

Digital & Online Presence |

Your guide to mastering digital marketing.

Presented by:



*“Embrace what you don’t know, especially in the beginning, because what you don’t know can become your **greatest asset**. It ensures that you will absolutely be doing things different from everybody else.”*

Sara Blakely
founder, SPANX



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Digital & Online Presence |

Audience Development

Social Media

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Digital Marketing Platforms

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*“A good marketer can **empathize with their audience** and can therefore understand what topics they should create content on, what tone of voice to use, and what channels to promote the content in.”*

Pawan Deshpande
CEO, Curata



Audience Development

Find, reach and nurture your audience.

To grow your business, start with your audience.

So, you've started a business. Perhaps you're selling vintage jewelry online, providing your neighborhood with the best dining experience in town or inviting customers into your very own bed and breakfast. No matter what you do, your business has a distinct purpose. Guess what? Finding that purpose is the hardest—and the most important—part of running a business. Give yourself some credit, and prepare for the fun part: sharing your offerings with your audience. Within this step, you'll need to define, target and engage your audience. Let's get started.

*“There may be customers without brands, but **there are no brands without customers.**”*

— Anonymous

Define your audience

Did you know that Popular Woodworking has over 28,000 followers on Twitter? The world is full of people with unique hobbies and niche interests. That means no matter how specialized your product or service is, you have an audience waiting for your offerings. To pinpoint your audience, ask yourself a few key questions about your customer's demographics, psychographics and behavior.



Audience Development

Find, reach and nurture your audience.

Demographics:

1. What age are most of my customers?
2. What gender are most of my customers?
3. What is the profession or income level of my customers?

Psychographics:

1. What are my customers most interested in?
2. What do my customers find value in?
3. What makes my customers unique?

Behavioral:

1. What are my customers' shopping patterns?
2. How do my customers find my business?
3. What sites, social channels or blogs do my customers visit?

Reach your audience

Now that you know who your audience is, it's time to reach them. One way to start is by creating Google Ads to help your audience find your offerings.

First, come up with a list of common keywords for your brand. Then, follow Google's guidelines to create text ads that include those keywords. Be sure to keep the language natural—otherwise your carefully crafted ads may end up ignored.

Aside from Google Ads, it's also important to include SEO keywords throughout your website. This should help customers find your content, while giving them helpful information about what sets your business aside from the rest.

Start the conversation

Your audience is never just in one place. They're on Google, but they're also on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Pinterest and Instagram. **Find out which channels are best for your brand by identifying which your customers use most frequently.** Then, create social profiles as well as regular, engaging content.



Audience Development

Find, reach and nurture your audience.

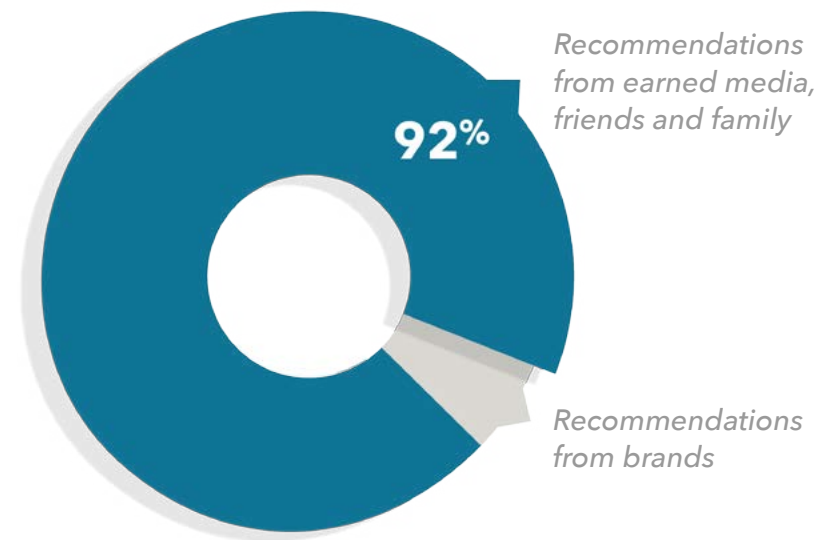
Once you make your profiles, communicate with your audience. Ask questions, respond to comments, repost your favorite user-generated content and continue to keep the conversation rolling.

Create buzz around your brand

Believe it or not, you're not the only one who can bring in your audience. **To grow your audience more, ask yourself who else your customers would like to hear from.** For example, if you sell produce at the local farmer's market, consider partnering with a popular chef as an influencer. Then, have them post recipes or other content around your fresh fruits and veggies.

Working with influencers, partner brands and publishers can grow your audience and your business. So how can you convince these influencers to work with you? You may want to give them products or services for free in return for honest content.

As well, you can explain that this is a mutually beneficial partnership—as your audience grows, so will your influencers'.



According to Nielsen's Global Trust in Advertising Survey, 92% of consumers trust recommendations from other people over brands. Article by Marisa Grimes 04/10/2012. [Read more here.](#)

With all these tips, you're basically an audience development expert. That wasn't so bad, was it? We knew you'd be a natural.



Audience Development

Find, reach and nurture your audience.

Top tip

To **reach** your audience, start by **defining** your audience through demographic, psychographic and behavioral information.

Now that you've tackled audience development, find out how you can make the most of social media in our next section.



