

# 10 Digital Marketing Trends to Follow in 2021

2020 has been a tumultuous year that has brought a massive amount of change and disruption to the world of marketing, especially digital marketing. There are a wide variety of factors influencing this, including; natural disasters, political turmoil, social upheaval, and of course, COVID-19. As a result, the global marketplace has been scrambling to make changes to accommodate today's ever-changing needs.

There is no question that the eCommerce sector of the global economy is growing by leaps and bounds, and with so many people caught up under stay at home orders and quarantines, it is growing even faster. The pandemic had forced traditional businesses to go online, when they were, in many cases, starting without even a website! Many consumers who had long resisted shopping online finally took the plunge due to need rather than convenience due to the current situations.

At some point, brick and mortar businesses will enjoy the freedom to operate that they once had. Still, the simple truth is that many consumers will not go back to a less convenient and more expensive purchasing method simply because it is suddenly available again.

To be successful with your digital marketing plan this year, it is essential to understand your consumers, how their needs have changed, and which new marketing trends they will find most appealing. With the plethora of trends going on in marketing these days, here are the 10 most important digital marketing trends to follow in 2021:

## Segmentation

Customer segmentation has been around for a while, but it is trending now because it is such an easy way to expand on the 2020 trend of personalization. A business may segment its customer base (email list and/or mailing list) into groups based on specific activities or habits.

These groupings are often made based on the size, type, or frequency of purchases that a buyer makes. It is also a good idea to gear advertising based on the platform you are engaging your customers on. Not only is there a difference between your email and traditional mail customers, but there are also some easy-to-spot demographic differences between the customers you find on Facebook as opposed to the ones you will find on Instagram or Twitter.

## Interactive Content

For years, the mantra has been "content is king," but that isn't the whole story. A more accurate statement would be "engaging content is king." Having engaging content means that customers will enjoy your content instead of merely bypassing it as advertising. In turn, they will spend more time with your content, which increases their recognition of your brand and increases your ranking among algorithm-based search platforms and social media feeds.

Among types and styles of content, interactive content, such as polls, quizzes, contests, and surveys, is the most engaging and enjoyable to consumers. This is the kind of content that is most often interacted with and shared.

## A New View of SEO

SEO is still a significant priority in digital marketing, but there are new ways to look at SEO that you may not have considered. Because so many brick and mortar companies are finding their way into the online space, localized SEO gains much more importance. Being verified by Google and signing up for Google My Business will help you rank higher in Google SERPS.

Another new way to look at SEO is to consider the number of voice searches done these days. When performing voice searches, people tend to use slight differences in words and language. If you aren't happy with your SEO results, you might want to consider an update.

## A Brand That Cares

Price used to be the deciding factor in the majority of purchase decisions, with convenience coming in at a close second. Many consumers are beginning to value a new aspect just as much as a low price or convenience, and that is sustainability and charity. With the onset of social media and cultural changes, consumers now vastly prefer to support and buy from companies that share their values.

This is why it has become so important to showcase diversity, charity, and community involvement. Sustainability is also a major selling point for many customers. It is essential not just to pay lip service to these issues, though.

Being genuine and authentic counts for a lot, so choose the things you support with your heart, but don't be afraid to showcase them. Showing that you are a brand that cares is significantly more critical based on your consumers' age, which is why showcasing such causes is so common on social media feeds.

## Improved Communication

This is another area where the COVID pandemic has affected digital marketing. Having up to date information on your website means more now than it ever has, and this is doubly true if you are a brick and mortar establishment. When consumers visit your website looking for information about your establishment, products, or services, they expect the information they find to be correct.

You can't have customers finding the information faulty, your products unavailable, or your establishment unable to accept your online coupons or orders. If you do, the customer becomes disappointed and trust is broken, making the customer much less likely to do business with you now or in the future.

## Zero Position

According to research, the top position in the google search results gets about one-third of the search's traffic. While this position used to be the goal of all of your SEO efforts, that's no longer the case. Google now has a zero position, also known as a featured snippet. Unlike just a meta description, this featured snippet is a block of information featuring a piece of information from your site.

Because these featured snippets are chosen to answer questions and present information being searched for, they often end the search, and no further clicks occur. Even if your site does not receive clicks from being the featured snippet, the visibility and validity lent to your brand in this search position is invaluable.

## Image and Video SEO

Another new aspect of effective SEO is multimedia, including images and videos. Not only can consumers do searches looking specifically for image and video results, but now there is a new way to use images in searches. An image can be loaded to search for similar images or context.

This makes having images and videos in your content even more significant than they already were. Make sure you include text with your images and use appropriate SEO keywords in your image descriptions.

## Ad Blocker Blockers

Almost a third of internet users are likely to be using ad blockers in 2021. This is devastating for many marketers, but you have to adapt to survive in a market as vast as today's digital market is. There are tools, ad blocker blockers, that will allow you to ask each visitor to please turn off their adblocker.

While this might be a useful tactic for a charity organization or a hometown newspaper, it generally will only drive traffic away from a site. It is a better idea to reinvest your advertising dollars in strategies that will be more effective for you, such as email marketing or using influencers to boost your brand.

## Better Social Media Management

Social media platforms are not just a place for you to post your advertisements for free. If that is your strategy, you will not get anything out of your brand's social media use. Social media should be seen as your chance to develop your personal relationship with your customers. This is very important in today's fast-moving and often digitally-based world. If you want to increase how much your customers interact with you online, you must interact and engage with them in a meaningful way.

Following back on social media is essential, and so is sharing the content of your followers. If you like and share their content, they will likely do the same for you. Posting open-ended questions and responding to comments on your posts will also help increase engagement. It would also help if you considered sharing the content of influencers who promote any products that you may sell.

It is also vital to share content with your followers and customers that is valuable. If everything you post or share is just blatant advertising, your content will quickly be ignored, and you may even find yourself losing followers. Try sharing informational posts that feature your products or services to solve consumers' problems or how-to posts that give various new or alternative uses for your products. Make sure you include posts about causes that your brand supports as well.

## New Social Media Platforms

If you are not staying current on the new social media platforms, you are missing out on a lot of opportunities. New emerging platforms cropping up will undoubtedly replace some of the current ones, while others will survive and thrive. If you are only investing in Facebook and Instagram,

you are missing out on other great platforms such as TikTok and VSCO. These might be even more valuable to you depending on your particular customer persona demographics.

Instagram is so aware of TikTok that they have introduced Instagram Reels to remain competitive in their market space. Clubhouse Social Media is also sneaking up, which is an audio-based group room conversation social media platform. You can not afford to miss out on new and emerging social media platforms, especially if you are trying to reach younger demographics.

## Final Thoughts

Effective digital marketing depends on your ability to stay up to date, be versatile, and adapt quickly. If you allow yourself to fall behind your competitors, it will be tough to catch up, and your bottom line will suffer.

Needing to adapt in an ever-changing digital space is vital, and your ability to do so will help to secure your place within it for the future. By sticking to the advice outlined above, you increase your odds of success and the opportunities for your business to grow.