

5 Trends to Rock Your Digital Marketing Strategy in 2015

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5 Trends to Rock Your Digital Marketing Strategy in 2015 (and knock the socks off your ROI)

With 2014 sitting squarely in the rear-view mirror, now's a good time to take stock, see what worked in 2014, and look ahead what you can expect in the year to come.

Like any year in the digital marketing space, there were mighty changes and small steps in all areas of the industry, from paid search, to SEO, affiliate and content marketing, and social media.

In the past, these areas have been approached as discrete tactics, often implemented by different departments. What's changed is that now these activities are completely enmeshed. In today's digital marketing landscape, it's all hands to the wheel. Boundaries are hazy and getting hazier. You simply can't consider your social channels without considering content marketing, which in turn affects affiliate success, and so on.

Lee Odden, CEO of TopRank Online Marketing puts it nicely: "Marketing is everybody's job."

So that said, how did you do in 2014? Did you have a digital marketing strategy? If you didn't, do you wish you had one? If you had a strategy, could you have done better? A 'yes' to any of these questions means you're ready for industry-leading tactics that take you to the next level.

We've taken a look back ourselves and come up with this killer list of five trends that can do some serious, strategic heavy lifting in 2015. All five are doable, actionable, and within the scope of small businesses and big brands alike.

It's never too late to think strategically. With a little industry-leading support and insight, you can position your online business ahead of the curve and rock your ROI.

SEO Will Become More Holistic and Proactive Rather Than Reactive

Google ain't done with you yet! Manual penalties abounded in 2014. We found one of the biggest changes in SEO this past year was the upswing in number of manual penalties levied by Google. Since the introduction of the manual penalty 2012, it seems people have held their breath, hoping it's not their turn.

The truth is, if you haven't been hit yet with a penalty but your site's been around for a while, it could be that Google just hasn't got around to you. But they will. And while you can certainly work to get the penalty lifted, the process can be long and require several resubmissions. Even then, a fully recovery after a penalty is difficult.

Like manually applied penalties, Google algorithm changes keep SEOs hopping. The 2013 Hummingbird Update, for example, relegated keywords to the digital dust bin yet we still see merchants trying to optimize for keywords, an unnecessary task that often compromises content quality.

In 2015 we strongly suggest you opt for holistic, proactive SEO strategies that will serve your business long term rather than force reactionary tactics that leave you scrambling.

By proactive we mean cleaning up your backlink profile, getting rid of bad links, and scrubbing your content of any keyword optimization practices. There's no way to predict which way the Google wind will blow, so start now to proactively scrub your site.

By holistic we mean tighter integration with your content marketing teams to ensure that content is of the highest quality, relevant to your audience, and squeaky clean from Google's perspective with inbound links from other relevant high quality sites.

Affiliate Marketers Will Lead Brands in Building Solid Relationships with Affiliates and Consumers

Best-in-class affiliate marketing has always been about rocking your relationships with your affiliates. In turn, it's your affiliates who build trust with your customers.

Attribution, the way a customer is tracked between the top of the funnel and the point of purchase, is a lot more important now than it was a year ago. Advertisers are using large segments of data to help them see how transactions come to their sites, including the traffic that comes from the affiliate program. For affiliates and affiliate managers, this means solid relationships with consumers will pay off more than ever.

As attribution technology continues to get better, advertisers are getting a lot smarter on how they pay their affiliates, affiliate networks are creating ways to pay affiliates differently, which means affiliates will be rewarded for building trust with the consumer.

Opportunities to build trust also come from industry shakeups. Facebook has announced that starting in January 2015, it will be limiting the number of promotional posts from businesses that show up in users' news feeds. This could be a 'red alert' for some companies who will be scrambling to figure out other ways of reaching their customers. On the other hand, brands with solid relationships with their affiliates should see this as a golden opportunity.

People lend more attention to posts by individuals, as opposed to posts by brands. If a brand has spent time supporting their affiliates, who in turn build solid relationships with their visitors, platform changes like those at Facebook or other channels won't cause quite the same headache.

The difference is that instead of a brand promoting itself, affiliates will drive consumers to their own blogs, and then over to the brand. It may be a less linear route, but it will likely yield stronger long-term brand credibility.

Pay-Per-Click Goes Mobile

The mobile buzzword is everywhere. Some are calling mobile a “catalyst for change” or the “driving force”. We couldn’t agree more. This just may be the year forces converge in a perfect storm of mobile marketing luv.

Paid advertising has always been a staple of digital marketing because it inputs directly into revenue, web traffic and conversion rates. Now, the biggest change from 2014 that’s still gaining momentum in 2015 is mobile emerging as an advertising platform in its own right.

While the use of phones and tablets has increased this past year as much as 60%, and with it impressions, the increase in clicks and ad spend grew more slowly, around 30%. What this means is advertisers (on the whole) are slow to take advantage of the mobile advertising platform.

This presents a unique opportunity for you to be ahead of the crowd. In 2015, you should be directing your ad spend at mobile phones and tablets, tailoring the specific ad image and messaging to user behaviour and geolocation data. Especially with smartphones, you also have the opportunity to take advantage of new call tracking tools for optimizing offline purchases.

Social Media Will Lead The Way in Humanizing Corporate Messaging and Building Community

Like other years, the explosion of social media channels continued in 2014. It seems like just as soon as new platforms came online, others were swallowed up by the big players. It's no wonder people get confused about what they should be doing on social media.