Digital & Online Presence |

Audience Development

Social Media

Content Creation

Digital Marketing Platforms

Customer Service &
Reputation Management

“
*People don't want to be marketed at in the social channel. This is where they want to talk to each other, and brands are there by invitation. They have to **be a great guest** at the table.*”

Veronica Fielding
CEO, Digital Brand Expressions



Social Media

Connect with your audience online.

Your customers are nailing social media. Are you?

In the modern world, everything and everybody are on social media. From Facebook to Twitter to YouTube, your customers are spending quality time connecting with friends and family—but they're also connecting with brands. They're learning about products and services, asking questions, giving feedback and identifying with brands that share like-values. Social media is an enormous opportunity to grow and nurture your audience. By picking the right channels, creating valuable content, scheduling posts ahead of time and studying analytics, you can benefit your audience and your brand. Ready?

Choose your channels

Unless you have a full marketing team, you probably shouldn't dive head-first into Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Snapchat and Periscope. Chances are you're already busy—so it's important to only pick channels that you'll be able to properly manage. You should post regularly to any channels you run, so make sure you're not biting off more than you can chew. After all, it's better to be absent on a channel than to abandon fans and followers who look to you for fresh, interesting content.



Social Media

Connect with your audience online.


“ We need to create a business strategy for our content. That means saying no to too many channels and content types... ”


— Joe Pulizzi, Founder,
Content Marketing Institute


Think about which channels your audience spends the most time on. If you own a restaurant, you may want to go with Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. If you specialize in craft supplies, add Pinterest Propel to the mix for promoted DIY content. Do you sell quirky t-shirts to millennials? Go for channels that appeal to younger audiences like Snapchat. Do you own an accounting firm? Reach out to professionals on LinkedIn. **Prioritize the channels you'd like to run, then make sure finding them is easy.** One way to do this is by including clickable social icons on your website to any channels you use.


Create content for your audience

Different channels call for different content. Let's take a look at what you could post on different channels.

 Facebook is best for culture and community-focused content, like photos of your café's baristas having a latte art contest.

 Twitter is ideal for shared interests, like a list of new artists your music magazine recommends for hip-hop lovers.

 Pinterest is all about DIY ideas—so go here or Pinterest Propel to share your subscription grocery service's favorite pizza toppings.

 Curious where to post in-the-moment content like videos of your gym's morning routine? Try Snapchat or Periscope.



Social Media

Connect with your audience online.



For visual content like puppies from your dog grooming service, pick Instagram.



Want to share your recruiting firm's hiring tips? Look no further than LinkedIn.



Have videos about how to use your new tech tool? Share those on YouTube.

Posting the right content on the right channels will help you make the most of your social presence. But you shouldn't stop there. This is the chance to turn one-time customers into life-long loyalists. When someone asks you a question, respond in a timely manner. When someone tells you how much they love your products, take the time to thank them. If someone posts a message that aligns with your brand values, repost it while crediting the original source. For more engagement, ask your fans questions or create polls to

learn more about what they're interested in. This is a great way to find out what else you could do to improve your relationship with your audience.



Don't rely on spur-of-the-moment posts

If you post whenever you have the time, you might just find yourself dropping off the grid for weeks at a time. This doesn't fly in the fast-paced world of social media. **To keep yourself accountable for regular social posts, create a social content calendar that breaks down everything you'll post for the month.** Go ahead and write the posts, then pick a date and a time to post to your channels. This is also the place to include any



Social Media

Connect with your audience online.

advertising dollars you'd like to use toward social posts. You can then use a platform like [Hubspot](#) to schedule the posts ahead of time, so they'll automatically appear on your channels. If you decide to post spur-of-the-moment, that's fine—just make sure it's in addition to your pre-planned content. Also, remember to regularly check your channels for posts that you'd like to respond to.

Keep track of your progress

Once you've posted to your channels, it's time to monitor your progress. **By taking advantage of helpful third-party platforms like [Hubspot](#), you can see everything from the number of interactions your channels see to the amount of traffic driving to your website.**

HINT: You'll learn more about **Hubspot** (and other platforms like it) in our upcoming chapter about digital marketing platforms.

Here are some important things to look out for when reviewing analytics:

Conversions:

how many times your audience responded to your call-to-action

Engagement:

number of times someone interacted with your post (liked, shared, commented, etc.)

Reach:

size of audience who could potentially see your posts

Impressions:

size of audience who saw your post

Audience growth rate:

how much your social audience has increased (or decreased)



Social Media

Connect with your audience online.

Visits vs unique visits:

comparison of frequent visitors versus new visitors

Bounce rate:

number of people who left your website without exploring

Referral traffic

number of website visits from your social channels

Influence:

a score showing your estimated potential influence over your audience

shop now



With these new skills under your belt, you'll be sure to grow your social presence (and your business).

*“The more you engage with customers, the clearer things become **and the easier it is to determine what you should be doing.**”*

— John Russell
President, Harley Davidson



Social Media

Connect with your audience online.

Top tip

Pick social channels that ***appeal to your audience***, then post regularly to keep your followers and fans ***engaged*** and ***loyal***.

By now, you should feel pretty great about your social media skills. You're all set to create social accounts, create a social content calendar, schedule posts and measure your growth. In our next section, you'll learn about content creation for everything from blogs to newsletters!



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*“Visual content, more creative storytelling, and interactive content contribute to experiences that inform and **create an emotional connection** with buyers.”*

Lee Odden
CEO, TopRank Marketing



Content Creation

Create attention-grabbing content for your brand.

It's not all about products and services—it's about your content.

