

Digital Marketing 101: What do Small Businesses Need?

Since the internet plays a significant role in how your customers/businesses make purchasing decisions, a digital marketing strategy is of the utmost importance for an SMB. A digital marketing solution is one that encompasses all areas of online advertising, like social media marketing, content marketing, email marketing, etc.



But, why is it that even knowing what it is and how to do it, there is still a deficit in delivering good digital solutions to SMBs?

1. What is it that you as a digital marketing agency can offer SMB's to increase their revenue/numbers?
2. What are the solutions that an SMB is looking for from a digital marketing viewpoint?
3. How can a digital solution help an SMB in their business?
4. How can you succeed as an agency?

If you've asked yourself, any one of these questions, then this information is for you.

What do SMB's need?

There are only a handful of things that are really essential for an SMB to be successful. **Marketing is an important aspect that an SMB needs to properly invest in.** SMB's often have a problem with understanding marketing in the digital space. How much can

they afford and how much is worth it? The good news is that you don't have to break the bank when it comes to developing strategic marketing solutions. Traditional methods like networking with local businesses and local customers will work, but unfortunately, its reach may be limited.

An online presence is very important to be able to effectively market an SMBs business. To start with, simple things like a good business website and social media account is necessary. Since today's buyer is almost always online, either on their desktop or smartphones, it is prudent to make the business website mobile-friendly if nothing else.

Why mobile marketing?

- Mobile apps and mobile-specific strategies like text message advertising and mobile display ads can reach the target audience in a much better way.
- Mobile payment systems are another way to go. With Apple Pay and Google Wallet also joining the field previously dominated Square, and PayPal in the mobile payment space, the choices for an SMB has become even better.

Investing in technology has been another challenge that SMB's face. Cloud computing, data analytics, AI tools, etc are some of the ways in which an SMB can get ahead of its competitors. But, aside from not knowing where to start, SMBs also find it hard to cope with the rapidly changing pace in the world of technology. In many cases, SMBs also lack the skills, knowledge, and capabilities to make any real change using technology.

Why invest in Technology?

This is seriously a no-brainer. The most effective ways technology can help an SMB is-

- Effective customer communication like automated emails.
- In an Increase in ROI - Websites, social media, and e-commerce can give SMBs a greater market reach and increase the ability to reach out to more customers.
- In Efficiency - Tasks that require a higher degree of accuracy are more efficiently carried out with AI-backed tools.
- In Insights - Valuable insights are provided using historic or current data with analytics tools.

What can a digital marketing agency do?

Since you know most of what an SMB needs, your solution needs to cater to them. **One of the fundamental rules of marketing is “be where your target audience is”.** Like it or not, today’s target audience is always “online”.

Devise a solution that encompasses three things -

1. Dynamic Online Presence
2. An excellent SEO Strategy
3. Multi-channel Advertising

Put all these pieces together for an effective digital marketing strategy. There are many cost-effective solutions that you can provide to your SMBs to help them promote their brand or product and help you grow as an agency as well.

Mobile marketing can take many forms – SMS messaging, push notifications, video messaging, in-app advertisements, location-based marketing, etc. Develop, design and provide a mobile marketing plan that involves many channels. Review what works and what doesn’t work and use analytics wisely when designing the solution. For example, if an SMB is already using e-commerce software, then a lot of those services offer mobile marketing and it may be easier to integrate your solution with one already provided by them like Salesforce, instead of creating an altogether new one.

Technological solutions an SMB can use include teleconference tools, time tracking tools, accounting software and many more. Design the most cost-effective strategy that makes use of the needed tools in the market for efficient use of time and an increase in productivity. For example – Teach your SMB to use automation like collecting email addresses through an opt-in form for leveraging the power of email marketing. OR Write a blog related to an SMB’s business and target audience.

Other ways in which you can provide an effective solution includes -

- The use of **social media platforms**, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest, Instagram, and the like, is extremely useful in creating more awareness of your SMB’s business. It aids them in reaching out to new customers all over the world.
- A **consistent email marketing strategy** allows an SMB to design targeted email campaigns for better results. Also, this approach lessens a paper trail, which is less sustainable and more expensive than a subscription to an email marketing tool.

- **Content marketing** is another solution that will make a huge impact on SMB's business website. Blog posts, proposals, and webinars can all be used to strengthen their online presence.
- Leverage the **power of bloggers and social media influencers** while drafting a good marketing solution. Some influencers ask for a high amount of payment to advertise an SMBs brand/product but there are others who do it for free, especially if they like the product.

There are over 6 million businesses in the US who employ between 2 and 250 people. **Marketing is the driving force behind sales** and can make or break many of these companies. The second point is the customer behavior has changed. Today, many consumers will go online and see what the internet is saying about a business. This is true even in your agency as well. **Make a tangible difference** in an SMB's ROI by educating them on the benefits of an online marketing strategy. If you want to be invaluable to your SMBs, then design and provide an effective marketing strategy that doesn't break the bank and which is suitable to the SMB's needs.