

# Digital Marketing 101- The Fundamentals



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Marketing is imperative for your business to succeed but getting it right can be tricky in the age of digital marketing. Most SMEs (small to medium enterprises) know that they need to be doing digital marketing but we know, from feedback from many clients, that many of you find it confusing as to where to start, overwhelming with so much information, time consuming and difficult to monitor results.

In this guide, I'm going to give you the fundamentals that you need to take your business to the next level. The world has changed and the days of just putting an ad in the local paper or having a listing in the Yellow Pages are long gone. If you want to turn your leads into sales and stay ahead of your competitors, you need a real presence online or you will be left behind.

Our aim with this guide is to help you understand how you can build trust, reputation and authority - exactly what is required to get results from your digital marketing

First, let's just cover quickly the difference between digital marketing and Internet marketing as many clients often ask this question. Simply, Internet marketing is just a component of digital marketing, albeit the largest part. Digital marketing covers any digital channel e.g. website, social media, email, SMS, TV, digital billboards - or marketing anywhere that is digital. Internet marketing obviously makes up most of this and includes any marketing whatsoever on the Internet like your website, social media, blogging, banner advertising, pay per click or retargeting etc.

With digital marketing you need to get your ducks in a row properly so that you will be found on Google or the search engines and then turn that traffic into leads and sales. It's about achieving a perfect mix of presenting your business to your potential clients and customers, as well as keeping the search engines happy. Just concentrating on one or the other won't pay off.

So - let's start at the very beginning – no, not with a song, with your branding!



Before we can get into digital marketing, we need to just quickly cover off some basics about your branding.

Your brand is not just your logo as many people think. Your logo is the visual symbol for your brand. Your brand is the way your business is perceived in the market place by your customers and clients. So it's not about what YOU say about your business, it's about what OTHERS say about your business.

It's the personality of your business and how that is conveyed to others. You need to spend some time on this so that you have consistency prior to getting your digital marketing up and running. Your team or staff members also need to be briefed and understand your brand especially if they are going to be updating social media posts, recording videos etc.

Your brand includes your logo, colour palette, marketing materials, images, banners, voice in your content, tagline, messaging, and so on. These are all tangible representations of your brand that make up its sensory identity.



It's almost impossible to believe that some businesses still don't have a website and it's also impossible to believe that about 50% of businesses don't have a mobile friendly website!

All websites should be built these days for mobile as well as desktop, as roughly 80% of Australians and Americans are now smartphone users who use their phones for shopping, search and connecting. More searches are now done on mobile than desktop. If your customers need to zoom to see your website on their mobile, they won't be your customer for long.

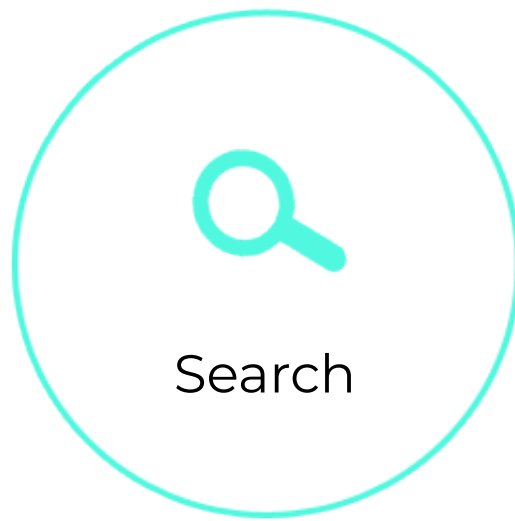
You can get a free website by building your own but save yourself the pain and the mistakes, and employ a professional web company to get the job done for you. Your website reflects your business and brand to the world and it must be professional if you are serious about your business. A website company or digital marketing company will consider a range of critical factors when they are building your site, which will make a big difference on getting you found on the search engines or turning your traffic into sales e.g.

- Responsive design for all mobile devices.
- Website speed – important not just to visitors to your site but also to Google for your ranking.