Whether you own a yoga studio or a spa, you know that running a successful business means giving your customers great value. But value isn't just what you can give your customers when they're in your presence. While complimentary tea, relaxing music and free samples are all great additions to your services, you can benefit customers even more.

How? By creating content that gives your customers a reason to stay loyal to your brand.

Begin with a helpful blog

According to a [survey by Jadite Inc.](#), small businesses that engage their customers through a blog get a **whopping 126% more lead growth** than non-blogging businesses.



*businesses
without blogs*



*businesses
with blogs*



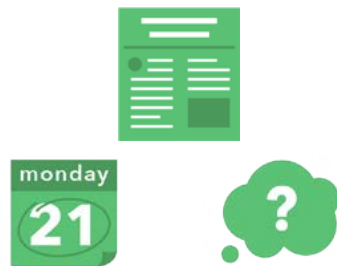
Content Creation

Create attention-grabbing content for your brand.

Not only are blogs valuable to you, they're also valuable to your customers and potential customers.

Common blogpost themes

- **News & Happenings**
- **Thought Leadership & Discussion**
- **Sales & Events**



Let's picture two businesses: a yoga studio with a blog, and a yoga studio without a blog. At first glance, these studios look very similar. They both see customers regularly, develop meaningful relationships and help customers better their lives through exercise and Zen mindsets. But the studio with a blog goes even further. It posts about breathing practices, where to find quality yoga gear, post-workout smoothie recipes and aromatherapy blends for relaxation. That means two things.

First, potential customers who come across the blog will likely choose this studio over other options (i.e., the studio without a blog) because the studio has already given them value through helpful content. Second, existing customers who are in-between sessions will be able to continue their journey through the studio's blog—causing them to be even more loyal, while sharing these posts with friends and family. The blogging yoga studio will likely grow, while nurturing their customers and enticing potential customers.

Give your customers something to look forward to

Like blogs, we recommend using newsletters to give even more value to your customers. But wait, what's the difference between blogs and newsletters? Well, while the two mediums are quite similar, there is one difference that should be considered. Blogs are written for customers and potential customers. Because of



Content Creation

Create attention-grabbing content for your brand.

this, blogs should be written toward a larger, more general audience. Newsletters, however, are for your inner circle: customers who care enough to subscribe to your content. Write these newsletters in a more personal voice, and feel free to speak to this community about more niche topics. Just make sure you give your subscribers the option to unsubscribe to comply with legal requirements!

“Content marketing is like a first date. If all you do is talk about yourself, there won’t be a second date.”

— David Beebe
Marriott International

Encourage your customers through email

Let’s say your spa is running a special: free facial with an hour massage. You’ve taped posters on the walls,

posted on your social channels and told customers to spread the word. But you’re still not quite seeing the results you expected. What do you do? **One way you could bring in more business is through a drip campaign, or a set of emails that are sent automatically according to a specific schedule.**

You could start by sending everyone in your email list an introduction to the special. A week later, you might send two different emails: one to those who opened the last email, and one to those who didn’t. Perhaps you send those who opened the email tips about how to maximize massages by staying hydrated and being prepared to chat about tense areas that need extra TLC.

What will you send those who didn’t open the email? A reminder that the special is ending and to hurry in before it does. You can then continue this with future emails to engage multiple segments of your audience.



Content Creation

Create attention-grabbing content for your brand.

Stick to your social channels

In the last section, we went over the importance of staying active on social media. This is hugely important when it comes to creating content for your audience.

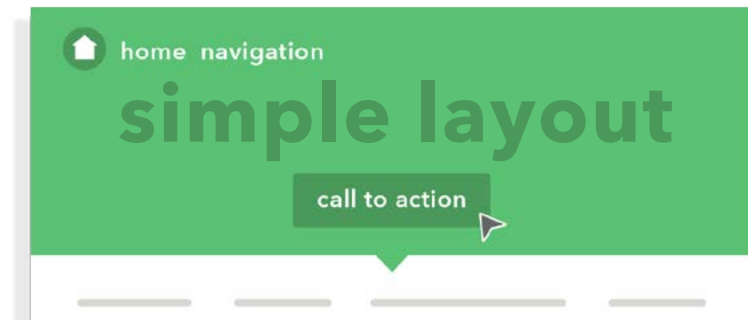
So, what can you post on social media? Consider a combination of photos, videos, brand messages, links to relevant third-party articles, polls, questions and testimonials. To increase the impact of your blogposts, you should also drive fans to new posts as they're created. As well, you could encourage your audience to sign up for your newsletter or follow you on any other channels you run. By cross-promoting your content, you can reap even more rewards (while rewarding your audience too).

Put your ad campaigns in the spotlight

If your business is running an ad campaign, you should promote it through your newsletter, blog and social channels—but you should also create a space where the campaign can live. What is this space?

A landing page, or a standalone page that includes a simple form for users to fill out. **Landing pages give you a space to speak strictly about your campaign in a basic layout, while gathering information about customers and potential customers.** These pages should be concise, straightforward and simple—driving users to an obvious call-to-action.

Landing page must-haves:



Imagine your yoga studio is partnering with a spa to treat customers for staying active. You want information about those who are interested, so you can grow



Content Creation

Create attention-grabbing content for your brand.

your audience and continue to market to prospective customers. So, what's your CTA? Sign up for the spa day event. It's simple. You send out a drip campaign, driving your audience to the landing page. Here, you should gather their basic information for the sign-up, and measure performance through your marketing platform (don't worry, there's more to come on this later).

