

M LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

The Marketing Guide for Local Business Owners

July 2024

**ADA
Compliance
for Small
Business
Websites**

**SIX COMMON
SEO
MISCONCEPTIONS**



**UNDERSTANDING
THE IMPORTANCE
OF CALLS TO
ACTION ON YOUR
LANDING PAGES
AND WEBSITE**

**HOW TO
LEVERAGE
PERSONALIZATION
IN YOUR EMAIL
MARKETING**

Infographic:
How to Improve Your
Ecommerce Conversion
Rate

FREE!

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Greetings!

Can you believe we are officially done with half of 2024? Time flies when you're having fun running a business! We are here to help you complete the rest of the year strong and prepare your business for 2025.

In this month's issue, we've included several interesting articles that you can apply immediately to help grow your business. Find articles in this month's magazine on ADA Compliant Websites, SEO tips, Personalizing Email Campaigns and more.

If you're not already receiving this magazine regularly, we suggest you add your email to our subscriber list so you 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.

As always, we welcome any comments or questions you might have, as well as the opportunity to explain how we've been able to help businesses just like yours.

Alyssa Engle
Marketing Manager
LMS Solutions, Inc.

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Inside This Month's Issue

- 4 Marketing Calendar
- 5 ADA Compliance for Small Business Websites
- 10 Six Common SEO Misconceptions
- 14 Understanding the Importance of Calls to Action on Your Landing Pages and Website
- 18 How to Leverage Personalization in Your Email Marketing
- 22 Fun Facts
- 23 Infographic: How to Improve Your Ecommerce Conversion Rate

A Little About Us

Local Business Marketing Magazine is proudly provided by LMS Solutions, Inc.



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.

July

National Grilling Month
National Ice Cream Month
National Picnic Month
National Blueberry Month

July 4 - Independence Day (U.S.)

1st - American Zoo Day
1st - Postal Worker Day
1st - International Joke Day
4th - Country Music Day
6th - Fried Chicken Day
7th - World Chocolate Day
7th - Global Forgiveness Day
8th - Blueberry Day
9th - Sugar Cookie Day
10th - Pina Colada Day
10th - Kitten Day
11th - 7-Eleven Day
11th - Mojito Day
12th - Pecan Pie Day

12th - French Fry Day
14th - Mac and Cheese Day
15th - Pet Fire Safety Day
17th - Lottery Day
17th - Emoji Day
17th - Hot Dog Day
17th - Ice Cream Day
18th - World Listening Day
19th - Daiquiri Day
21st - Junk Food Day
22nd - Mango Day
24th - Tequila Day
25th - Hire a Veteran Day
26th - Disability Independence Day
27th - Scotch Day
28th - Milk Chocolate Day
29th - Chicken Wing Day
30th - International Day of Friendship
30th - Cheesecake Day
31st - Mutt Day
31st - Avocado Day

August

Black Business Month
Eye Exam Month
Immunization Awareness Month
Traffic Awareness Month
Sandwich Month

1st - World Lung Cancer Day
1st - Spider-Man Day
1st - IPA Day
2nd - International Beer Day
2nd - Ice Cream Sandwich Day
3rd - Play Outside Day
3rd - Watermelon Day
4th - Chocolate Chip Cookie Day
4th - International Friendship Day
5th - Oyster Day
8th - International Cat Day
9th - Book Lovers Day
9th - International Day of Indigenous People
10th - S'mores Day
10th - Spoil Your Dog Day
11th - National Son and Daughter Day

12th - International Youth Day
13th - International Lefthander's Day
13th - Filet Mignon Day
14th - Financial Awareness Day
15th - Relaxation Day
16th - Rum Day
17th - Nonprofit Day
18th - Couple's Day
19th - Potato Day
19th - World Photo Day
20th - Radio Day
20th - Lemonade Day
20th - Bacon Lovers Day
21st - Senior Citizen's Day
22nd - Eat a Peach Day
24th - Kobe Bryant Day
24th - Waffle Day
26th - Dog Day
26th - Women's Equality Day
28th - Red Wine Day
30th - Beach Day
31st - Eat Outside Day



ADA Compliance for Small Business Websites

Having a strong online presence is crucial for any business, regardless of its size. As more and more transactions and interactions move online, ensuring that your website is accessible to everyone, including individuals with disabilities, is not just a moral obligation but a legal requirement. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandates that businesses provide equal access to their goods and services, including their websites, for people with disabilities. In this article, we will explore

what ADA compliance for small business websites entails, why it matters, and how you can achieve it.

