

M LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

The Marketing Guide for Local Business Owners

December 2018

How to Use Customer Service as a Marketing Tool

**For Small Businesses,
Outsourcing Web
Development Makes
the Most Cents**

How a Custom
Mobile App
Can Help Your
Business Grow

**Top Secrets
for Your
Website
Success**

**Infographic:
15 Steps to
Growing Your
Business in 2019**

4 Ways to Create Viral, Share-Worthy Content

***How to Create
Marketing Headlines
that Will Get You
More Business***

**Social
Media: Four
Reasons to
Focus on
What Works
for You**

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Greetings!

Here we are in December once again. Another year is almost put to rest. Hopefully you've already been thinking about 2019 and how you're going to grow your business. What are your goals for the coming year? How did you do with your goals for this year?

This month's articles and infographic cover many topics that we hope will be relevant to your business, including Mobile Apps, Customer Service, Social Media and more. These tidbits will hopefully help you as you plan and execute your plans for the coming year.

If you're not already receiving this magazine regularly, we suggest you add your email to our subscriber list. We have some exciting articles already in the works for the upcoming issues. Don't miss out!

If you find the magazine helpful, and know other local business owners that could benefit from receiving our magazine each month, please do us (and them) a favor by forwarding a copy to them.

Have a topic that you'd like to see us cover? We welcome any suggestions, comments or questions you might have.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

David Akers
President / CEO
LMS Solutions, Inc.

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A Little About Us

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LMS Solutions was developed to give businesses of all sizes the ability to leverage the same cutting-edge marketing platforms that the Fortune 500 organizations use, at extremely affordable rates.

We offer an extensive catalog of cutting-edge Local Online, Mobile, Social, Pay-Per-Click, Video, Web and Direct Marketing Media Programs. Whether you're a small business, medium business, or non-profit organization, our programs can help you find greater success.

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Marketing Calendar

Plan your marketing messages around these upcoming holidays and proclamations.

December

Impaired Driving Prevention Month
Write A Business Plan Month
Tie Month
Tomato and Winter Squash Month
Universal Human Rights Month
Worldwide Food Service Safety Month
Awareness Month of Awareness Months

December 2nd-Dec 10th - Hanukkah
Dec 25 - Christmas
December 26th-January 1st - Kwanzaa

1st - World AIDS Day
1st - Bartender Appreciation Day
1st - Pie Day
2nd - Mutt Day
3rd - International Day of Persons With Disabilities
4th - Sock Day
5th - Volunteer Day
7th - Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
10th - Human Rights Day

11th - App Day
12th - Gingerbread House Day
15th - Bill of Rights Day
20th - Free Shipping Day
16th - Chocolate Covered Anything Day
17th - Maple Syrup Day
18th - Answer The Telephone Like Buddy The Elf Day
21st - Ugly Christmas Sweater Day
21st - Crossword Puzzle Day
21st - Humbug Day
21st - Winter Solstice
22nd - National Re-gifting Day
23rd - Festivus
26th - Whiner's Day
27th - Fruitcake Day
28th - Chocolate Candy Day
30th - Bacon Day
31st - Make Up Your Mind Day
31st - New Year's Eve

January

Cervical Health Awareness Month
Eye Care Month
Family Fit Lifestyle Month
Financial Wellness Month
Get Organized Month
Glaucoma Awareness Month
March of Dimes Birth Defects Prevention Month
Staying Healthy Month
Thyroid Disease Awareness Month
Volunteer Blood Donor Month
Walk Your Pet Month

January 1 - New Year's Day
January 21 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day

1st - Polar Bear Plunge Day
1st - World Day of Peace
2nd - Science Fiction Day
4th - Spaghetti Day
9th - Law Enforcement Appreciation Day

9th - National Take the Stairs Day
14th - Dress Up Your Pet Day
14th - Clean Off Your Desk Day
15th - Hat Day
15th - Humanitarian Day
17th - Ben Franklin's Birthday
18th - Winnie the Pooh Day
19th - Popcorn Day
21st - National Hugging Day
23rd - Pie Day
24th - Compliment Day
24th - Peanut Butter Day
25th - Have Fun at Work Day
26th - Spouse's Day
26th - Australia Day
27th - Chocolate Cake Day
27th - Thomas Crapper Day
28th - Blueberry Pancake Day
29th - National Puzzle Day
31st - Backward Day