- Layout – designed for the best results.
- All links, forms, opt-ins working properly.
- Images set up for Google – yes Google algorithms can read images!
- Payment gateways set up correctly.
- Set up for Google with Sitemap, Analytics, and Webmaster Tools.
- Compelling content written for your target audience as well as for Google search engines.
- Landing pages connected to advertising campaigns.
- Domain name advice.
- Hosting set up.
- Email set up & advice – use a professional email address associated with your domain name and not just a free Gmail or Outlook address.
- Branding or rebranding if required.

And these are just a few of the factors you will get assistance on.

Website design trends change constantly and it's best to leave it to the experts so that you can spend time on doing what you do best.



People do most of their researching online. This may be on search engines like Google, on social media sites like Facebook, on video channels like YouTube (owned by Google), on Podcast sites, or on a myriad of directory sites. If your business isn't there, they will find your competitors.

If you do nothing else, make sure you have your business on Google My Business. It's free and easy to update. Include lots of content that is keyword rich, images and videos. You can get all your clients who are wild about your products and/or services, to give you a 5-star rating as well, which Google loves!



Content should be the key to your digital marketing. Your website content needs to be authentic and relevant always to your products and/or services. If it's not, you will be penalised by Google when your website is ranked (the better ranked websites will appear higher in the search list, resulting in more visitors to the website). You can't just write a lot of rubbish that is over-stuffed with keywords hoping that will get you to the top of page 1 on Google. Without great content Google's algorithms can't figure you out.

Content includes your copy, your images, videos, social media feeds into your website and blog posts.

You need to be publishing fresh content constantly and remember, Google owns YouTube, which is the 2nd largest search engine with 3 billion searches per month! Fresh content means frequent indexing by the search engines. It may not be the case that they give you higher indexing but it gives them a reason to visit your site more frequently so that you have the opportunity to get better indexing. The more great content, the more likely you are to be perceived as an authority in your industry or area. Remember, you need to build trust, reputation and authority!





Can you afford to ignore social media for your business?

Many of your customers and prospects are communicating with each other in a social space like Facebook. Wouldn't it be a good business move to be there with them?

When visitors go to your website and have decided there is enough interest for them to look around, they will inevitably click on some of your social media links for social proof (trust). I'm sure you've done it yourself. You check the Facebook Page or Instagram feed to see if it's being updated and what the posts are like. You definitely need to have some social media going but if you're doing it yourself and are time poor, it's best to do one or two platforms well than have lots of accounts that are not being managed properly.

- Share your content including blog posts, videos, images, news - this provides links back to your website.
- Include social media feed to your website so potential clients will be encouraged to 'join the conversation'.
- Make sure you answer questions, comments or complaints promptly.

- Engage a specialist social media team for a strategy or do some research first about what your target audience wants to engage with.
- Mix it up and keep it interesting.
- Use a site like Hootsuite to schedule posts to save time but make sure you still spend some time on the platforms to interact.
- Engage a specialist social media team to manage it all for you if you need assistance but remember, you know your business and clients better than anyone else, so make sure you have plenty of input and assist with content.



Once you've created your fabulous website the question is, how can you ensure that your products or services are noticed by the people searching for them on the Internet?

That is where SEO (search engine optimisation) comes into the picture. Search engine optimisation is all about making sure that your website appears in relevant Internet searches organically (free of charge as opposed to paid advertising) as much as possible. Everyone wants to come up on the first page of Google! Search engines such as Google, Yahoo and Bing are powered by complex algorithms which, to make things confusing, can be updated often.

SEO isn't just about stacking your content full of keywords (the words or phrases potential clients will use to search for your business). Lots of different factors affect your ranking e.g. updated content, relevant content, user experience, loading time of your website, backlinks to your site, and of course, the keywords. So what's on the front end of your website is just as important as to what's behind the scenes.