Understanding ADA Compliance

ADA compliance refers to the adherence of your website to the standards set forth by the ADA for accessibility. The ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. Title III of the ADA specifically applies to businesses and nonprofit service providers that are public accommodations.

In recent years, courts have increasingly ruled that websites are covered under Title III of the ADA. This means that your website must be accessible to individuals with disabilities, such as those who are blind or visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, or have mobility impairments that affect their ability to navigate and use the web.

Why ADA Compliance Matters

Ensuring your website is ADA compliant is not just about legal compliance; it's also about inclusivity and expanding your customer base. By making your website accessible, you are opening your doors to millions of potential customers who may have previously been unable to fully interact with your business online. Moreover, accessible design often improves usability for all users, leading to better user experience and higher conversion rates.

Non-compliance with ADA guidelines can lead to legal consequences, including lawsuits and hefty fines. Many businesses have faced litigation for failing to make their websites accessible, underscoring the importance of proactive compliance measures.

Key Components of ADA Compliance

Achieving ADA compliance for your small business website involves several key components:

1. Text Alternatives for Non-Text Content

Provide text alternatives for images, videos, and audio content to ensure that screen readers can interpret and convey the information to users who are blind or visually impaired.

2. Keyboard Accessibility

Ensure that all functionality of your website can be operated via keyboard alone, as some users with mobility impairments rely on keyboard navigation instead of a mouse.

3. Color Contrast and Fonts

Use sufficient color contrast between text and background to ensure

ACCESSIBILITY



COGNITIVE



VISUAL



AUDITORY



MOTOR



SPEECH

readability for users with low vision. Similarly, choose fonts that are easy to read and resizable without loss of content or functionality.

4. Descriptive Links and Headings

Use descriptive link text that makes sense out of context and organize content using clear headings and subheadings to facilitate navigation with screen readers.

5. Video and Audio Accessibility

Provide captions for videos and transcripts for audio content to ensure that users who are deaf or hard of hearing can access the information.

6. Forms and Interactive Elements

Ensure that forms and interactive elements are accessible to users using screen readers and that error messages are clearly identified and described.

Implementing ADA Compliance

Implementing ADA compliance for your website may seem daunting, but there are

several steps you can take to simplify the process:

1. Conduct an Accessibility Audit

Use online tools or hire a professional to conduct an accessibility audit of your website. This will identify areas where your site may not meet ADA standards and provide recommendations for improvement.

2. Choose an Accessible Website Platform

When selecting or updating your website platform, choose one that prioritizes accessibility standards and offers built-in features that facilitate compliance.

3. Educate Your Team

Ensure that everyone involved in creating and maintaining your website understands the importance of accessibility and knows how to implement best practices.

4. Regularly Monitor and Update

Accessibility standards evolve, and technology changes. Regularly monitor your website's accessibility and make

updates as needed to ensure ongoing compliance.

ADA Compliance goes beyond your website. If you utilize social media, your posts must also comply to the ADA standards. For example, videos posted on your website and/or social media need to have captions. PDFs that are embedded (or even linked from your website) need to be ADA compliant.

There are great tools available to help you determine if your website is currently compliant, including some free scan tools. In addition, there are software platforms available that can help your site become compliant and provide the necessary tools for a site visitor with a disability to manipulate the website so that they can easily interact with it. For example, a user can click on a button in the software tool to increase the sizing of the text, which is important for a visitor with sight impairments. While these tools will not make your site 100% compliant (see earlier mention of PDFs and Videos), they are a great way to improve the

accessibility of your site, and possibly reduce the risk of potential legal action against your company.

