6 MARKETING TASKS EVERY BUSINESS OWNER SHOULD START TODAY

BE LOCALLY SEO

"Helping Businesses to Succeed Online"
Which marketing tasks offer the best return on investment for your business?

This is a question that every business owner must answer for themselves, based on their business model and goals for growth. Still, some of the most important tasks are virtually universal in today’s digitally focused marketing landscape.

So, if you’re ready to get serious about taking your marketing to the next level, start with our exclusive marketing insider’s guide to the most important tasks you should be doing today.
1. Update Your Website

By now, the chances are pretty good that you already have a website for your company. But, if your site has been around for a while – or even if it hasn’t – you should take a long look with an analytical eye.

What do your prospects and customers see when they get to your home page? Is your site easy on the eyes, with clear fonts, appealing colors and an obvious menu structure? Do you have plenty of “white space” and elements that add visual interest? Is your content engaging?

Updating your website helps make it easier for your prospects to make a purchasing decision, and for your existing customers to find what they need. But it also helps Google figure out where to put you in the search engine rankings.

Speaking of Google and rankings, has your site been optimized for SEO? If not, don’t waste any time getting this underway. Until you position your company correctly with Google and the other search engines, you are losing business every day.

Finally, get in the habit of updating the content on your site frequently. If you don’t, Google will start to favor your competitors who are adding fresh content to their sites regularly.
No. 2: Leverage Your "Google My Business" Account

Have you set up your Google My Business (GMB) account yet? If so, you’re already on the way to taking advantage of this incredibly powerful – and free – marketing tool.

If you’re a locally based business, GMB is the engine that powers the Google Local Search (GLS) platform. If you’re an internet-based business or if you have an ecommerce store, GMB offers countless cost-effective ways to increase your online visibility and put your products or services in front of the best-qualified prospects.

If you already have your GMB profile set up, make sure that Google has already verified it. Then, take some time to update it and optimize it with images, correct categories, contact information and business hours.

Google made some major changes to the GMB platform recently and, knowing Google, they’re like to keep making changes every few months to make GMB even better and more powerful. Staying up-to-date on these changes – and keeping your GMB listing fresh -will provide many measurable marketing benefits at little or no cost to you.
No. 3: Seek Out Your Audience – and Meet Them Where They Are

All of your marketing efforts, once you put them out in the world, go to work attracting prospects and helping them down the path to purchase. But that doesn’t mean you shouldn’t spend some time tracking down your audience to help the process along.

The depth of the online world offers tons of great opportunities, many of which won’t cost anything but your time. The secret is finding them.

People with shared interests tend to find each other online. If you can sniff out some of the places they hang out, you can join in the conversation.

Facebook groups and pages are a great example. If you sell pet products, for example, seek out rescue groups and breed enthusiast pages on social media. If you offer services related to home improvement, check out Angie’s List and HomeAdvisor. If you sell home furnishings, try Houzz or even Pinterest.

Once you find some prospects, listen to the dialogue for clues about where else they may hang out online, to get information or find resources.

Remember, though, you want to start a conversation – not advertise. If you go into a forum and try to market in a traditional sense, you will put potential customers off. When you ask sincere questions, listen to the answers and provide value, you will engage your prospects and lead them right back to your digital doorstep.
No. 4: Incorporate Images & Other Media

Are you using images and other types of digital media in your marketing efforts – especially your digital marketing?

Images are uniquely powerful for engaging your prospects, and making them stop to see what you’re all about. Today’s internet users, with their information overload and short attention spans, prefer visual content in most settings. Capitalize on those preferences and you’ll boost your marketing efficacy virtually overnight.

If you’re posting regularly on social media, add relevant images (or charts, graphs, infographics, video) to your posts. You’ll likely get more impressions, because almost every social platform prioritizes visual element. You’ll also get more comments, likes and shares.

For blogs – or any type of content, really – adding an image or two will attract more readers. You can make your website a better experience for your visitors if you offer them more visual elements. Think image galleries, employee profile photos and how-to video libraries.

Images also offer you a valuable opportunity to boost your SEO. Optimize your images and other visual elements whenever you have the opportunity, by slipping keywords and phrases into image file names, alt text, meta-tags, titles and captions.

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No. 6: Start a Business Blog

Today, content marketing is one of most powerful SEO strategies we have – and blogging is one of the easiest and most effective means of content marketing. Many business owners eschew blogging because they don’t understand how important it is for improving their position in the search engines.

Yes, a business blog is a great way to engage your prospects and stay in touch with your customers. Blogging helps establish you as an expert in your field and it can be very effective for providing important information.

But, even more important, having an active business blog on your website is the best way to prove to Google that you are an expert in your field and worthy of better placement in the search engine results pages (SERPs).

When you write blog posts, be sure to incorporate your keywords – but don’t overdo it. Otherwise the search engines won’t approve. However, this is a great way to incorporate your long-tail or locally focused key phrases. The optimal length and frequency of your blog posts will vary literally from company to company. However, Google will reward you most generously if you are adding at least one new post (or more) each week.

Just remember: the more often you post relevant, high-quality content, the faster Google will improve your SEO standings.

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If you aren’t sure what to write about, check out what your most successful competitors (or companies that dominate your industry in other markets in your region) are blogging about. Or, even better, think about what topics would provide the most value to your prospects and customers.

**In Conclusion**

By adopting these marketing strategies right now, you could potentially see a marked difference in your bottom line in a matter of months. For many business owners, however, it becomes more a question of how to implement these and other proven marketing approaches. You and your staff only have so many hours in the day, which you likely spend on the important tasks of running your business.

If these tasks sound daunting or confusing – or if you simply don’t have the time to spare – consider getting some help from an online marketing expert. The benefits of a proactive, digitally focused marketing strategy can go a long way toward helping you meet your bottom line goals over the next year.

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