How a Custom Mobile App Can Help Your Business Grow



A business of any size - be it small or a multinational corporation - always looks for ways to expand and grow further. Marketing your brand, product or services to a larger customer base is surely on your agenda. So, what is the best way to grow your business so that it reaches a wider customer base and you start on building a loyal clientele? You should strongly consider the development of a custom Mobile App for your business.

This technology allows for a more profound and intimate experience between your business and client. How so? Mobile applications have brought the global market into the palms of users and brought everything much closer. With a few clicks and a user has what they need in a matter of minutes. Smartphones are now widely used with cheaper options constantly making

their way into the market. With all this at their disposal, businesses can make use of this expertise and exploit it to their advantage.

There are various ways via which companies can make use of mobile apps. Namely:

Boost Branding

Instant recognition and bringing your name to the forefront will bring you closer to clients who are in search of the products or services you are offering. It would also give you an edge over your competitors who might not yet have adopted this means of promotion and marketing. Make most of this technology as soon as possible if you haven't already.

Enhance Customer Service Experience

Make customers your priority without expending

on resources. Without having your customers call on your helpline or visit your website, they are still able to contact you at any time.

Smart, right? That's what smartphone users now want - accessibility without the cumbersome process of making calls or going through various website options. This makes for easy and swift use. Customers are bound to come back for more.

Having more customers visit your app while saving on resources at the same time is definitely a win-win situation for you and your customers.

Acts as A Marketing Tool

Above and beyond being a mere application, it is a very strong and valuable marketing tool. By simply incorporating social websites such as Facebook,

Twitter, Foursquare and the like with the application, your presence is known throughout the globe - providing for free publicity with more and more customers sharing your app and their experience with your company. Also, push notifications allow for speedy announcements of promotions and special events. All this saves up on time, effort and most importantly, money for your firm.

Secure Another Revenue Stream

Make buying and selling a whole lot easier and faster with the ability to buy and sell goods and services

