Channelling your best efforts - to reach the right audience



When it comes to marketing, digital channels have vastly expanded what is possible in terms of reach and audience engagement. Compare the situation nowadays to just a few decades ago, when marketing opportunities used to be virtually limited to print media, door-to-door sales, and telemarketing.

Nowadays, audiences can be reached almost 24/7 over email, via social media, on blog posts, or through banner ad displays based on a users' internet search terms. Moreover, with the ever-proliferating uses of big data and rapid development of AI and machine-modelling technologies, it is increasingly possible to segment, profile, and target audiences in ways that were previously unimaginable.

Faced with such a plethora of marketing options, how are businesses to decide where best to concentrate their marketing budget and efforts? Previously, we looked at strategic ways to accelerate or decelerate spend in times of economic strife. In this post, we break down the most popular marketing channels and explain how each one can help you to reach qualified audience likely to be receptive to your offer.

Before diving in, however, a word of caution is required: not all marketing channels were created equal. Some channels rely on quantity over quality; other channels depend on creating a genuine one-to-one human connection. What works brilliantly for one product or service will prove unusable for another.

Let's take a closer look.

Email Marketing

Despite being the oldest of digital marketing tools, email marketing remains popular for a

number of good reasons. Firstly, unlike a paid campaign, email marketing is inexpensive and sustainable regardless of budget constraints. Secondly, as a relatively versatile medium, email marketing can be used to target both warm and cold lead lists.

In the case of warm leads, email allows you to reach out to people *already* in your sales funnel who, one hopes, just need a little extra attention and nurture in order to convert. Hitting them with well-timed and consistently valuable content via email is an excellent way to bring them to the table. A data-led channel such as email lends itself to a highly targeted approach, which is a great for delivering a personalised message tailored to the interests of each individual audience.

Content Marketing

According to Databox, content marketing is up there with email marketing when it comes to reaching your target audience—and it makes sense. If you are producing useful, valuable content in the form of a blog that attracts inbound traffic because it helps people to solve a problem, your audience is automatically pre-qualified. They were actively seeking answers to a question that you helped them to answer. Therefore, for pre-qualifying leads and enticing them into the top of your sales funnel, content marketing can be an extremely powerful tool.

Furthermore, content marketing can also be used to nurture leads within the funnel, quietly establishing brand authority and goodwill among your target audience. Best of all, the content that you create is evergreen—i.e., so long as it remains relevant, it will continue to rank on Google, improve your SEO, and drive traffic to your door.

On the other hand, content marketing is a slow burn channel that is not necessarily well-suited to producing a high rate of conversions.

Social Media Marketing

A good way to think about social media platforms is like digital biospheres or ecosystems—and social media marketing can be a great way to find and meet your target audience in their 'natural habitats'.

In the LinkedIn biosphere, for instance, you are much more likely to find B2B marketers, business personnel, and people looking to professionally network. In the Pinterest biosphere, by contrast, you have a higher chance of finding users in the Generation X demographic looking for lifestyle inspiration.

What this means is that social media marketing can yield dividends, provided that you have correctly identified where your target market is likely to be hanging out. Creating a paid ad for international tax consultancy services is unlikely to result in many conversions on Instagram, but the same ad placed on LinkedIn could provide excellent returns.

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In reality, the situation is more nuanced than this (not every Pinterest user is a woman looking for advice about wedding dresses and not every LinkedIn member is a corporate lawyer), so as with all marketing efforts, it is essential to have as clear an idea as possible of your buyer persona before committing budget to a serious marketing campaign.

An excellent way of doing this on social media is to first build up an organic following by posting valuable content, and then using data analytics to search for commonalities among your followers. Once you have built a semi-clear picture of who likes and follows you, you stand a much better chance of reaching like-minded individuals through a laser-focused paid campaign.

SEO Marketing

Achieving good SEO does not sit outside of other aspects of digital marketing, so if your website is working properly and your inbound marketing efforts are well-thought through, then good SEO should already be a by-product of your marketing strategy. If, however, your attempts to attract valuable inbound traffic are falling short, then it would certainly be smart to investigate what can be done to improve your search engine ranking.

Good SEO comes down to making it easy for Google to trawl your website for results. Three important ways to help Google do this are 1) making sure that your website includes key search word terms; 2) making sure the content on your website contains relevant, high-quality backlinks; and 3) leveraging the use of strategic content production through blog posts and regular updates.

Being aware of SEO is key, but regardless of your efforts it remains something of a mysterious entity, not least because people often try to game the system and therefore Google is constantly changing its algorithm. In essence, SEO is volatile by nature, but not to be overlooked.

Display Marketing (paid search)

Google adwords has provided a hugely powerful tool for businesses who invest in it. Driven by big data, it allows any size of company to bid on key search terms that will result in their ads being displayed to a highly-specified demographic segment.

Whereas content marketing, finely-tuned SEO, and social media marketing all lean into the power of organic search results, display marketing is all about assigning budget to locate and target possible consumers. By bidding on popular key words, display marketing can be used to ensure that your products and services are prioritised on search engine results pages (SERPs) for clients whose interest in your field is self-evident.

There is no question that display advertising is a powerful way of capturing well-qualified leads, and this is especially true if your business is not getting onto the front page of Google for organic reasons. However, despite its potential to produce high volumes of traffic and ability to reach

relevant audiences, paid ads won't necessarily help with your ROI unless those clicks turn into conversions. Furthermore, it can quickly become a pricey option if competition on key words is strong.

Telemarketing

Just as spam has given email marketing a bad rep, so have inconsiderate and intrusive cold calls provided telemarketing with a certain stigma. The truth, however, is that done properly, telemarketing is a hugely powerful medium for reaching and converting leads.

The reason for its effectiveness is rooted in the fact that telemarketing has the capacity to be unequivocally personal, allowing businesses to build relationships, trust, and deep levels of engagement with their clients. Furthermore, telemarketing is an abundantly agile channel that can be applied at any stage of the customer journey; from cold calling to closing; from pre-sales market research to post-sales feedback; and for inbound or outbound customer engagement.

While it is easy to ignore emails and digital calls to action, telemarketing is direct and interruptive so it can reach audiences that digital channels can't. As a direct channel, it also has the ability to get through to the right contacts that may not be responsive to other digital approaches.

The truth that everyone knows is that few businesses can survive nowadays without a digital marketing strategy. However, what many businesses fail to recognise is that by integrating the broad reach of digital with the surgical precision of analogue, one can deploy on a suite of channels that will return the best possible ROI.

...but most importantly

It may be the case that one channel far outperforms the others, but the chances are that you will need to integrate several channels in order to really optimise your marketing efforts. This is more of ongoing journey than a one stop shop-type situation.

Whichever channels you explore, however, you may have twigged that there is an underlying principle common to them all. In a nutshell, it consists of really knowing your audience and formulating a customer-focused strategy. If you keep this squarely in mind, then whichever channel you choose to focus on will stand a much greater chance of delivering what you ask of it.

Since 1990, The Telemarketing Company has helped hundreds of organisations extend their reach and grow their businesses into new sectors and geographies. An agile, strategic channel, telemarketing can be targeted at any stage of the customer journey, qualifying top and middle of the funnel digital leads and guiding high-value prospects through to close. It builds trust and delivers a tailored, compelling message to high value prospects that are otherwise inaccessible. Get in touch to discover how our expert voice-based services can help extend your reach.

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Hopefully this article will have inspired you to think a bit more about telemarketing and the value it can bring to your business. For more information on our services visit our website, or give us a call to discuss your requirements and how The Telemarketing Company can help support your sales and marketing strategy.

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