There are currently Federal Tax Credits available to eligible businesses to reimburse expenses associated with updating your website to be ADA compliance. The tax credit, listed under Section 44 of the IRS Code, covers 50% of the eligible access expenditures made during the previous tax year, with a maximum expenditure limit of \$10,250. There is no credit for the first \$250 of the expenditures, and so, it is subtracted accordingly. Therefore, the highest amount of credit a business can receive is \$5,000.

ADA compliance for small business websites is not just a legal requirement but a crucial step towards inclusivity and better user experience. By making your website accessible, you not only mitigate legal risks but also expand your customer base and improve engagement with all users. Taking proactive steps to ensure accessibility benefits everyone and demonstrates your commitment to equality and customer satisfaction. Embrace ADA compliance as an opportunity to enhance your online presence and make a positive impact on your business's reputation and bottom line.

What is the ADA tax credit?

The U.S. government promotes and supports accessibility practices that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by incentivizing the efforts made and sustained with a tax credit.

The tax credit, listed under Section 44 of the IRS Code, covers 50% of the eligible access expenditures made during the previous tax year, with a maximum expenditure limit of \$10,250. There is no credit for the first \$250 of the expenditures, and so, it is subtracted accordingly. Therefore, the highest amount of credit a business can receive is \$5,000.

For example, let's say a business spends \$2,750 on updating their website to be accessible. You would subtract \$250 from that, which leaves \$2500. Your business would then receive 50% of what's left, which equals \$1250 in credit.

Who is eligible to apply?

1. Any business that generated \$1,000,000 or less during the year before filing.
2. Any business that employs 30 or fewer full-time employees in the previous tax year.

How to apply?

If your business fits one of these two qualifications, the next step is to fill out form 8826, which you can find on the IRS website, and attach it to your yearly tax return.

More instructions can be found on page two of form 8826. Please refer to the Tax Incentives for Improving Accessibility Fact Sheet which provides facts on the tax credit.

IS YOUR WEBSITE ADA COMPLIANT?



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Six Common SEO Misconceptions

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) remains a cornerstone of digital marketing strategies, yet it's also a field fraught with myths and misunderstandings. In the ever-evolving landscape of SEO, staying informed about what works and what doesn't can significantly impact your website's visibility

and traffic. In this article, we'll debunk six common SEO misconceptions that continue to persist, despite changes in search engine algorithms and best practices.

Myth 1: SEO is a One-Time Effort

One of the biggest misconceptions about

SEO is that it's a one-time task. In reality, SEO is an ongoing process that requires continuous monitoring, optimization, and adaptation. Search engines like Google regularly update their algorithms to improve user experience and combat spammy tactics. This means that what worked yesterday may not work

tomorrow. To maintain and improve your search rankings, you need to consistently update your content, monitor performance metrics, and refine your SEO strategy based on the latest trends and guidelines.

Myth 2: Keyword Stuffing Improves Rankings

In the early days of SEO, stuffing your content with keywords was a common practice believed to improve rankings. However, keyword stuffing is now considered a black hat SEO tactic and can result in penalties from search engines. Instead of focusing on keyword density, prioritize creating high-quality, valuable content that naturally incorporates relevant keywords and phrases. Aim for readability and user engagement rather than trying to manipulate search engine rankings through excessive keyword use.

Myth 3: The More Backlinks, the Better

Backlinks, or links from other websites pointing to yours, are an important factor in SEO. However, the quality of backlinks



BACKLINK
STRATEGY

matters more than the quantity. A few high-quality, authoritative backlinks from reputable sites in your industry carry more weight than numerous low-quality links from irrelevant or spammy websites. Focus on earning backlinks organically by producing valuable content that others want to link to, rather than engaging in link schemes or buying links, which can harm your site's reputation.

Myth 4: SEO is All About Ranking #1

While ranking on the first page of search engine results pages (SERPs) is desirable, it's not the only metric that matters in SEO. The ultimate goal of SEO is to drive relevant traffic to your website and convert visitors into

customers or leads. Even if you're not ranking #1 for every keyword, you can still attract valuable traffic by targeting long-tail keywords, optimizing for local search, and focusing on user intent. Monitor metrics such as organic traffic, engagement rates, and conversion rates to measure the success of your SEO efforts beyond rankings alone.

