Driving Growth with Digital Marketing

10 Steps to Create a Digital Marketing Program

PRESENTATION WORKBOOK

Presented by:

Lindsay Diven, CPSM

Marketing and Sales Manager

ldiven@fullsailpartners.com

888.552.5535 x134

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Introduction

The A/E/C industry has often been slow compared to other industries when adopting new marketing trends. But in 2020 with the global pandemic, A/E/C firms were propelled to rapidly make changes to their marketing programs, including shifting resources to digital marketing.

In fact, according to a 2021 study of A/E/C firms conducted by Hinge Marketing, high growth firms are generating 50% of their leads from digital sources. These digital sources include website, email, social media, and digital advertising. Also, high growth firms are increasing their marketing budgets and dedicating almost 27% of their revenues to marketing efforts.

Knowing this, Full Sail Partners has developed the Driving Growth with Digital Marketing series. In this series, marketers and principals will learn how to develop a digital marketing program that is right for their firm. Sign up by clicking here to subscribe to this eLearning series.

Presentation Workbook

Presentation participants are encouraged to utilize the information in this workbook to build their digital marketing program.

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Step 1: Defining Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is defined as any marketing that uses electronic devices to convey promotional messages and measure its impact. Typically, these marketing practices include marketing campaigns that appear on computers, phones, tablets, or other electronic devices. It takes many forms including videos, emails, and social media posts. It also includes organic content and paid content such as display ads. Digital marketing is often compared to "traditional marketing" such as magazine ads, billboards, and direct mail.

Digital Marketing Campaign Types

Digital marketing can consist of both online and non-internet channels and strategies. Common online digital marketing channels and strategies consist of:

- Search engine optimization (SEO)
- Search engine marketing (SEM)
- Content marketing
- Inbound marketing
- Influencer marketing
- Social media marketing
- Email marketing
- Display advertising
- Pay per click advertising (PPC)

Off-line or non-internet digital channels and strategies consist of:

- Television
- Text message campaigns (SMS and MMS)
- Virtual displays or electronic billboards such as at conferences or events
- Custom apps
- Cold calling

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Step 2: Define Personas

According to HubSpot, a buyer persona is a fictional, generalized representation of an ideal client. The persona helps firms understand their clients and prospective clients better and make it easier for them to develop content to the specific needs, behaviors, and concerns of different groups.

Use the questions below to develop your firm's persona(s). You most likely will have more than one persona.

Basic Demographics

Applying demographic information will bring the persona to life. It becomes easier to visualize this person when writing or asking SMEs to write. Basic demographics include age, occupation, job title, marital status, children, annual income, level of education, location, etc.

Goals & Values

What are their goals and values? Make note of the goals and values that are relevant to your services that you offer. You'll use this information to drive product creation, copywriting, content and email marketing.

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Challenges & Pain Points

Identifying challenges and pain points can drive new service offerings as well as copywriting and creative that will compel your ideal client to action.

Sources of Information

Use this section to determine the "where" or best places to share/advertise your content to reach your persona. Look for places like books, magazines, blogs, conferences, gurus, podcasts, etc. your persona would be attracted to.

Objections & Decision-Making Role

Why would this persona choose NOT to purchase your services? These are called "objections" and they must be addressed in your marketing. You must also determine your persona's role in the decision-making and/or purchasing process. Are they the primary decision-maker? Are they a decision influencer?

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Step 3: Set Digital Marketing Goals

Without marketing goals, it's nearly impossible to develop a marketing plan, let alone know if the marketing effort is working. And without clear, actionable, and achievable metrics, how does an A/E/C marketing team know what they're working towards? Setting goals for digital marketing programs should always be the priority.

Identify Firms' Strategic/Business Growth Goals

Write SMART Goal(s)

Write digital marketing goals that are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timebound.

Step 4: Outline Your Content Strategy

Formulate the Decision-Making Funnel

In every sales transaction, buyers go on a journey that begins the moment they decide they need services to when the contract is eventually signed. This is also referred to as the decision-making funnel. Use the space below to sketch out your firm's specific decision-making funnel. If you serve different markets or client types, you may need a different funnel for each.
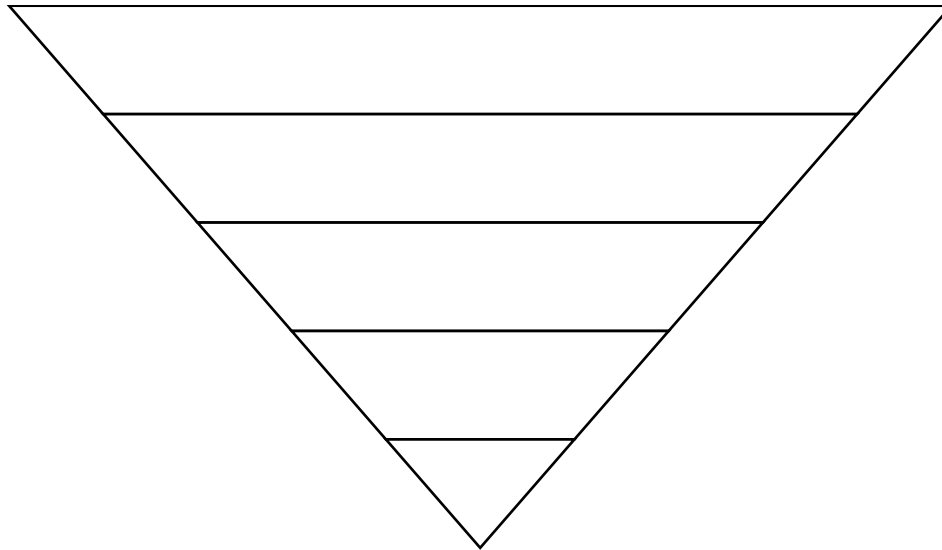
Run a Content Audit