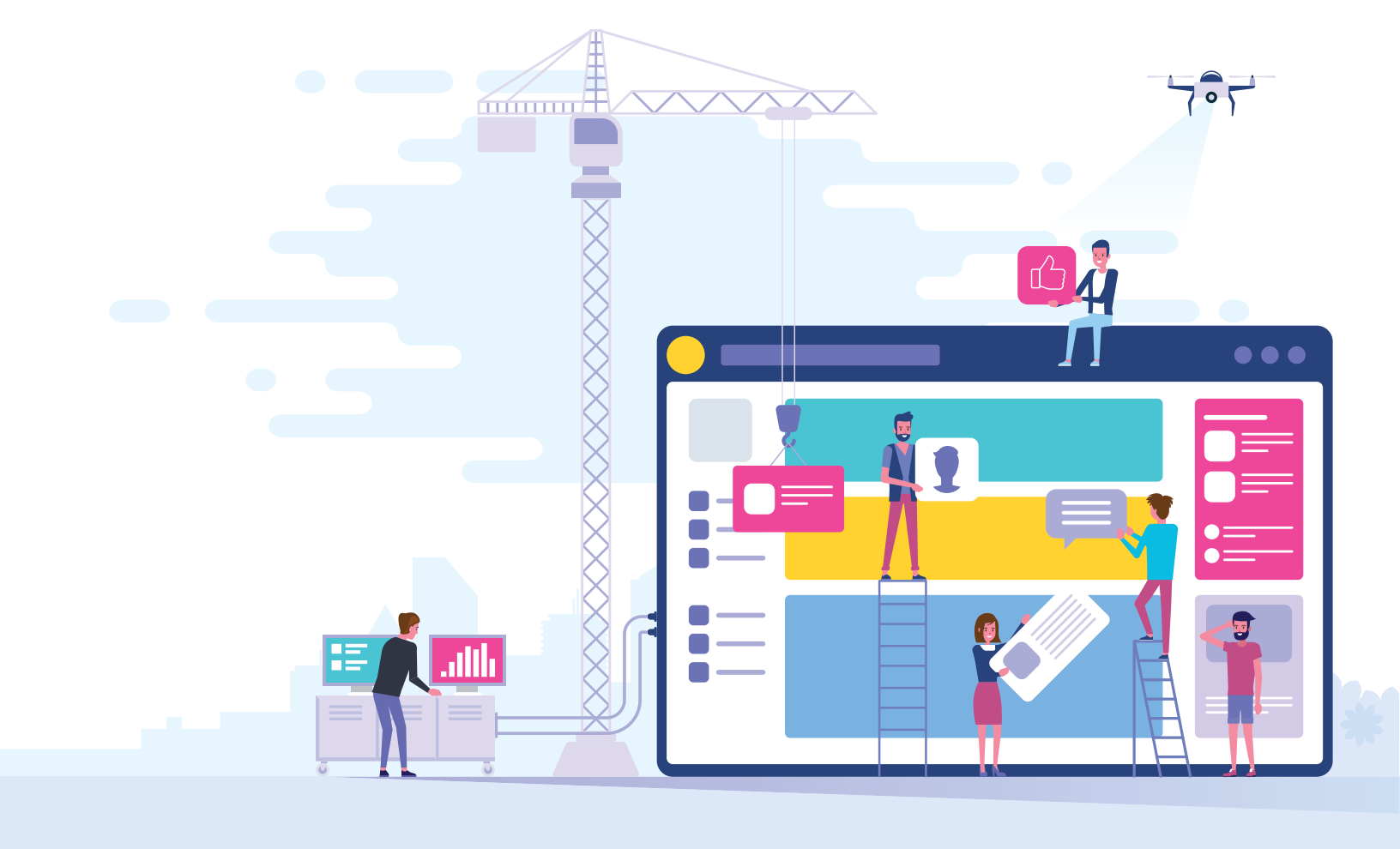
via applications. With everything going mobile, why should buying and selling be any different?

Allow customers to book reservations, buy services or products your organization is offering, concert tickets and anything else that can be bought. By making it more convenient for customers to make use of your application for purchasing what's on offer, secure another line of income while reducing the expense of having to invest in a storefront and human resource to do the sales. Your business would be more accessible without the need of the added expense of setting up a store in all

the locations you want to grow in.

Like most technology, pricing for custom mobile apps for small businesses and non-profit organizations has declined in the last several years. This is due to advancements in technology that make it easier for the developers to design and manage your custom mobile app. Now is the time for you to consider hiring a mobile app development company. Search for one that has experience working with local businesses and has knowledge on how to properly market brands through user friendly apps and attractive features most relevant to your company.





For Small Businesses, Outsourcing Web Development Makes the Most Cents

Web development is just as crucial to a small business as it is to a big corporation. As an impartial platform that should consider the end user, when done correctly, it can drive traffic and convert it. Small businesses often struggle with the decision to outsource, understandably, as the task can be difficult to delegate. However, it is usually the best decision for the following reasons.

Affordable Innovation

Outsourcing web development is more

affordable than keeping a developer on staff, or worse, trying to figure it out yourself and goofing it up. Don't try. Take advantage of the innovation offered through outsourcing to professionals who do it all the time. Better web infrastructure and search engine optimization are just a couple of the perks of outsourcing web development to a professional. They keep up with emerging trends, and stiff competition dictates that social media integration is part of the process.

Outsourcing the work ensures a smoother surfing experience for visitors at a rate that won't break the bank.

Time and Scalability

Time is crucial for any business, so free it up. Outsourcing this project frees the company to concentrate on more pressing matters. Also, if you outsource this project, it likely will be finished and to the market quicker, so it can start generating revenue faster.

More importantly, the website will be scalable, so it can readily grow along with the business. Nothing is more frustrating than creating a site and building a business on two different planes.