Small businesses doing social marketing on their own and the big brands with big budgets continued to fall into the trap of spreading themselves too thinly across all channels, and in the end supporting none very well at all. In 2015, we see more and more companies seeking out consultation and support for the right social channel that fits their business.

Another win for social media marketing is the recognition that selling or promoting too much on social is the best way to be dismissed or ignored. Social media has become a critical backbone for companies who want to align their message with their core values. We've seen campaigns structured around a point of view on an issue or world event that don't sell a thing but say a lot about a brand.

Likewise, the use of social for customer support, where conversations are public, transparent, and immediate--often faster than traditional support forms or systems, will increase. Social conversations if done right, are great community builders.

A/B testing continues to be important, even more so, and yet we're shocked to see how little it's done in the social space. While people seem to be all right with testing landing pages and offers on the website, they don't necessarily do the same for their social channels. This is another huge opportunity for savvy strategic thinkers. Whether you partner with an agency or you DIY, the tools for testing your ads are there, and free to use.

Content Marketing Will Continue to Grow With Humor and Visual Storytelling

One thing all digital marketing experts can agree on is to expect more content to be created than ever before. In 2014, we saw trends such as focus on empathy, the customer experience, and clear, remarkable writing. The change for 2015 is simply 'more please'!

Humanizing your message with behind-the-scenes images and stories of the real people (and pets), behind the brand go along way with your customers. Brands will seek out and align with leading bloggers, giving away some control of their messaging but in return getting access to new loyal audiences and a trusted voice.

For 2015, we also see humor and the flip side, vulnerability, coming to the fore. Who doesn't love reading something funny? Humor is also highly sharable and more likely to hold that elusive viral x-factor. Social channels like Instagram and Vine are natural platforms for visual storytelling. Brands that can tell their stories with images or video will shine.

Finally, if more content than ever before will be published, then we believe measuring the consumption of that content is a next vital step. This means testing and optimization in content production and distribution using content-specific metrics such as production rate, qualified leads, bounce rate, conversion rate, retention and acquisition costs. That's a real mouthful, but what we mean is that if you continually measure and test content, like other digital marketing tactics, you'll know how to adjust and adapt for better results.

So What's Next?

That's five killer trends for digital marketing strategy in 2015. There are certainly more, and with them more work to be done. But, these five we believe are achievable by any company operating online, even if there's been no strategic plan in place until now.

It's not enough to just be engaged in digital marketing activities, like posting to a company Facebook page or Twitter account, sending out newsletters or running an affiliate program. Making it all jive together, that's the secret sauce--getting all digital marketing disciplines pulling together for a common goal.

That's what All Inclusive Marketing does best. We have a team of industry's leaders in PPC, SEO, content marketing, social media, and affiliate marketing. We live and breathe this stuff every day, staying on top of emerging trends, and industry shakeups. We apply our own advice in our own business so we know how strategy works to improve your bottom line.

Strategy is not about big words on a page, or a slide deck with funky pie charts. A true multi-channel digital marketing strategy identifies the holes, gives you actionable steps to improve, and recommends how to measure the results for better ROI.

Here Are Three Ways You Can Get All Inclusive Marketing Working for You

2015 Multi-Channel Digital Marketing Strategy

This report is our comprehensive digital strategy option, perfect for new online businesses and older companies wanting to go to the next level.

Choose this one if you:

- Are new online and are unclear what your goals, objectives and online direction/strategy should be
- Don't know how to reach, engage and/or convert your desired audience online
- Don't know which digital marketing channels you should use or why, that will produce the best results with your target audience
- Don't know what budgets to set or what sales projections to expect from online marketing efforts
- Want to execute a digital marketing plan yourself, or with an external team, but need industry experts to show / tell you what to do.

2014 Digital Marketing Audit and Performance Evaluation

This report gives you a detailed breakdown of all your digital marketing activities in your business as it stands today. It gives you that line in the sand so you know where to start.

Choose this one if you:

- Don't know if your existing strategy is working
- Don't know where the gaps and opportunities are for both short and long term improvements that produce stronger revenue growth
- Want to figure out how to reduce costs with existing campaigns for higher ROI.

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2014 / 2015 Gap & Opportunity Analysis

This report is a small slice of the multi-channel digital marketing strategy that focusses on gaps and opportunities you may be missing in your existing strategy.

Choose this one if you:

- Want to expand into new markets but don't know how or what to look for
- Don't know if your existing strategy is working
- Don't know where the gaps and opportunities are for both short and long term improvements that produce stronger revenue growth
- Want to figure out how to reduce costs with existing campaigns for higher ROI.

About Us

At All Inclusive Marketing, we help businesses like yours make it easy with our proven reach, engage, and convert methodology that uses attribution to drive stronger results and higher ROI for your brand.

If driving new customer acquisitions, increased sales, stronger profitability and extended buyer retention is important to you, then call All Inclusive Marketing today for your free consultation.

You don't need to navigate these waters alone. Our team of seasoned veterans will create a customized solution specific to your needs, your budgets and your overall brand objectives so you can get back to growing your business in other areas you love.

Call All Inclusive Marketing for your free consultation today at **1.866.512.1314** or email info@allinclusivemarketing.com.