List all the content you have already created. Tag it with the stage of the funnel it could work for. Look at previous blog posts, industry articles, industry presentations, shortlist presentations, proposals, project award submittals, press releases, brochures, SOQs, etc.

Fill the Content Gaps

Review each stage of the funnel and make sure there is content for each stage. Indicate any gaps that need to be filled below.

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Step 5: Develop New Content
Use the following questions to help guide brainstorming efforts for new content.

Problems

What problems will you be solving for your targeted audience(s)?

Uniqueness

What makes your firm or your point of view unique?

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Formats

What content formats will you focus on?

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Step 6: Content Repurposing

When planning and developing new content, be sure to include all the different ways that one piece of content can be used.

Repurposing Ideas

Review the new content ideas listed above. For each topic, brainstorm at least 5 different ways you can use that piece of content.

Step 7: Promoting Your Content

List the ways in which you will promote this piece of content. Include SEO, social media, email marketing, and live events into your promotion plan.

Step 8: Analyze Results
If you're not tracking your marketing efforts, how will you know if they're working or not?

Start with SMART Goal

Write one previously identified SMART Goal below.

Identify Potential KPIs

Based on that SMART goal, identify 2-3 different KPIs you can measure. These should include quantifiable metrics that align with the SMART goal. These KPIs can be a point in time or comparisons (such as previous month, your three-month average, compared to last year).

Tracking Methods and Locations

Where will the data to support the metrics come from? What software(s) or services will you deploy? Who will be tracking and building the reports?

Step 9: Optimize Performance

Once the digital marketing program has begun and you have started collecting results, it's time to start optimizing its performance. The specific activities will look different based on your marketing strategies. Popular areas to optimize include your website and landing pages, conversions and leads, content promotion, and email marketing. Answer the following questions, as applicable, for each of those areas.

Website

Site Pages *– Review the on-site SEO elements for your website pages that get the highest web traffic. List those pages below. Identify a call to action (CTA) to add to each page, if there isn't one.*

Blog Posts *– Identify the blog posts that get the most views. Write those below. Use those topics/themes to brainstorm new content.*

Conversions and Leads

Calls to Action (CTAs) *– Review all your CTAs. Ensure that they are relevant to the topic/content on the landing pages and blogs in which they appear. Write any other new CTAs that you think about as part of this review.*

Landing Pages *– Review your landing pages to make sure that the information is clear, concise, and in bullet format. Limit distractions by removing the menu items, navigation, etc. List your landing pages below that DO NOT meet these criteria and need to be updated.*

Forms *– Review your website forms to make sure they are "above the fold" on your landing pages. Review the questions on the forms to determine if you are asking the right questions to get the proper answers to qualify and assign leads. List your forms below that DO NOT meet these criteria and need to be updated, or list forms you need to create if you currently don't have any.*

Content Promotion

List the channel(s) that you are using for your content promotion. Review the last three months of content promotion on each channel. Look for correlations between publishing frequency and time (day/hour) and engagement. Write each below.

Email Marketing

Review the last 10 email campaigns sent. Indicate the "from" email address used, the subject line, the open and click through rates (CTRs). Once you see these side-by-side, look for outliers or trends and use that to improve your email marketing going forward.

Step 10: Adjust & Refine

Once you begin your digital marketing program, and start to analyze results and optimize, it doesn't end there!

Marketing is ever evolving with new interests, new content formats and new preferences in which our targeted audiences like to consume our content.

So as marketers, we constantly need to be keeping up with trends, especially out of our industry, looking at our metrics, and adjusting our marketing efforts.

The benefit of being marketers is that it is fun and creative, and our job demand will remain high!

Next Steps

Turn this insight into action by following these steps:

1. **Use this workbook** – Refer to the workbook to help guide digital marketing program.

2. **Review firm goals** – Make sure you understand your firm's growth goals.

3. **Write SMART goals** – Develop 3-5 SMART marketing goals that support firm growth goals.

4. **Pick only 1** – Pick only 1 SMART goal to start your digital marketing program.

5. **Get to work!** – Use the presentation and workbook to help guide you.

6. **Be patient** – Allow yourself up to a year to be able to report full results.

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