Look to like-minded creators your audience trusts

In our audience development section, we touched on the value of partnering with influencers and like-minded brands to promote your business. These partners can create unique, insightful content that gives your customers helpful information as well as another reason to choose your business.

Influencers can create blogposts, video reviews and social posts about your offerings—but it's important that they disclose your relationship for transparency.

*“Treating influencers as an extension of your company rather than a distribution channel will **result in a more impactful experience for influencers and consumers alike.**”*

— Emily Garvey
Director of Strategy, Rokkan

Another way to stretch your content is by creating advertorials with publications your audience follows already. For example, your yoga studio may want to work with Yoga Magazine to create content that benefits all parties. An example? You could write an article with your top 15 tips to help beginners stick to practice. Not only would the publication promote it, you'd be able to share it on your website, social channels, blog and newsletter. Win-win-win.



Content Creation

Create attention-grabbing content for your brand.

Create content that's fresh and unique

When it comes to creating content, the bottom line is **keep your audience engaged**. Think carefully about what is most valuable to them, and be creative. Here are several [types of content](#) you could use to appeal to your audience across channels:

- How-to guides
- Testimonials
- Photos
- Polls
- Videos
- Questions
- Brand messages
- Lists
- Case studies
- Contests

Don't overwhelm your audience

There's so much you can do to give your audience helpful, valuable content. But if there's one thing worse than not giving your audience enough content, it's giving them too much content.

Avoid posting unnecessary content. If you're posting for the sake of posting, it's time to reconsider what you'd like to share with your audience. **Everything you post should have a purpose—plain and simple.**

*“The reason we struggle with content marketing is because we haven't started with 'Why?'. **Customers don't care about your vanity metrics. Ask them, 'How can I help?'**”*

— Kristina Halvorson
CEO and Founder, Brain Traffic



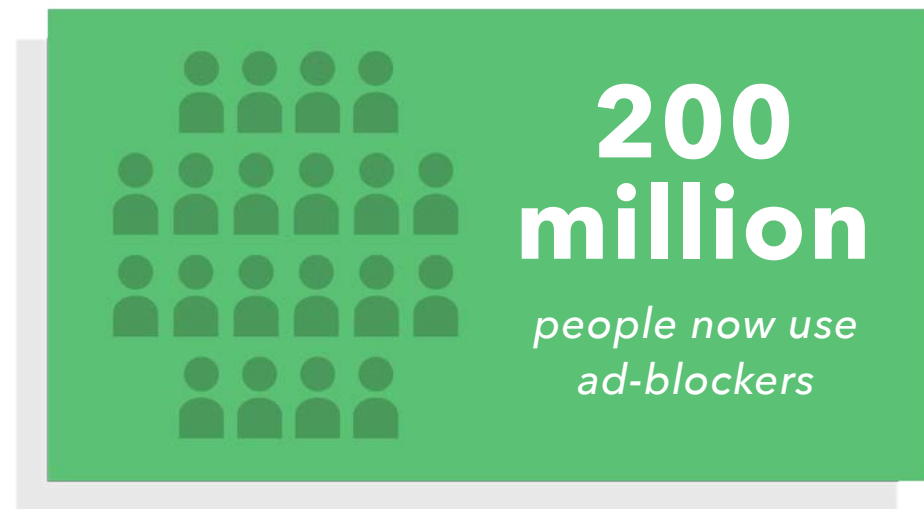
Content Creation

Create attention-grabbing content for your brand.

One piece of content you may want to avoid is push notifications. **Push notifications should only be sent to tell users about necessary updates.**

For example, airlines send their customers push notifications when their flights are delayed. However, push notifications should never be used for advertisements through system level notifications. Instead of giving your customers added value, it'll likely only give them added frustrations. Save your communication for content that engages, informs and helps your audience.

By giving your customers helpful content, you can pave the way to even more loyal customers. Look out, world.



Content Creation

Create attention-grabbing content for your brand.

Top tip

Create content that **engages** your audience, and you will in turn create content that **grows your business**.

Now that you're ready to create invaluable content for your audience, start looking forward to learning about our favorite digital marketing platforms in our next section.



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*“ We have technology, finally, that for the first time in human history allows people to really **maintain rich connections** with much larger numbers of people.”*

Pierre Omidyar
Founder, eBay



Digital Marketing Platforms

Pick your marketing platform with confidence.

Simplify your marketing needs with the right platform.

As a business owner, there's a lot on your shoulders. First, you have to source (or create) a valuable product or service. Second, you have to provide these products and services to your customers in a simple, timely manner. Third, you have to stay on top of transactions between you, your customers and your vendors. Between stocking up on necessary supplies, paying rent and hiring employees, your to-do list never quite comes to an end. So how do you pencil in tasks like creating and scheduling emails, posting social content

and measuring performance? With the right marketing platform, you can save time and reap more rewards. Take a look at our favorite tools.

Salesforce

With Salesforce's Marketing Cloud, you can build and manage email campaigns, reach your customers via mobile messaging, engage customers over social channels, manage ads online, create landing pages, track visitor behavior, deliver personalized web content and create cross-channel journeys for customers. Plus, you can access the platform through your computer or smart phone.