Site Support

When outsourcing this type of work, there is usually some type of support available much like a guarantee. If there is an issue, just pick up the phone or send an email. Also, the contract usually can include a pricing discount on future modifications. Outsourcing can carry a lot of perks even if it involves a freelancer.

Many website developers will offer website maintenance or website management packages at affordable rates. These programs will keep the website software up to date, keep the site safe from hacking, and can also include periodic changes to the site content.

Functionality & SEO

Avoid the free website platforms that are currently available. Most of these have limitations on website functionality and the ability to properly setup Search

Engine Optimization (SEO). A qualified web designer will work with you to provide the functionality you're looking for or guide you on the options available. While many web designers can create a beautiful looking website, if consumers can't find it, it isn't worth anything. Find a web developer that not only has the artistic skills to create an attractive website, but also has the marketing and SEO skills and knowledge to help your website perform. A properly designed and optimized website should drive traffic, calls and revenue.

High-Quality Work

Outsourcing web development projects often means the person or company doing the work is relying on references for their next job. They will usually go above and beyond to do fabulous work since nobody wants to be the company that built a horrible website. The job you need to have done will usually get done better and faster when outsourced.

New Markets And Technologies

Outsourcing web development is also a great way to break into new

markets. It often brings out new ideas and emerging trends that can benefit the business. All too often, businesses get tunnel vision, and outsourcing web development puts a new perspective on things that may not have been visible before. Many times, the company doing the work may even have access to newer and better technologies that will benefit the business.

The Bottom Line

The bottom line is that outsourcing web development is the best option for small businesses for many reasons. From saving money and headaches to shortening the time to market, the benefits stack up. Internal links, blogs, web stores, and product reviews all have a proper place, and building a site that converts traffic and offers a smooth surfing experience is a tedious and time-consuming task better left to professionals. They are typically well-versed in the buyer cycle and familiar with the kinds of content necessary and where to put it. Small businesses should keep it simple and outsource their web development.



How to Use Customer Service as a Marketing Tool

Customer service has traditionally been seen as an after-sale operational function but has increasingly moved to the forefront of marketing to new and existing customers. Businesses need to address this new opportunity.

No longer is customer service synonymous with a "help desk" or "complaint department." In the days before social media, it was common practice to handle problems if and when they occurred, and usually with varying degrees of consistency and resolution. Problems were simply after the fact of sales that had already occurred, and they were seen to have little to no direct connection to future sales.

Customer service was a

cost center, which meant that businesses tended to try to staff and execute the function with as few resources as possible. The utility of social media as a platform for sharing has made the fact of user experience more explicit and visible; it has moved to the forefront of marketing.

Complaints, reviews, and ratings serve a central function when consumers are contemplating purchases. Technology services platforms like Facebook and Twitter, not to mention the multitude of chat rooms and user communities that occur across the Internet, make it vital that businesses come to terms with the customer experiences that form the basis for these communication tools.

Using customer service as a marketing tool requires far more than simply replying to dissatisfied customers' tweets, though. Every brand is expected to fix problems; doing so is no longer a differentiator, just as every brand can all but depend on encountering a certain amount of problems and complaints (especially larger consumer brands, and certainly technology brands).

Successful customer service involves efforts to reduce the number of complaints that occur; resolve them more quickly; make sure that a reliable and fair approach is applied to every instance; and proactively reach out to likely problem cases and preempt them.

Here's detailed thinking on each quality:

Preemption

Perhaps the most common misunderstanding about social media and their effect on customer satisfaction is that the capacity for customers to complain has allowed some business to push the edge of the envelope on reductions to product and service quality. The thinking is that it is cheaper to reduce quality and handle the subset of customers who will complain vs. try to achieve some absolute thresholds in hopes of pleasing everyone. Many will argue that service has declined since the advent of social media tools, just as some customers have learned to resent the necessity of complaining in order to get satisfaction.

The idea of preemption -- renewing operational focus on identifying and rectifying potential service failures or shortcomings -- remains the best way to enhance customer service. The goal should not be to spend money on fixing problems that could have been better invested in precluding them in the first place. Many industries, such as automobiles, are ranked on "initial customer satisfaction" metrics, and not

on how well they resolve subsequent problems. The best customer service is to not have to service them, which means there'll be more satisfied customers recommending (i.e. marketing) your products and services to others.

