5 Must-Adopt Marketing Skills

Techniques and practices are always emerging and evolving, and marketers can’t afford not to upskill.

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The marketing industry is continually evolving. Consumer expectations are intensifying, and new marketing practices and technologies continue to sprout up. More than ever, it’s crucial that marketers expand their competencies and learn new skills. Otherwise, they risk getting left behind.

It’s unrealistic to be proficient at everything, but picking up an in-demand, hard skill can make marketing professionals stronger assets to their teams and potential hiring managers, which is why they should consider learning or updating one of the following skills.

Data Science and Analysis

According to HubSpot’s 2018 State of Inbound survey, 42 percent of marketers said proving the return on investment on their marketing efforts was a top priority for their company, and 39 percent considered it to be one of their top challenges.

Being able to analyze and understand data is the key to evaluating the success of campaigns and proving ROI. It helps marketers understand what is or isn’t working, what needs to change and how to replicate success. Through data, marketers can learn about customer behaviors, their needs and content that interests them.

Marketers can learn to use data-analytics tools such as Google Analytics to view key metrics and track the performance of their marketing campaigns. These tools can provide keyword ranks, conversion rates, top landing pages, traffic-source information and more. Marketers can earn a Google Analytics certification by taking free online courses at Google Analytics Academy and passing the Google Analytics Individual Qualification (GAIQ) exam.

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Foundational Graphic Design

Excellent first impressions are a vital part of marketing. With attention spans decreasing, it’s increasingly important to know how to create captivating images and landing pages. While marketers don’t need to become experts in graphic design, a basic understanding and some fundamental design skills are beneficial and can provide a competitive edge. Marketers can learn to use Adobe Photoshop or Adobe Illustrator to design web icons, eBooks and other marketing materials. Adobe also offers numerous tutorials for each program.

Being able to design landing pages and marketing materials, and not outsourcing those tasks, can save teams money and set marketers apart. Even those who choose to outsource their graphic-design work can understand and communicate with designers, relaying what they need them to do.

Basic Coding Knowledge

Marketers may need to troubleshoot website problems or make small changes to their content layout, fonts, colors, buttons, etc. Having a basic understanding of HTML and CSS et al helps marketers handle website issues internally without the help of a developer. For instance, coding is useful for aligning text,

adjusting padding and formatting headings, hyperlinks, images and lists.

There are numerous websites, such as Codecademy or Udemy, that offer free and paid coding tutorials and lessons. Many businesses prefer marketers who can improve landing pages, modify basic website structure and handle other client-facing, code-related needs.

Search Engine Optimization

According to HubSpot, 61 percent of marketers said growing their search engine optimization (SEO), or organic search presence, is a high inbound-marketing priority. SEO is always evolving, and Google is continuously updating its algorithms. Marketers must have the skills necessary to produce content that complies in order to keep their brand ranked high in search results. The higher their ranking, the greater number of visitors to their site, with the ultimate goal of generating leads and sales.

Additionally, the rise of voice search makes it paramount for marketers to ramp up their SEO knowledge. For voice SEO, marketers must be able to understand the difference between how people formulate voice searches and how they conduct text-based search queries in order to properly optimize. Marketers can become proficient in SEO by taking courses through SEMrush Academy (free) or SEO Training Course by Moz (paid).

Mobile Video Production

Statista reports that 500 million people use Instagram Stories every day. According to Snapchat, its number of daily active users has grown to 190 million people. Facebook stats show that the platform has reached more than 3.5 billion live streams since 2016, with the daily average continuing to double year over year. Mobile video isn’t going anywhere

anytime soon.

Marketing professionals must understand how to create videos for live streams, Instagram Stories, Snapchat, and other platforms. Real-time video content is an excellent way to show behind-the-scenes updates, build trust with consumers and engage with customers.

There are numerous online resources for marketers who want to expand their mobile-video production skills. Hubspot, for example, offers a guide and a short video series on how to create Instagram Stories. NPR provides a Facebook Live guide that includes streaming tips and recommended equipment for live-video setups.

Related: This Is How Your Marketing Strategy Can Be a Huge Hit

Marketing techniques and practices are always emerging and evolving, and marketers can’t afford not to upskill themselves. By adding new proficiencies and skills, they can can grow as valuable team members and candidates for hire.

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