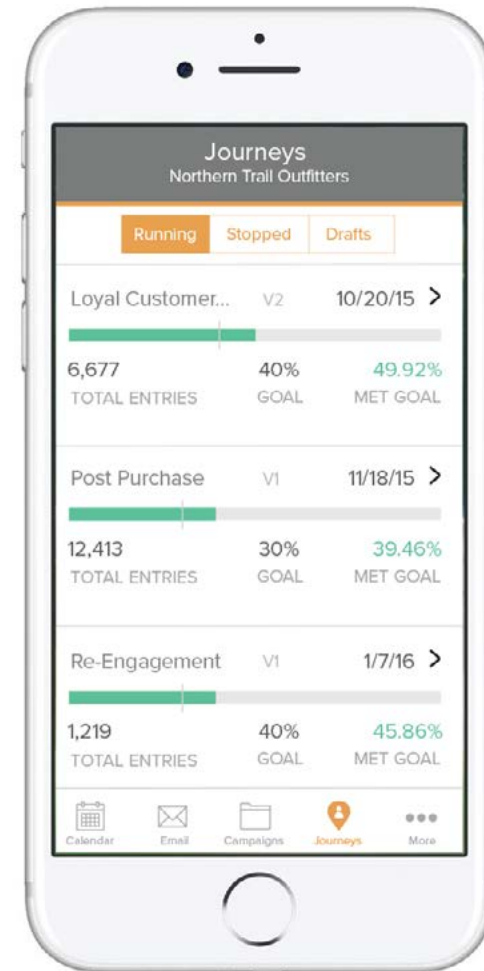


Digital Marketing Platforms

Pick your marketing platform with confidence.

Let's take a closer look at Salesforce's Marketing Cloud email capabilities. With this platform, you can use drag-and-drop content tools to create custom emails for your audience. Through this tool, you can also create automatic messages for your customers for different stages throughout your email campaign. For added value, Salesforce's Marketing Cloud also allows you to A/B test emails—or test two different email variations to see which will perform better—while tracking and optimizing your campaigns.

Salesforce's Marketing Cloud social capabilities are also impressive. Through social listening tools, you can keep an eye on conversations about your brand, trending topics and more. As well, you can plan, publish and track social posts simply for full-circle campaigns. Another perk is the ability to respond to customers quickly by monitoring owned channels, organizing conversations and labeling posts.



[EXPLORE SALESFORCE](#)



Digital Marketing Platforms

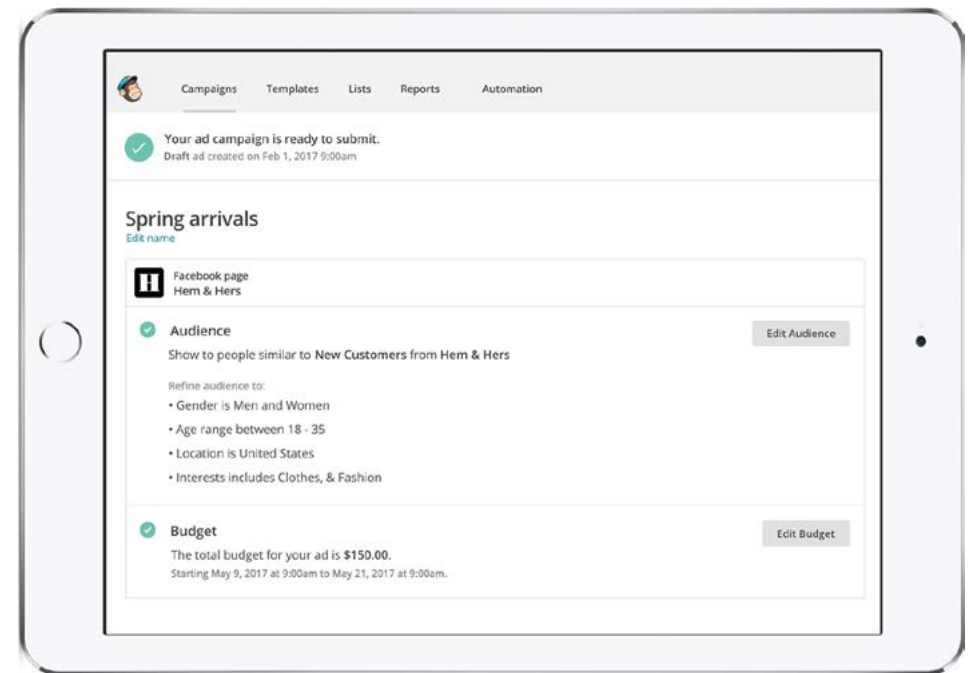
Pick your marketing platform with confidence.

MailChimp

We bet you've heard the name "MailChimp" before—and with good reason. Not only does MailChimp have an intuitive user experience for users of all skillsets, it can be used for Fortune 500 companies and is affordable for businesses of all sizes. What kind of marketing needs can you accomplish with MailChimp?

MailChimp allows you to easily design or choose email templates, automate and track emails, monitor performance, create ads, target your audience, post social content across channels and more.

Also, MailChimp connects seamlessly to your online store. Utilizing MailChimp's ecommerce integrations, you can create targeted ad campaigns, automate follow-up messages and even notify your audience when items are back in stock. You can then see reports that show how much your customer base has grown and how close you are to reaching financial goals.



[EXPLORE MAILCHIMP](#)



Digital Marketing Platforms

Pick your marketing platform with confidence.

