

The digital marketing future is now

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That digital marketing is a constantly evolving phenomenon is a given. It's no longer changing monthly or weekly, but daily. And companies that are waiting for the next wave to break before venturing into these fast-moving waters will be left high and dry.

Waiting for something new to happen in digital marketing is a bit like waiting for the next cell phone to be released – there will always be a newer and possibly better cell phone about to take the market by storm. The fact is that companies can no longer afford to say they are still transitioning from traditional to digital marketing, because the two are now encompassed in one – and customers expect their chosen brands to have a digital marketing presence that they can interact with.

Ideally, companies should have the ability to engage with their consumers – and be flexible. They need to spend more time developing and implementing their business and marketing strategies to ensure they make the right decisions for online success for their company, and to make sure that all capabilities are in place to effectively achieve their strategic goals.



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This means that choosing a digital marketing company is about finding a business partner, not just a supplier – a digital marketing company that works very closely with their own business, that is as agile as their business, and that can ensure that their marketing strategy changes as the business changes and as digital marketing evolves.

In terms of the evolution of digital marketing, what we're seeing now in the digital space is that bandwidth is steadily becoming more affordable and video is exploding as a means of communication. People love to see gifs and video; they want to conceptualise how things would work for them rather than the generic consumer. Video is enabling companies to get into consumers' mind space by showing them things that are meaningful to them.

We're also seeing the instrumental growth of mobile and video as people fit more interacting and information sourcing into their days – while at work and at home – consuming media across multiple channels. With this steadily increasing digital interaction comes the exciting and strong growth of gamification (the application of game elements and principles in non-game contexts to encourage user buy-in and engagement), which is drawing in users in their droves, primarily in the below-50 age categories. The 30-40-year-olds are into gamification, either by themselves, or with their kids. We're finding that embracing gamification on their digital platform is likely to futureproof an organisation. The consumer is getting younger and, for the long-term future protection of any business, it is vital to understand this generation and the next – and how they want to interact with organisations.

Interactive content is seeing strong growth too. This includes platforms such as Periscope, live broadcasts on Facebook, and augmented reality. [Wiki: Augmented reality (AR) is a live direct or indirect view of a physical, real-world environment whose elements are augmented (or supplemented) by computer-generated sensory input such as sound, video, graphics, or GPS data.]

When people do a search on a brand, what will come up first is how people feel about that brand – good or bad, their comments are coming up at the top of the search. For this, and a myriad of other positive reasons, it is important for companies to interact with their consumers. Too often we have heard companies state that they are choosing not to play in the digital space because they are worried about the negative feedback. The reality, however, is that their brand is already playing in the social space. Their business needs to be out there now to justify itself and prove its value.

Digital marketing is not an unfathomable mystery. It's dynamic and customer-centric and it's changing and reshaping itself according to the expectations and demands of its users – all the while offering companies an exciting platform for a wealth of communication opportunities with the very people they want to reach.

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