Myth 5: Meta Tags Have No Impact on SEO

Meta tags, including meta titles and meta descriptions, are HTML elements that provide information about your webpage to search engines. While their direct impact on rankings has diminished compared to other factors like content quality and backlinks, well-



crafted meta tags can still influence click-through rates from search results. A compelling meta title and description that accurately summarizes your content and includes relevant keywords can improve visibility and attract more clicks, thereby indirectly benefiting your SEO efforts.

Myth 6: SEO is Separate from User Experience (UX)

SEO and user experience (UX) are closely intertwined elements of a successful digital strategy. Search engines prioritize websites that provide a positive user experience, including fast

loading times, mobile-friendliness, intuitive navigation, and relevant content. Optimizing your website for SEO often overlaps with improving UX, such as ensuring easy navigation for both users and search engine crawlers, enhancing page speed, and creating engaging, informative content that meets the needs of your target audience.

Navigating the complexities of SEO requires dispelling common myths and understanding the evolving landscape of search engine algorithms. By debunking misconceptions such as

SEO being a one-time effort, the effectiveness of keyword stuffing, and the importance of quality over quantity in backlinks, you can refine your SEO strategy to drive sustainable results.

Remember that SEO is a dynamic field that requires continuous learning, adaptation to algorithm updates, and a focus on creating valuable content that enhances user experience. By staying informed and implementing best practices, you can improve your website's visibility, attract organic traffic, and achieve your digital marketing goals effectively.



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Understanding the Importance of Calls to Action on Your Landing Pages and Website

In the realm of digital marketing, calls to action (CTAs) are the guiding force that drives visitors to take desired actions on your website or landing pages. Whether it's making a purchase, signing up for a newsletter, downloading an ebook, or simply contacting your business, CTAs serve as the crucial link between engaging content and meaningful conversions.

In this article, we will delve into the significance of CTAs, explore effective strategies for crafting compelling calls to action, and discuss how they can optimize the performance of your digital marketing efforts.

The Role of Calls to Action

Imagine your website as a virtual storefront where

visitors can explore your offerings, learn about your services, or discover your products. However, without clear directions or invitations to take the next step, visitors may browse aimlessly and ultimately leave without engaging further. This is where CTAs come into play—they act as signposts that guide visitors towards specific actions that align with your business goals.

A well-crafted CTA not only informs visitors about what action to take next but also motivates and persuades them to act. It should be clear, concise, and compelling, prompting immediate action while addressing the visitor's needs or desires. Effective CTAs can significantly increase conversion rates by reducing friction and providing a seamless user experience.

Types of Calls to Action

CTAs come in various forms, each tailored to encourage different types of interactions:

Button CTAs

These are typically prominent buttons with clear text such as "Buy Now," "Sign Up," or "Learn More."

They stand out visually and are designed to attract attention and prompt clicks.

Text CTAs

These can be integrated into the body of your content, compelling visitors to take action through persuasive language and direct requests.

Image CTAs

Incorporating CTAs within images can enhance visual appeal and engagement, directing users to click for more information or to perform a specific action.

Pop-up CTAs

While often debated for their intrusiveness, strategically timed pop-up CTAs can effectively capture attention and encourage immediate response, such as offering a discount or promoting a time-limited offer.

Key Elements of Effective CTAs

Crafting compelling CTAs involves considering

several key elements to maximize their effectiveness:

Clarity

Ensure that your CTA is clear and specific, leaving no room for ambiguity about the action you want visitors to take.

Visibility

Position your CTAs prominently on your website or landing page where they are easily noticeable and accessible without scrolling.

Urgency

Create a sense of urgency or scarcity to prompt immediate action, such as using phrases like "Limited Time Offer" or "Act Now."

Relevance

Align your CTAs with the visitor's journey and stage in the sales funnel. Tailor

CALL TO ACTION



DOWNLOAD



SHARE



LEARN MORE



WATCH OUR VIDEO



CONTACT US



SUBSCRIBE



CLICK HERE

CTAs based on the content they are engaging with or their browsing behavior.

Value Proposition

Clearly communicate the benefits or rewards of taking the desired action. Visitors are more likely to convert if they understand what's in it for them.