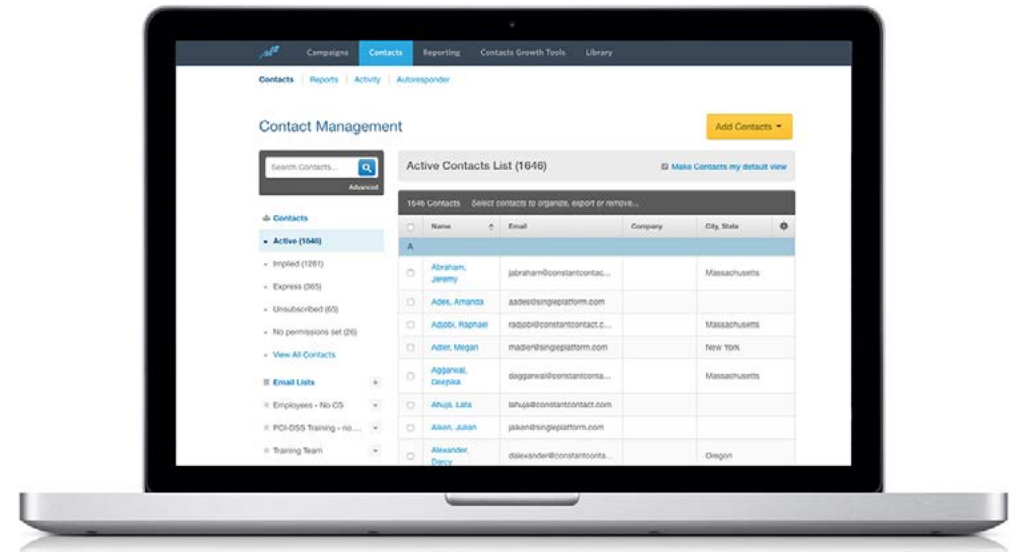
Constant Contact

Constant Contact allows you to create and edit email templates, deliver and track emails, share emails via your social channels, run and track Facebook promotions, easily manage contact lists and set automatic emails for instances like customer birthdays. It also easily integrates with platforms like Facebook, LeadPages, PayPal and WordPress.

One reason small businesses choose Constant Contact is because this platform comes with a myriad of resources to make the most of their services. From FAQs to video tutorials to webinars, Constant Contact allows you to grow your skills without leaving your home (or, more likely, your business space).

On top of their helpful resources, Constant Contact is known for their superior customer service. Along with live chat support with Constant Contact representatives,

you can take advantage of phone support for additional help. If you're often overwhelmed by marketing tasks, this platform may be right for you.



[EXPLORE CONSTANT CONTACT](#)



Digital Marketing Platforms

Pick your marketing platform with confidence.

Active Campaign

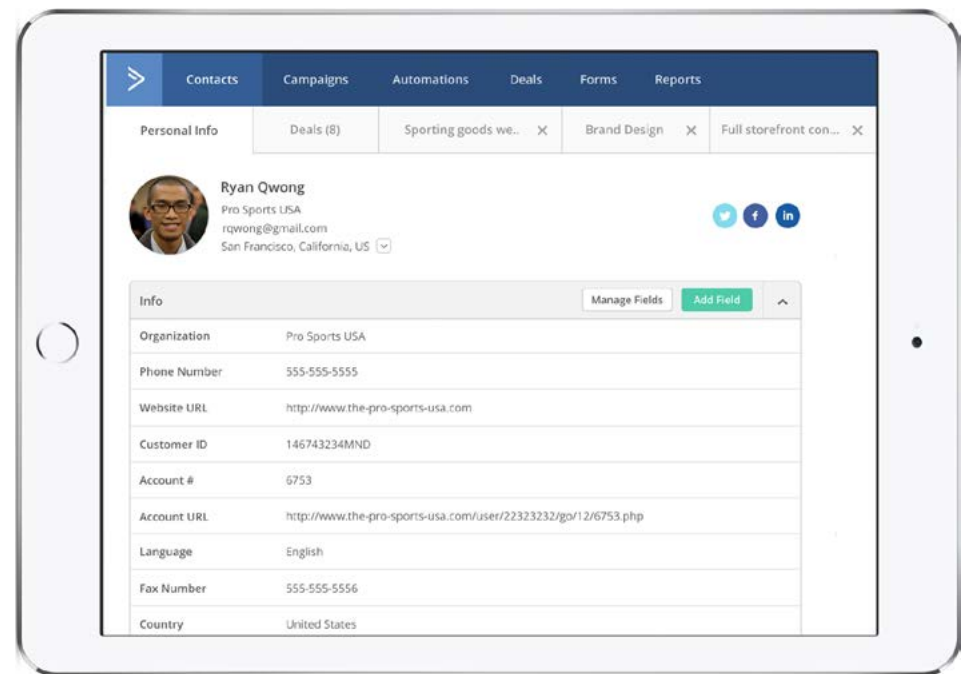
With Active Campaign, you can automatically send emails using drag-and-drop custom templates, take a close look at customer insight, measure performance and organize your data. Through Active Campaign's email marketing tools, you can also send personalized messages based on what your customers are interacting most with on your website or in their inbox.

Active Campaign offers insights and detailed reports, so you can find out what to continue and what to change within your campaigns. By maximizing your marketing efforts, you can take your business to the next level simply.

Why do small business owners pick Active Campaign?

It's extremely easy to navigate, has great value at an affordable price and includes helpful customer service options.

As well, Active Campaign integrates with apps like Shopify, WooCommerce, Unbounce, Zendesk, BigCommerce and Zoom.



[EXPLORE ACTIVE CAMPAIGN](#)



Digital Marketing Platforms

Pick your marketing platform with confidence.

