3 ways to revitalize your digital marketing program

One of the joys of digital marketing is the ability to quickly see the results of an implemented strategy. With a lot of real-time data and the ability to accurately attribute success back to effort, it is instant gratification at its finest.

But often after continued success, marketers face the dreaded performance plateau. Here are three go-to strategies to try when you find you are stuck with wheels spinning in neutral.

Never underestimate the importance of UX testing

Even a small boost in conversion rate can make an enormous difference in results for a program. Not only does it have potential to boost top line revenue, but it can have a significant impact on bottom line results.

Most marketing leaders find making the business case for user experience (UX) improvement work a slam dunk as minimal gains result in significantly increased revenue. However, it is often easier to preach the importance of testing and focusing on the user than to actually practice this belief.

Here are some tips to keep in mind to make the most of your UX optimization efforts.

- **Get a fresh set of eyes**. Whether it be an agency, a consultant, or a new team member, often a new perspective is needed to identify opportunities and create impactful tests. Internal stakeholders can be blinded by personal attachment to work they have done. They can be biased by past results or be too close to the business to be able to view things through the lens of a prospect. Getting an impartial voice in the mix can help limit these pitfalls and ensure you are testing the right things to move toward success.
- **Ensure you have the right resource managing your UX strategy**. UX requires a unique skill set. Not only does someone need to be analytically minded, they must be a creative problem solver. Additionally, this person needs to be highly scientific when it comes to testing and not let their own personal bias and opinions color their thinking. That's one tall order! While admittedly not an easy combination of skills to find in one person or agency, it is essential for your UX strategy to work. Taking the time to ensure the right resource is

in place is critical.

- **Ensure the right and left hand are talking**. In the digital marketing world, it seems everything is automated. It makes life easier and ensures seamless processes. When it comes to UX, it is important to remember that the experience your potential customer has does not begin the moment they hit your site. It begins pre-click. The ads your prospects see, the sites on which your ads are served, your social presence, etc. – *all* of these touchpoints are part of the experience potential customers have with your brand and influence their likelihood of converting once on your site. Cross-channel learnings are often quantifiable and automated reporting helps to ensure all parties have access to the data and are optimizing accordingly. However, many of the insights needed are qualitative which means all parties need to be *talking*. For true UX success, ensure there is an environment that fosters collaboration, the sharing of insights, and avoids a siloed channel approach.

Rethink past approaches

With a constantly changing marketplace, evolving online behavior, and ever improving digital marketing technology, a tactic tested in the past may perform very differently today. Here are some suggested plans of attack:

- **Revisit failed search campaigns.** With improved audience targeting available for search campaigns, general campaigns that were not fruitful in the past can achieve profitability. Remarketing Lists for Search Ads (RLSA) and Customer Match are fantastic ways to accomplish this. Additionally, improvements are continually being made to bid strategies and ad rotation settings that can make a significant impact on a search campaign to hit and exceed goals.

Customer Match

- **Rethink attribution.** The majority of digital marketers still operate on a last-click basis. This approach is easy to understand and measure, but often over-emphasizes channels (while understating others), which could leave potential revenue on the table. Using Google Analytics reporting and AdWords Attribution, I suggest marketers re-assess the data. Evaluate the impact of Assisted Conversions, the flow of user paths, and compare performance when toggling between attribution modeling types (first click, last click, time decay, etc.). Often, there are gems to be found that can help you to refocus your efforts and jumpstart growth.

- **Consider offline conversions.** Not all conversions happen online. Even if most of yours do, if you are not bringing offline conversions into AdWords, you are missing out on the full picture of your program efficacy. Bringing in offline conversions allows you to utilize automated bidding and ad optimization features to the fullest. Further, you can create Similar Audience lists based on the characteristics of all your converters, not just online converters.

Keep marketing *after* the sale

Focusing on customer Lifetime Value (LTV) and retention,

rather than limiting your view to just the initial sale, opens up substantial profitability for your existing acquisition efforts. This extends across multiple marketing channels.

- **Utilize social**. Social media channels can be a great vehicle for customer service, communication, and brand reinforcement. It gives your brand a personality and a digital connection with your existing customer base.
- **Change the messaging**. Social and display advertising is a fantastic way to stay in front of current customers. Now that these individuals have been acquired, your ad messaging will need to change. Ensure messaging speaks to new offerings, awards/industry recognition, and how your company can address *additional* problems or needs they may have. This is a great opportunity to not just keep your customers engaged with your brand, but to cross-sell them on additional offerings.
- **Create relevant content**. Often the focus of site content is to attract and convert a new audience. Ensure your site also speaks to your existing customer base. Utilize your customer service team to understand the needs, concerns, and questions voiced by your customers. Use these insights to create compelling and relevant content that speaks to both prospective and current customers.

Summary

Performance plateaus happen to the best of marketers, but they don’t need to stick around for long. Get creative and think outside of the box. Double-down on conversion optimization, rethink and refine previous marketing tactics, and market for maximum LTV.

These suggestions should help you move beyond current results and take your digital marketing performance to the next level, allowing you to increase revenue, expand your reach, and improve your profitability.

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