Testing and Optimization

Effective digital marketing strategies rely on continuous testing and optimization of CTAs to maximize conversion rates. A/B testing allows you to experiment with different variations of CTAs—such as wording, color schemes, placement, and design—to identify which combinations resonate best with your audience. Analyze metrics such as click-through rates, conversion rates, and bounce rates to measure the impact of your CTAs and make data-driven decisions for improvement.

Integration with User Experience (UX)

Calls to action should



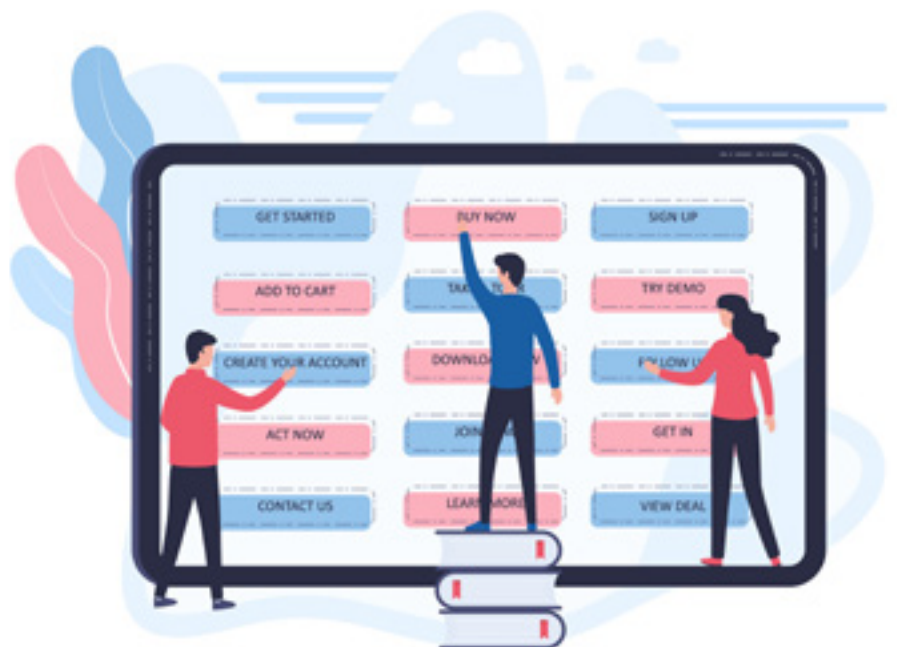
into customers or leads. By strategically placing clear and compelling CTAs throughout your website and landing pages, you can guide visitors

seamlessly integrate with the overall user experience (UX) of your website or landing page. A cohesive design, intuitive navigation, and responsive layout contribute to a positive user experience, reinforcing trust and credibility. Avoid overwhelming visitors with too many CTAs or conflicting messages, as this can lead to confusion and detract from the user's journey.

Calls to action are indispensable tools for converting website visitors

towards taking meaningful actions that support your business objectives.

Remember to continuously refine and optimize your CTAs based on user feedback and performance data to ensure they remain effective and relevant. Embrace the power of CTAs as a fundamental component of your digital marketing strategy to enhance engagement, drive conversions, and ultimately, achieve your business goals effectively.





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How to Leverage Personalization in Your Email Marketing