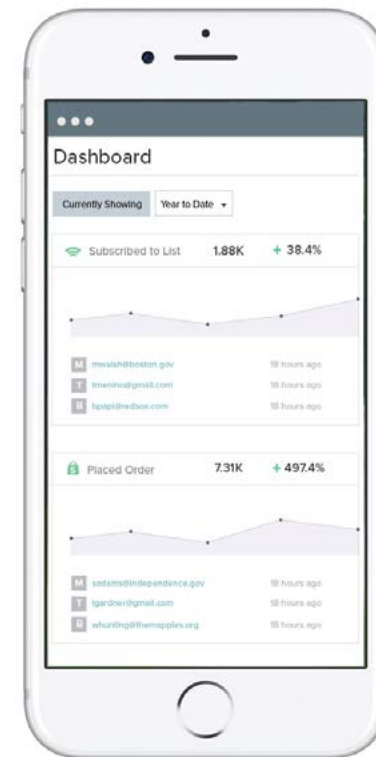
Klaviyo

When you use Klaviyo, you can take advantage of helpful ROI-based reports, simple Facebook advertising, responsive and customizable email templates as well as simple integrations. Klaviyo also allows you to automatically send emails with pre-built flows, target your audience through behavior and browsing, A/B test emails and track how your audience uses your website.

If you're interested in seeing all your data, Klaviyo is a great option. It syncs all your data and puts it in one place, so you can see everything you need to improve your business without jumping around.

Klaviyo's biggest perk is that it makes ecommerce simple. Klaviyo allows you to send automatic emails for topics like abandoned shopping carts, recommended products, order follow-ups, welcome emails and more.

With these emails, you can keep in touch with your audience while giving them a personal experience.



EXPLORE KLAVIYO



Digital Marketing Platforms

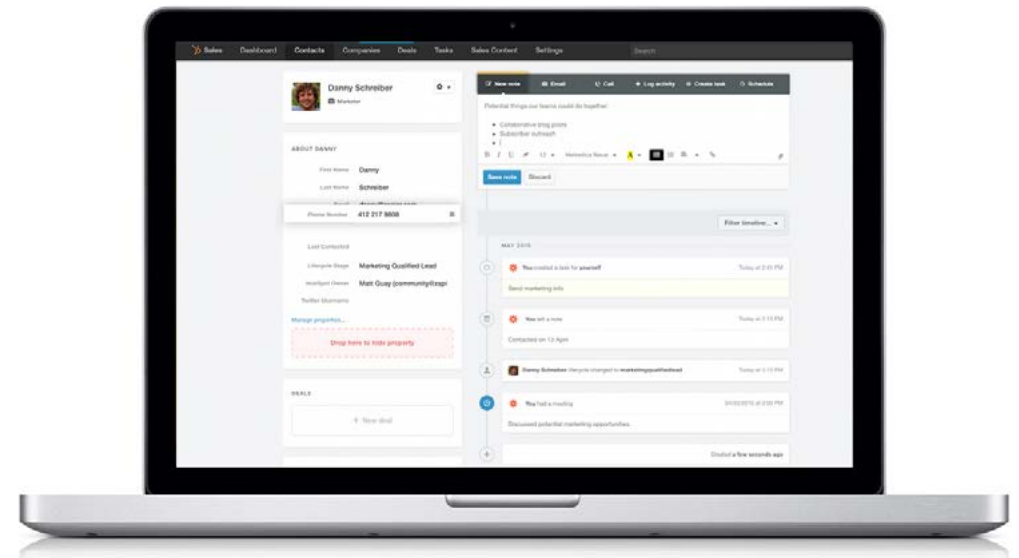
Pick your marketing platform with confidence.

Hubspot

Hubspot includes everything you need for marketing all in one platform—from tools to build and modify websites, landing pages and emails to real-time SEO recommendations to A/B testing.

With Hubspot, you can easily manage your blogs, landing pages, emails, social accounts and website. This platform also gives you insight into your marketing pieces to see where you may want to make improvements. You can also track ROI of your social ads for even more value.

While you can integrate Hubspot with platforms like Gmail, Outlook and Salesforce, it's seen as an all-in-one solution for marketing needs. It is also a great choice for anyone without coding practice, or anyone who looks to review resources to boost their experience.



[EXPLORE HUBSPOT](#)



Digital Marketing Platforms

Pick your marketing platform with confidence.

Before you pick a platform

Which platform do we recommend for you? Whichever one you feel the most comfortable with. Take some time to explore these platforms, taking a close look at your unique needs. Consider factors like price, customer service, resources and, of course, capabilities. All businesses run differently, and you don't always need the same tools as your neighboring business.

*“If you use standard research methods **you will have the same insights as everyone else.**”*

— David Nichols,
Managing Partner, Brandgym

We believe all these platforms can help you grow your business and achieve your marketing needs. It's just a matter of *how* you'd like to achieve them!



Now that you know the basics of our favorite platforms, you're more prepared to simplify your workload and make the most of marketing.



Digital Marketing Platforms

Pick your marketing platform with confidence.

Top tip

*As you decide on a digital marketing platform, consider the following factors: **capabilities, price, customer service, resources, integrations and ease of use.***

You're almost ready to pick the perfect platform and up your marketing game. What's next for you? In our next section, we'll tell you all about customer service and reputation management.



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*“Customer Service shouldn’t be a department; **it should be the entire company.**”*

Tony Hsieh
CEO, Zappos



Customer Service & Reputation Management

Meet your customers' needs—before they ask.

Bring your great customer service online.