Immediacy

The 24/7 web has raised everyone's expectations for response time or, better put, reduced them to all but zero. There is meaningful research on internet usage that suggests consumers have become more impatient in all aspects of their lives (because things happen so fast online). This makes the speed at which customers receive service almost as important as the substance of that help; certainly, the former informs the latter, so great service that's late is less effective than so-so service that is prompt.

Many companies maintain service teams that are ready to respond to complaints at a moments' notice, usually with nothing more than a message that the complaint has been received and is being addressed. Approaching online complaints requires this immediacy, along with a statement of next steps and timeframe, so as to inform

expectations. The next worst thing after being slow in initially acknowledging a problem is to be vague on the follow-up and/or expected resolution target. Consumers who feel that they're being told things promptly and fairly are far more likely to endure any period of time before a problem is fixed, and to speak positively about the experience.

Integrity

Though every customer is different, there's no way that a marketing campaign of any significant size would attempt to craft customized offers to individuals. Product configurations can't be infinite, and pricing can't (or shouldn't) be open to any values. Communications, like business operations overall, need constraints that help define the scope of the effort. What a company is willing to say and do when it comes to servicing customers also communicates what the company is willing to commit to its brand. Therefore, it's important that businesses apply the principles of branding to the policies of customer service; one has to inform the other. Just like a company doesn't presume to sell to any and every sort of customer, its customer service needs to

be cognizant that some customers will not be satisfied with its policies and/or there are certain thresholds (rewards, etc.) that cannot be ignored. The idea that a company should be willing to do "whatever it takes" to please customers is a catchy slogan, but it's not real business strategy. Defining customer policy and then sticking to it is a sign of integrity and brand coherence.

Proactivity

Imagine this circumstance: a handful of customers encounter the same problem, perhaps even a small one, and you discover it can be remedied by a company action. Traditional service policy would be to wait for additional

customers to have the same problem, with the hope that they wouldn't contact the company (this drives many of the social media service strategies today, whether admittedly so or not). But a true customer-centric brand would proactively seek out its customers, or perhaps the subset(s) most likely to encounter the same problem and notify them of the fix. In other words, highlight the problem with a solution before anybody else encounters it. This is a powerful idea, and it might run counter to some existing company policies or routines. But it simply acknowledges reality: It only takes one customer with a problem to notify every customer via a social media platform, so there's no such thing as keeping a secret,

and therefore no reason to hope to avoid issues. A core quality of making customer service into smart marketing is to embrace it as an outbound communications strategy that strengthens customer relationships, and that means telling them what's going on, bad or good.

The bottom line is that customer service is a marketing tool whether you use it as one or not. The smart play is to embrace the qualities that elevate the function from being passively responsive to actively engaging with your customers and markets. It can thereby move from being a cost center to a generator of sales and brand equity.

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4 Ways to Create Viral, Share-Worthy Content

Want a quick way to draw crowds of traffic to your site? Want to know how to get visitors to share your content for you without having to manually create your own backlinks? One word: shareability. Shareability refers to the worthiness of your content to be shared in the minds of its viewers.

People love sharing content for two reasons:

1. To increase viewership on their own blog

2. They simply love the content that you've created and they want others to know about their awesome find (similar to how a friend may find a new restaurant and suggests that you check it out).

The main types of content that go viral are the following:

- In-depth pieces
- Listicles
- Videos
- Infographics

1. In-depth Pieces

In-depth pieces can be op-eds, news stories, or research articles. In-depth pieces have the ability to strike a chord with readers. Their intent can be to inform, uncover, shock, polarize, or educate. Their traffic-generating capability comes from their ability to connect with readers on a deeper level than other types of content. Ranging from 1,500-2,500 words, these types of pieces are not only great for keyword

density due to their large word content, but they are hubs for news sites such as HuffPost and The New York Times. One backlink from these authority sites can send your blog thousands of visitors in a matter of days.

