

The quiet in the storm - digital

 By [Marion Marais](#)

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Marketing is not about the product or service being sold to consumers - it's about sharing the right story.

Traditional marketing methods involve the marketer selling the product directly to one market but today, the market includes the world's internet users, making it vital for businesses to focus stronger resources towards their digital presence and invest into strengthening their influence through this rapidly growing platform.

Marketing is not about the product or service being sold to consumers. It is about sharing the right story. With so many stories out there, the marketing noise can be deafening, especially within the easily accessible digital space. So, to make an impact on the right people at the right time, an integrated approach will see the biggest return on investment for brands.

The greatest opportunity digital/online offers, is the ability to target people effectively. You can easily communicate a specific message to a specific market - more so than any other form of marketing.

Integration

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) needs to be integrated with quality content marketing and social media and influencer/blogger engagement. For a campaign to be a success these aspects all need to work together: you need your website to rank high on Google in terms of the technical compliancy, while social media engagement plays a role in gaining ground amongst your target audience all the while engaging with trusted bloggers and relevant influencers, who are trusted sources of information in their communities. This builds brand credibility.

Search Engine Optimisation

Over three billion people globally are internet users, with over 40% of searches taking place on a mobile device. What better way to make an impact than through a mobile-friendly website?

With SEO, keyword 'stuffing' is no longer seen as good practice; the focus has changed to a more central-themed keyword presence. Remember that you are writing for humans, and not a search engine - the user-experience is vital. Even the speed of your site impacts its ranking. Expert developers are able to lower the clunky, non-essential items on sites to ensure productive speed, with clear heading and image tags, enabling favourable search engine consumption.

Social media engagement

Social media is the perfect platform to build solid, rich connections with various target markets. Campaigns to increase followers will grow a community, however with algorithms changing as quickly as the digital environment, companies need to invest in engagement to ensure the correct reach is achieved.

For example, Facebook has altered its algorithms to push organic content posts to the bottom of newsfeeds, encouraging the use of promoted posts, which constitutes investment on the part of the company/advertiser. Because it's a form of online advertising, branded content is looked down upon to encourage informative, shareable content. The same goes for Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest - shareable, visual information or entertaining content creates an emotive response. The reason for this is that approximately 65% of us are visual learners. The brain has the capacity to process images 60,000 times faster than text. It's therefore beneficial to create quality visuals for social media engagement therefore encouraging sharing.

Blogger/influencer engagement

Often bloggers mention 'random' direct marketing they receive. The same goes for traditional media. The question then is, why spend money on researching your target market, when the people who you approach to spread the message, are chosen 'at random'?

Research is fundamental in discovering what each brand/blogger/media house focuses their articles on, what their brand involves and ensure that they do, in fact, accept blogger gifts. There's nothing worse than spending money on a beautifully crafted direct mailer and having the courier sent away.

Email campaigns

Email overload is a reality in today's working environment, but when used strategically, it is a constructive medium to share information to specific audiences, delivering value beyond pushing sales so that it resonates with the reader. Be relevant, beneficial and informative and personalize the email.

2015 will see a larger percentage of businesses thinking digital and social media when strategising. Through the growth in digital communications, and the role played by public relations across the marketing platforms, there is potential for significant growth. But when you put your brand online, remember - it's all about the story you're telling.

ABOUT MARION MARAIS

Digital communications director at Boortown
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