As a business owner, you're no stranger to customer service. You go above and beyond for your customers, whether you're helping them choose the perfect product or searching for answers to unexpected questions. As you know, great service sets you aside from other businesses. It shows you're trustworthy, personable and helpful. But what about your customer service online? From your social accounts to your website, there's always an opportunity to share proactive service with your audience. Here's how.

Start where your customers do: your website

Your website can make all the difference in a sale, and even in a customer relationship. Oftentimes, this is where your customers will begin their journey with your brand—whether you own a vegan juice bar or a second-hand boutique. So what happens when a customer has a question about food allergies or size conversions, but can't figure out where to ask it? Take a moment to visit your website. Now, imagine you're the customer in question. What do you do?



Customer Service & Reputation Management

Meet your customers' needs—before they ask.

First, you'll likely look for an FAQ or contact page. Are these pages easy to find? If not, it's time to make an update or two. **Your customers have limited time (and limited attention spans) when browsing your website. If your pages are buried, you might just miss out on a sale.**

If you're unsure whether your website's user experience is simple enough, ask someone who has never seen your site to complete a few tasks. These tasks could include answering basic questions through your FAQ page, sending you a message and connecting with you on social media. See how fast these tasks can be completed, and adjust your website accordingly.



70%

of buying experiences are based on the customer service

What if you don't have an FAQ page?

An FAQ page can be a huge help to customers, and a remarkable time-saver for you. Think about what customers ask you most often. Then, answer them in straightforward language. This page should be prominent on your site, and updated regularly with new questions.

An FAQ page is also a great place to show off your brand's benefits. Do you strictly sell locally-made products? Include the question "Where are your products made?" with an explanation about why you believe in supporting local sellers. Does your tech store have impressive warranties? Ask "What happens if my laptop breaks?" Think about what you'd like customers to know about your brand, then frame those benefits into simple questions and answers.



Customer Service & Reputation Management

Meet your customers' needs—before they ask.

If you want to keep customers, keep it personal

Everyone wants to feel special, including your customers. It's one of the reasons your regulars keep coming back—when they do, you treat them differently. You remember their orders, you have longer conversations, you might even call them by name. But how can you bring this personal service online, and share it with everyone?

One simple way to do this is through your voice. It helps to sound natural, human and personal. It also helps to give your customers reminders that you care. When someone sends you a message on your “contact us” page, send them a message thanking them for reaching out along with a timeframe of how long it'll take you to get back to them. This can be set up automatically through platforms like [WordPress](#), so you can always send timely messages.

*“What helps people **helps business.**”*

— Leo Burnett

“The Father of Advertising”

Ask yourself how else you can personalize your customers' experiences

Do you sell custom artwork online? When someone makes a purchase, consider recommending similar paintings or pottery. You may also want to check in with your customers to see how they like their orders by giving them the opportunity to leave a review. Not only does this make your customers feel included, it gives you testimonials that can be used you promote your business.



Customer Service & Reputation Management

Meet your customers' needs—before they ask.

Keep the helpful content coming

You don't have to wait for a question to answer it. Instead, think about ways that you can give your customers more value. An easy way to do this is through weekly or monthly newsletters.

If you own an auto repair shop, you may want to send newsletters with topics like "10 signs your car needs a check-up." If you own a steakhouse, your email could include grill tips or upcoming specials. Do you sell party favors? Send party ideas focused around different holidays. **Get creative, have some fun and consider what you'd like to know as a customer.**

Stay in touch through social channels

As we discussed a couple sections ago, connecting with your customers through social media is invaluable to your business.

Because of this, we recommend taking some time each day to respond to customers' questions and comments on your social channels—along with your pre-planned social content.

Give your customers the microphone

Once you build helpful content, you'll also build trust with your audiences. But there's nobody people trust more than other people just like them. Because of this, your audience wants to hear from each other too.

While it can be intimidating, we recommend becoming active on review platforms like [Yelp](#) and [Google](#). Once you've set up accounts, monitor them regularly to see what your customers are saying. You should also encourage reviews by posting the links to these accounts on your social channels, website or newsletters.



Customer Service & Reputation Management

Meet your customers' needs—before they ask.

Keep your brand's reputation strong

You're a hardworking business owner who clearly looks for new ways to give back to your customers. But like any business owner, you're bound to see a negative comment every once in a while. When this happens, take a moment to carefully think about your response. Instead of becoming defensive, put yourself in the customer's shoes. Perhaps the product that shipped late was intended to be a special gift for a loved one. Maybe the incorrect food order included an ingredient the customer is allergic to. Offer a way to help, and show that you care.

Of course, not all negative comments are alike—and as you know, the customer isn't *always* right. If you've received a negative comment that may violate guidelines, consider [following steps](#) to dispute the comment. Keep your head up, and don't let negative comments get to you.

Your customers know just how great your business is, and they'll continue to praise you on review platforms, social channels and in conversations with family and friends.

“Being on par in terms of price and quality only gets you into the game. Service wins the game.”

**— Tony Allesandra
Author and Entrepreneur**

Oftentimes, having great service means having a great brand (and vice versa). By combining these lessons with your already great customer service, you'll go far.



Customer Service & Reputation Management

Meet your customers' needs—before they ask.

Top tip

Treat your customers with **respect**, and they'll help you ***take your business even further.***

Look at that, you're all ready to give your customers amazing service online. With everything you've learned about digital marketing, we bet you'll be able to boost your business and create even more value for your customers. If there were ever a time to reward yourself, it's now!





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