2. Listicles

Listicles (next to images and videos) are probably one of the most shared content types on the web. This is because people are always looking for new resources, product/service reviews, best of/worst of lists, and any other easily-digestible list that they can share.

The key to making a great listicle is to find a topic that's popular or currently trending and to create a list better than any that you've seen on the net so far. Check out popular hashtags on social media, blog-sharing sites, and recent news to find a good topic to create your listicle.

After you create it, share it on as many channels as you can. It's helpful to create a list of these sharing channels beforehand to get quick traction. Also, be sure to tag any influencers, companies, or other individuals that you've included in your posts when you share it on

social media (tag editors and journalists as well) to let them know that you've included them in your list and hopefully they'll share it with their audience.

3. Interesting Videos

Videos go viral faster than any other type of content. They take less time to view than written content, and they give readers a break from reading. They can be educational, funny, informative, or investigative interviews--just make them engaging. Talk about things that no one else is talking about or create spins on current conversations.

Interview millionaires or people who've done amazing things.

Video marketing can be a standalone digital strategy, as it's super-effective at building core audiences. To make your videos go viral, you'll need to share them on your social accounts, but the most important place you can share them is YouTube (where videos have been known to go viral overnight).

Be sure to include keywords in your title and write a description that leads visitors back to your website for more information.

4. Infographics

Think of infographics as digital storybooks for adults. That's pretty much what they are. So why do readers love infographics? Because of their ability to make anything look interesting with cool graphics and eye-catching colors, which is hard to ignore. They're easy to skim, fun to look at, and informative. The better the graphics and data in your infographic, the more potential it has to go viral. Using public domain and stock images won't cut it, so try finding a good graphic designer.

Creating content that's viral-worthy can be done in several ways. To get your creative juices flowing, make a list of 5-7 viral campaigns that you've seen in the last 6 months. Take note of what made them so unique, and what mediums they viral on. Think of strategies that you can pull from those campaigns into your own when you're brainstorming new ideas.

Remember, making a campaign go viral requires a feasible marketing strategy, so be sure to put as much effort into your strategy as you do the campaign to ensure success.



How to Create Marketing Headlines that Will Get You More Business

Marketing is a tricky business. Say the right thing and people will flock to you. Make a mistake in wording, and the public won't give you a second glance. But how do you know what exactly you should say? Well, that's what copywriters are for.

Copywriting exists for one thing: to make sales. These writers know exactly what to say and how to say it to trick the subconscious mind into moving forward. But if you do it right, you don't need to hire a special writer. Here's how you can craft your headlines in a way that maximizes interest.

Be unique

Having a unique product or brand is a must for today's market. There are thousands of beauty bloggers, and countless fitness experts who are all trying to sell their supplements or services. Even dating experts have fierce competition with each other. Find a way to set yourself apart from the rest. What makes you or your brand more appealing than others? Perhaps you're a makeup artist--think about offering a specialty, like giving tips that make your face look slim. Nobody wants what they've already seen; they want new and

exciting. Come up with a list of what makes you more exciting than your competition.

Use phrases that highlight your unique content, such as:

- Groundbreaking
- You've never seen this before
- Brand new

Call to action

Don't merely ask people to take a look at your brand. Don't simply make suggestions--tell people what to do! Demand that they do it. Act like it's vital

for them to check out your product and do it in a catchy way.

Take a look at these headlines, re-written by a copywriter.

Original:

Taking Green Tea Supplements Can Really Help You Lose Weight

New:

Buy These Green Tea Supplements and Start Losing Weight Today!

Original:

Making an Ex-boyfriend Jealous is Easy

New:

These 5 Tricks Will Make Your Ex-Boyfriend Beg for You Back

Original:

How to do Flawless Makeup

New:

Create a Slimmer, Smoother, Flawless Face in Only 5 Minutes

So how do these headlines differ? Well, the original

is a suggestion or a weak description. The re-write is a demand or a strong promise.

The copywriter includes language that suggests by watching the video, reading the article, or using the product, that the consumer will benefit from the brand. It feels more exciting and carries more of a feeling of guarantee and results.

