role, Mike heads up the Search team ensuring Stickyeyes’ clients are leading the way with forward thinking, content-led digital strategies.

A little about us...

Stickyeyes

With more than 15 years in the industry, we have a world class track record in delivering highly effective acquisition-led enterprise level and international digital marketing campaigns.

Stickyeyes is 100% focused on digital. It’s all we do. But we also know how crucial digital can be in harnessing the power of your marketing channels.

We believe that digital is about more than simply writing a strategy, or building some processes. We believe that digital is a culture. Namely, your business culture.

Digital isn’t just a single channel, it’s an integral part of any brand communication strategy, and it works as part of, not against, your existing strategy.

To understand, and to succeed in digital, your brand and your people have to think digital.

If that sounds like a solution that your brand needs, get in touch: www.stickyeyes.com/contact

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