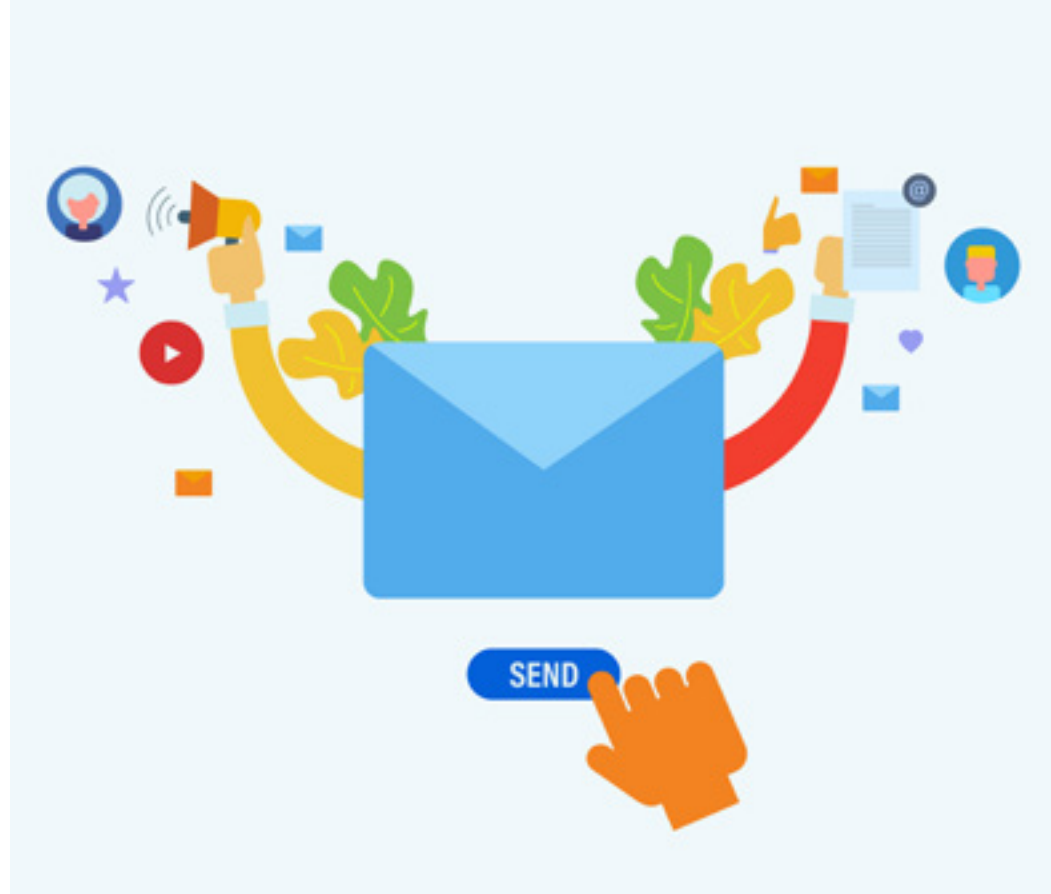


Every business strives to capture the attention of consumers and drive engagement. Personalization has emerged as a game-changer. Email marketing, in particular, has evolved from generic mass mailings to highly targeted campaigns that speak directly to the individual recipient.

Personalization isn't just a buzzword anymore; it's a strategic approach that can significantly enhance the effectiveness of your email campaigns. In this article, we'll delve into the power of personalization in email marketing, explore effective strategies to implement it, and discuss how it can benefit your business.

Understanding the Power of Personalization

Imagine receiving an email that addresses you by name, recommends products based on your past purchases, and includes content tailored to your interests. Such emails feel more relevant and valuable to recipients, increasing the likelihood of them opening, reading, and acting upon them. Personalization goes beyond basic



demographic segmentation; it's about creating individualized experiences that resonate with each recipient on a personal level.

Personalized emails have been shown to deliver higher engagement rates, improved conversion rates, and increased customer loyalty. According to studies, emails with personalized subject lines are 26% more likely to be opened, and marketers have found a 760% increase in revenue from segmented campaigns. These statistics underscore the impact that personalization can have on the success of your email marketing efforts.

Effective Strategies for Personalization

Segmentation Based on User Data:

Start by segmenting your email list based on demographic information, purchase history, browsing behavior, or engagement levels. This allows you to send targeted messages that are more relevant to each segment's interests and preferences.

Dynamic Content:

Incorporate dynamic content blocks within your emails that change based on the recipient's data. This could include personalized product

recommendations, tailored offers, or localized information.

Behavioral Triggers:

Implement automated email workflows triggered by specific actions or behaviors, such as abandoned cart emails, welcome sequences, or re-engagement campaigns. These emails are timed to deliver relevant content at the right moment, increasing the likelihood of conversion.

Personalized Recommendations:

Use predictive analytics or machine learning algorithms to suggest products or content that are likely to interest each recipient based on their past behavior or preferences.