Language

When it comes to copywriting headlines, there are certain words you want to use. These words work in the mind to suggest forward action and are shown to result in more interest and purchases, without the buyer even realizing it's the words that have gotten them to that place.

These include:

- Buy
- Now
- Immediately
- Purchase
- Instantly
- New
- Right now
- Limited time
- Hot
- Surprise
- Don't wait

One example of an important keyword that you need to use more often is "because." Studies have shown that telling a customer the reason why you're doing something has a big effect on sales.

For example:

"We're Giving You Two Weeks of Our Newsletter Completely Free Because You Can't Miss These Amazing Deals"

One more example is the word "You." Use it whenever you're addressing potential customers. It will make them feel special and make you seem sincere, without them even realizing it.

To go even further than just "you," ideally you should craft your newsletter in a way that it will automatically insert the subscriber's first name in the greeting, as well.

Marketing should be taken seriously, with every word and headline carefully crafted. It doesn't have to be scary or hard, and if you put the work in, you'll see more traffic and interest instantly, growing your business and brand upward and onward like you've always wanted.

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Top Secrets Tips for Your Website Success

Online business has become a common practice and continues to provide new opportunities for commercial growth and prosperity day by day. But online success doesn't come by itself - it is achieved through a range of strategies and techniques which imply not only the improvement of your e-commerce website design, but also methods for the effective cooperation with your customers.

If you want to make your commercial website one of the most powerful and influential sources, learn how to do it with several simple but important tips.

1. Start from keywords

Before your commercial website becomes a popular place, it should be found by the potential clients, the

majority of which make use of search engines to find products and services they are interested in. That is why the first thing to do is to identify what keywords related to your business are popular and most used by customers in the process of search. This is an integral part of your marketing strategy, the beginning that will predetermine further results significantly. Find the keywords, check competing pages on the search engines and create your keyword tactics.

2. Spice up your site

The way your online business will grow significantly depends on your clients' attention to it, so take care of this fact. If necessary, upgrade the design and content structure enhancing your website presentation for it to

attract your target audience. Add relevant and popular keywords you have found during the research in the title, description and your site keywords tags, use them within your web pages text as well.

The way your website is constructed has great influence on its search rankings, so be attentive with its design, content and coding, and keep every aspect in order. At the same time, don't forget about its usability, as you may lose your customers if the website is not functioning properly or loads slowly.

3. Stay in touch with the visitors

The most effective way to encourage your clients to communicate and maintain relationships with your clients is to create online

newsletters and invite your website visitors to sign up. Website newsletters answer different needs, providing your customers with your website news and always keeping them informed concerning your company business.

Timely, topical and well-written newsletters will be appreciated by your clients and show how reliable and customer-friendly you are.

4. Run a blog

Starting up a business blog will both drive traffic to your website and help you get closer to your customers. Posting news, events reviews and content that your customers may find interesting is very useful for your source. Besides, your visitors are allowed to take part by writing comments and their suggestions to the posts, which makes them even more attracted.

5. Use RSS

Syndicating your site content with RSS helps to get more links to your site and spreads your contact to other sites. It is a simple and efficient way of sharing the content with your subscribers and other websites. RSS feeds

are very easy to implement and improve your website visibility greatly. Besides, search engines pay a lot of attention to RSS feeds, which means better rankings and site popularity.

6. Write press releases

Send press releases about your products and services to the news sites for the users to read and get interested. Such a technique will not only attract visitors to your site but also increase the backlinks, which will help your website rank higher in search engines. Before you write and submit your press release, do keyword research again, incorporating them into your headline and content.

This is a general list of important marketing strategies you can implement to make your website a profitable place. If you aren't comfortable in making these changes yourself, contact a local marketing company that works with local businesses. You may find that they can do the work on your behalf at a very reasonable price, enabling you to outsource these tasks and focus on other important elements of your business.



- Promotional Products
- Online Company Stores
- Trade Show Giveaways
- Executive Gifts
- Stress Relievers
- Team and Collegiate Items



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Social Media: Four Reasons to Focus on What Works for You

There is undoubtedly a lot of advice available on social media marketing, but you should ensure you stick to what is working for your brand. Remember that social media is connected to your brand and not something completely different.

