4 Keys to Effective Performance Marketing in 2021

Performance marketers don’t have the luxury of not making the sale, so when business buyers and consumers migrated online during the pandemic, they followed. Their pivots will continue to serve them well in 2021.

So said Donna Robinson, CEO of performance marketing agency Collective Measures, which itself transitioned through a rebrand in 2020.

“Buzzwords like ‘key learnings’ and the ‘quick pivot’ took on a new, heightened meaning in 2020,” she said. “These steps were critical for agencies, brands and media platforms alike to stay afloat amidst the many curveballs that came with a global pandemic. The bright side? We’re smarter for it, and can take on 2021 armed with new strategy and insights.”

Digital will continue to reign supreme

Gartner found digital channels consumed 80% of 2020 marketing budgets, and Robinson contended that digital marketing would remain the top spend in 2021.

“For brands that continue leveraging channels like print and TV to reach their core audiences in 2021, they’ll need to understand how traditional channels will attempt to evolve in order to be accessible digitally and comply with shifting consumer demands,” she said.

Among those shifting demands is a significant increase in business and consumer use of virtual meeting apps. On Dec. 1, Zoom reported a 485% increase in customers with more than 10 employees on the app vs. the same time last year, and expected

to strengthen its market position in the coming quarter.

If performance marketers follow Gartner's advice, that vision will become a reality. "In the b-to-b environment, CMOs should build and promote digital-first programming (such as webinars and digitally guided selling tools) that help answer customer questions and support conversions," according to the research.

Tracking the new consumer journey

"With more consumers working and shopping from the comfort of their homes, consumer journeys across b-to-b and b-to-c have changed," Robinson said. "Successfully reaching target audiences in 2021 will require additional audience research to ensure tactics align to the users' journey."

For instance, even though business meetings are happening online, Cardlytics found most consumers are still buying in physical stores.

Demanding more from martech

"With increased adoption of digital experiences and technologies in 2020, consumers' demands for transparent and seamless digital experiences will be at an all-time high in the new year," Robinson said.

Gartner said rising martech spending wasn't the problem.

"Marketers use only 58% of their existing technology capabilities," according to Gartner. "Extracting their full value may come with costs, such as upskilling marketing talent or investing in workflow management applications—investments that would be hard to justify in a challenging business environment."

Brand authenticity is key

Robinson predicted b-to-b and b-to-c audiences will want "a

stronger connection with the brands they open their wallets to: This means creating content that outlines your brand's mission, what you stand for, and the value you can provide them. It also raises the stakes for what high-value content is: content that arms your consumer with the information they need to guide them further along the consumer journey."

Content marketing can also be a great customer acquisition tool, email marketing strategy consultant Jeanne Jennings said.

"Be sure there's a way for them to reach out to you, via a registration 'gate' before the content or, better, a 'learn more' lead generation form on the same page as your content," she advised.

Jennings suggested performance marketers use several digital channels to distribute content marketing: ads on LinkedIn and third-party properties like websites, blogs and email newsletters; earned and owned media; and, of course, via email after renting a list.

Continue Reading

Pages: 1 2

Heather Fletcher
Heather Fletcher is a freelance reporter for Adweek. She covers performance and direct marketing.

Recommended articles
https://www.adweek.com/performance-marketing/4-keys-to-effective-performance-marketing-in-2021/