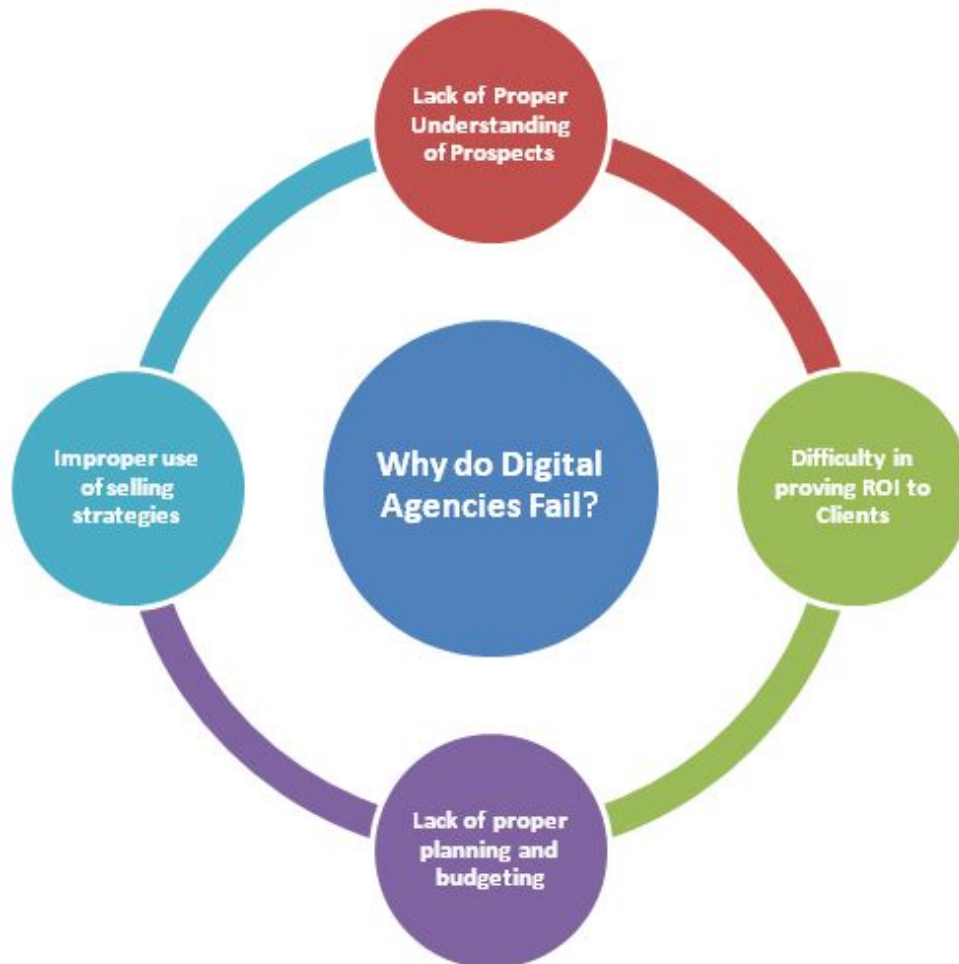


Why is digital hard to sell?

Digital hasn't stopped evolving and the technology will continue to grow and change. There is no denying it. **Digital is hard to sell.** What will make a marketing agency stand out? What will make the prospects/business satisfied enough, to make them choose the same agency every time?



There are several unique aspects of digital selling.

- The target audience is diverse.
- Product discovery is often not accompanied by a desire to purchase.
- The mechanism of sale is very different from traditional marketing.
- Packaging matters a lot - the way you design content, pages, etc will influence customers.

Prospect and Product

The number one reason why most agencies fail at digital marketing is not that they are not good at selling, but fail to understand the difference between **selling to a prospect** and **selling their product**. Customers no longer want to buy something, they want to be a part of something bigger. That's why agencies with a meaningful mission-driven statement have stronger brand engagement.

Transparent, trusting and long-lasting relationships need to be built with customers and businesses. Talk about your prospects' goals and aspirations and think about how your solution can fit their long term goals.

What to Do	What NOT to Do
Talk about the prospect's needs	Talk about your product
Identify if the best-fit prospect(s)	Call everyone on your list
Sell the solution	Sell the product

In the digital world, where it is even more, easier to know everything there is to know about your prospects, agencies are still struggling when it comes to developing deep knowledge about their prospects.

Identifying prospects is very important if we want to succeed in selling. We've talked about this many times before. ***Qualify prospects before that first cold call. Even in traditional methods as well as digital selling, this step is never to be taken for granted.***

What are the challenges the prospect is facing?	
Who are the key decision makers?	
How tech-savvy are the decision makers?	
Do they have a digital strategy in place?	
Will your solution fit their problem?	
How good is their online presence?	

Solutions can only be devised after a complete understanding of the prospect. If the focus is only on the products rather than the solutions then, we are setting ourselves up for failure.

Soft Selling and Hard Selling

We've all undoubtedly been at the receiving end of a hard sell at one time or another. And if human nature is anything to go by, most hard selling techniques often receive negative feedback.

Hard Selling	Soft Selling
Hard selling is when the marketer gets straight to the sales message.	Soft selling focuses on building long-term relationships, cultivating trust and nurturing the audience.
Typically seen with traditional advertising such as print, display ads or billboards.	Video Ads on LinkedIn and/or Facebook, Exclusive offers of "inside" information about promotions and discounts.