Interactive Elements:

Incorporate interactive elements like polls, quizzes, or surveys into your emails to gather more data about your subscribers' preferences and tailor future communications accordingly.

Benefits of Personalization

The benefits of integrating personalization into your email marketing strategy are manifold. Firstly, it enhances customer experience by delivering content that is more relevant and valuable to each recipient. This, in turn, fosters stronger customer relationships and increases brand loyalty. Secondly, personalized emails have higher engagement rates, resulting in improved open rates, click-through rates, and ultimately, conversion rates. By sending the right message to the right person at the right time, you maximize the effectiveness of your email campaigns and drive measurable business results.

Moreover, personalization allows you to stand out in a crowded inbox by delivering messages that

cut through the noise and resonate with recipients on a personal level. It helps you build a reputation as a brand that understands and cares about its customers' individual needs and preferences. Over time, this can translate into increased customer lifetime value and advocacy, as satisfied customers are more likely to recommend your brand to others.

Personalization is not just a trend in email marketing; it's a strategic imperative for businesses looking to thrive in the digital age. By leveraging user data, segmentation strategies, dynamic content, and behavioral triggers, you can create personalized email campaigns that drive engagement, foster loyalty, and deliver measurable results. Embrace personalization as a powerful tool to enhance customer experience, improve campaign performance, and differentiate your brand in the competitive marketplace. Start implementing personalized strategies in your email marketing today to unlock its full potential and achieve long-term success for your business.



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FUN FACTS

Contrary to popular belief, only two Founding Fathers signed the US Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. The majority of signers penned their signatures on August 2, 1776.

July Milestones:

- July 1st, 1770 - Lexell's comet passed closer to the Earth than any other comet in recorded history.
- July 3rd, 1826 - John Adams, second president of the U.S., died the same day as Thomas Jefferson, third president of the U.S., on the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the U.S. Declaration of Independence. The two founding fathers did not get along during their careers.
- July 11th, 1991 - The 'eclipse of the century' solar eclipse cast a shadow stretching 9,000 miles from Hawaii to South America, lasting nearly seven minutes.
- July 15th, 2006 - Twitter was launched. 140 characters could say a lot.
- July 29th, 1981 - A worldwide TV audience of over 700 million people watched the wedding of Charles, Prince of Wales, and Lady Diana Spencer at St Paul's Cathedral in London.

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How to Improve Your Ecommerce Conversion Rate

The average conversion rate is between 1% and 4%. If you can increase your ecommerce conversion rate by 1% or 2%, you could double your sales.



Offer Coupon Codes

When someone visits your website with a coupon in hand, they're more likely to be a shopper than a browser.



Decrease Loading Time

Over 40% of people abandon a website if loading time exceeds 3 seconds, every second delay in page response can result in 7% reduction in conversions.



Offer Free Return Shipping

67% of shoppers check returns policy before purchasing and 92% of consumers will make a repeat purchase if returns were easy.



Offer Free Shipping

Unexpected shipping costs cause 28% of shoppers to abandon their shopping cart. If you award free shipping to a certain cart value, your higher average sale amount & conversion rate can rise, covering your additional shipping costs.



Promote Benefits, Not Features

Product features explain what your product does, but when a customer reads the benefits, they learn what the product does for them.



Utilize Social Media

69% of shoppers seek the opinion of others before making a purchase.



Send Abandoned Cart Reminders

More than 67% of online shopping carts are abandoned. Reminders to customers who abandon their cart have been found to recover between 5% and 12% of lost sales.



Retarget Visitors

Whether they are a previous customer or simply a visitor of your site, retargeted visitors are 70% more likely to make a purchase upon returning.

A man with glasses and a beard, wearing a dark blue shirt, and a woman with dark hair, wearing a red shirt and a white apron, are sitting at a wooden counter in a cafe. The man is smiling and looking towards the camera. The woman is also smiling and looking towards the camera. On the counter in front of them is a white tablet computer, a white coffee cup, and a saucer. In the background, there are shelves with various items, including mugs, coffee bags, and a basket of bread. The text "LOCAL MARKETING" is overlaid in large white letters on the image.

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