Search engine optimisation is not a 'set and forget' activity. It requires consistent, ongoing hard work to maintain a top position on the search engines (which is why it is costly). Take your eye off the ball, and you

can slip very easily or be overtaken by competitors. Optimising for local search is easier and less expensive than national or even international. Whether or not you pay for advertising, you should have your website set up with the basics of search engine optimisation.



There are various ways you can advertise online and some of these options can be relatively cost effective depending on the platform and your keywords.

- Google offers PPC or pay per click, which will get your ad to the top of page 1 in an instant if you are prepared to pay.
- Remarketing is advertising which is targeted to consumers based on their previous Internet actions – you know those ads that follow you around the Internet? Love them or hate them, they can be effective.
- Many of the social media platforms offer advertising opportunities e.g. Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter and LinkedIn.
- Banner ads.
- Advertising on relevant websites. Industry bodies often offer advertising.
- Directories – many offer a free listing but also paid ads, which will appear closer to the top of the list.



Email marketing is alive and should be a vital part of your strategy and don't let anyone tell you otherwise. Building a list or a database of potential clients and current clients means that you have a way to keep in touch via emails or newsletters and sell more products or services. Make sure you have permission to email everyone on your database and also that you have unsubscribe links. Here is a link for anti spam information in Australia if you want to understand what is allowed or not allowed.

<https://www.acma.gov.au/Industry/Marketers/Anti-Spam/Ensuring-you-dont-spam/key-elements-of-the-spam-act-ensuring-you-dont-spam-i-acma>

There are lots of different email marketing softwares like MailChimp, Active Campaign, AWeber, Constant Contact as well as many others. You can set up beautifully designed newsletters (or get your website designer to do it for you), marketing funnels with auto-email responders (a series of emails over several days or weeks) encouraging downloads/purchases/sign-ups or whatever action you want your list to take.



We have already covered that your website MUST be mobile friendly under Website Design & Development above. That is the first step in mobile marketing and even if this is all you achieve initially, you will be further ahead than many other businesses.

However, other elements we should mention in mobile marketing are:

- SMS messaging which is probably the most common method of mobile marketing. This includes text, graphic and voice messages. This can be very effective as we know that:
  - Texting is the common mobile activity, with over 80% of Australian adults using SMS. (Pew Internet)
  - Open rate for SMS is 98% compared to 22.87% for emails (Mobile Marketing Watch)
  - 67% of mobile owners find themselves checking their phone for messages, alerts, or calls — even when they don't notice their phone ringing or vibrating. (Pew Research)
  
- Search engine marketing on mobiles.

- Apps – mobile applications are dedicated software that are developed specially for mobile devices and perform a specific action like games, social networks, maps, services or podcasts etc. They have to be installed on your smartphone from an app store. Some are free and some cost.
- Mobile ads –you can advertise on apps just like on a website. For example if you sold amazing headsets, you may want to advertise on game apps where you know your target market are hanging out. Advanced targeting algorithms include:
  - o Location – target your audience based on location
  - o Demographics – age, gender, education, income
  - o Interests
- QR Codes and 2D Barcodes – these allow a customer to visit your website by scanning a 2D image with their phone's camera instead of entering a URL.



# Conclusion

So these are the fundamentals of digital marketing for you. Start slowly and get your branding and website consistent and with a clear message first before you begin.

Some of the advantages digital marketing has over traditional marketing strategies are:

- Access to your competitors' strategies gives you lots of opportunity to improve.
- Fantastic analytics so that you can see how your campaigns or everyday traffic to the website are going in real time.
- Tailor your ads to your target market.
- Tailor your ads to suit your budget.
- Able to communicate more with your customers and clients.
- Stay up to date with industry news and updates so that you can change and stay ahead. This is particularly relevant for industries that have been disrupted or are about to be disrupted.

If you would like some assistance to get your digital marketing firing or are looking to revamp your existing strategy, HotsWots can help your business today.

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