Hard selling doesn't really work on social media and that is where most of the digital selling takes place. It is difficult to get the audience to sign up for daily advertisements to their inbox, in general, and getting the social audience to follow us on social media is even harder.

An exception to this rule is when exclusive access is being offered to in-demand product sales and discounts - but make sure the right audience is being targeted in this case for this to work.

Digital strategies on social media work on user engagement. Social algorithms are designed to give the user the best experience and they give a higher preference to "good content" which is determined using a number of factors with user engagement being the primary factor to be considered.

The question we need to ask ourselves here - Are people engaging with your content? If not, how can we get them to be more engaged?

The Answer - Two important things

1. Value-Added Content - Follow the content ratio 80:20 - 80% content and 20% sales.
2. Video Content - Show, don't tell and involve the audience.



- Create a tasteful Ad/Banner that invites users to follow the company on Facebook or Twitter.
- Offer benefits like coupons and "exclusive" information if signing up immediately.
- Include tips about the product and have a "Purchase Now" option for special discounts.



- Create videos that offer demos of the product.
- Simple "How-to" videos that enable a user to do things independently using the product.
- Avoid any direct pushes to buy and keep it soft.
- Invite users to comment, share and subscribe to more videos.

Think about the importance of having a good business website that not only has content to help customers be better at what they do but also has soft calls to action. Include demo videos to have brighter audience engagement.

Metrics and Outcomes

Proving ROI to clients can be challenging, with 81% of B2B marketers struggling to show measurable ROI. For an agency to be successful it needs to see, deliver and measure tangible results. The problem with digital selling, is we put so much time and effort into "viral content" and "engagement", that we often drop the ball on measuring how it has impacted our business as a whole.



It is important to understand how to measure ROI and what kind of metrics to use.

To constantly improve our efforts in our strategies, we need to measure performance, behavior, and outcomes across the digital selling cycle. It isn't just using google analytics and fancy technologies to prove ROI - which is what most agencies think to do.

It's quite a daunting list -



There are more. But to prove ROI to the customers, ultimately depend on the services provided, the prospect's expectations, their goals, and our campaign goals. Only when these are defined, can we then move on to collecting actual data for the metrics and calculate tangible ROI.

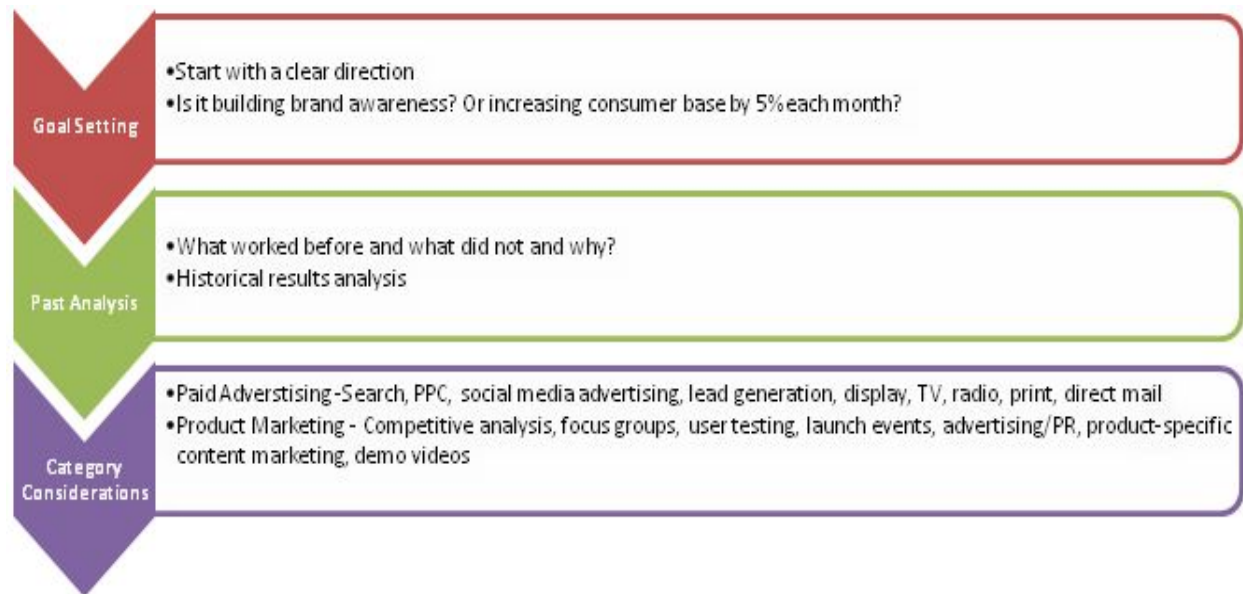
Cost and Profits

One of the trickiest parts of being a successful agency is determining the pricing of the services provided. Unfortunately, this remains one of the major roadblocks to success for many marketers. **It's difficult to compete against new players who offer solutions that undercut an agency's pricing. Being competitive, sometimes mean offering incentives and rewards for meetings with prospective clients.** Offering too much for free upfront could mean that all of the valuable time is spent on tasks that aren't returning revenue.

Pitfalls-



Budgeting Cheat Sheet -



For an agency to be successful at digital selling it isn't enough to just choose the right audience or the right product, we also need to leverage the right kind of digital strategy to reach the target audience. One of the most obvious pitfalls of digital marketing is that there is little interaction between the customers and the medium used for marketing. We need to look beyond and understand the latest trends in the digital space to ensure we stay ahead of the competition.