1. Create your social media strategy around your brand.

Your brand will define how your social media looks. This means you should be clear on which brand colors to use and the type of language to use in your social media updates. At the same time though, it's crucial to remember to communicate and connect with your audience rather

than to sell all of the time. Consistent branding though will allow your customers to get to know you and it makes you seem organized and professional.

2. Your target market will define which platforms are best for you.

One of the most significant things to remember about your social media strategy is to create the content your audience will love. As mentioned, it's vital that it stays true to your brand - but your target market will dictate your social media. Therefore, it's important to think about your customers when deciding which platforms to use.

Therefore, don't merely

select social media sites because they are trendy or cool. If you can't create the right content for that platform, then another one may suit you better. After all, it's all about engaging that core audience that will determine if you succeed or not.

3. Your success may go against what others would recommend.

There's plenty of information about the best approaches for success with social media marketing. Of course, if you're new to social media, then you may feel tempted to follow that advice. However, things are always changing with digital marketing and finding success is dependent on

your brand and industry to some extent.

This means that posting at the recommended time or on the most popular platforms may not work for you. Social media is all about having a strategy and then measuring the results. After that, you can adjust your plan to improve your engagement levels. Every brand's audience is different, so you need to measure what times and types of content work for you.

4. Doing something different on social media may work for you.

The previous point was all

about finding the different times and general types of content that work best for you. This information can then be used to formulate your primary strategy. However, this process can be taken a step further as well.

Sometimes looking at successful brands on social media and taking inspiration from them is a good approach.

Remember though that every brand and industry is different when it comes to finding success with social media engagement. Therefore, doing things differently can also prove to

be a successful strategy. It's important to remember that there are no definitive rules when it comes to social media. This means you shouldn't base your strategy purely on what the experts tell you.

The reality is what works for other brands, may not work for you and vice versa.

Create your social media around your brand, your audience determines which platforms are right for you, your success may go against what others would recommend and doing something different on social media may work for you.



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FUN FACTS

December derives its name from the Latin word decem, meaning ten, as December was the tenth month of the oldest Roman calendar.

"Jingle bells" was composed in 1857, and not for Christmas – it was meant to be a Thanksgiving song!

In 1647 Oliver Cromwell, English Puritan leader, banned the festivities of Christmas for being seen as immoral on such a holy day. Anyone who was seen celebrating was arrested! The ban was lifted in 1660.

The first artificial Christmas tree was made in Germany, fashioned out of goose feathers that were dyed green.

Japanese people traditionally eat at KFC for Christmas dinner, thanks to a successful marketing campaign 40 years ago. KFC is so popular that customers must place their Christmas orders 2 months in advance.

A large part of Sweden's population watches Donald Duck cartoons every Christmas Eve – a tradition that started in 1960.

The first Christmas was celebrated on December 25, AD 336 in Rome.

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15 Steps to growing your business in 2019

Utilize this checklist to ensure you complete each of these important steps so that you can position your business for growth

- ___ Write a blog (post something new at least once per month)
- ___ Make a podcast
- ___ Build a presence on social media
- ___ Create a webinar (show your expertise)
- ___ Create an infographic (great visual content)
- ___ Offer a valuable free download to capture email addresses
- ___ Start a drip email campaign
- ___ Make a video (informative or funny - show consumers more about you)
- ___ Google your competition (see how you compare)
- ___ Respond to both positive and negative reviews
- ___ Get your business listed online (keep your information consistent)
- ___ Install and utilize analytics on your website (what's working well?)
- ___ Make your website mobile friendly (an absolute must!)
- ___ Add reviews to your website
- ___ Freshen up your Facebook business profile (add a header video)

- 
- The logo for LMS Local Marketing Solutions features the letters 'LMS' in a large, blue, stylized font. To the right of the text is a graphic consisting of a blue location pin with three curved lines above it, and a yellow speech bubble to its right. Below the 'LMS' text, the words 'LOCAL MARKETING SOLUTIONS' are written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font.

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