

Consider the following situation... you are a business owner of a small or medium-sized enterprise who has been in the market for 20+ years. Over time, you have observed that the effectiveness of your traditional advertising methods has been declining. Perhaps you are concerned that your clients are no longer being reached by the communications you send out. As the digital transformation of media carries on, traditional marketing strategies are losing relevancy but your only experience with social media is Facebook for personal use. What should you do?

Ideally, you would hire a digital marketing agency and social media manager to handle everything, but that is not realistic for most small or medium-sized enterprises. So, you begin teaching yourself about digital marketing.

What is Traditional Marketing?

Traditional marketing is any form of marketing or advertising that uses offline media to communicate with an audience. Such as:

- Print (newspaper ads, physical newsletters)
- Direct Mail (letter campaigns, flyers)
- Telemarketing (cold calls, sales calls)
- Broadcast (radio ads, TV interviews)

These tactics have a long history of success but can be expensive to execute and are losing favor in the eyes of younger generations. Simply put, traditional methods have a time and a place but cannot be trusted as the sole source of new business development.

What is Digital Marketing?

Digital marketing is any form of marketing or advertising that uses online media to communicate with an audience and is typically rooted in the use of an electronic device, like a smartphone or laptop. Such as:

- Developing an engaging, and easy-to-use, website
- Maintaining an active social media presence
- Designing virtual ads to appear on websites and right in the search engine
- Producing personalized video content
- Sending promotional material through email campaigns

These tactics are much less proven in a B2B (business to business) context but allow you to reach a significantly larger audience with the same total expenditure. Depending on the products and services that your firm provides, digital marketing efforts may not fit into your sales process the same way that traditional marketing tactics did.

While digitizing your marketing and advertising programs, it will be critical to evaluate the reasoning behind either the success or failure of initial attempts. Pay close attention to how your close ratio changes and compare the total number of leads that you have the opportunity to pitch to. If the metrics are noticeably different or you are not happy with the results, it may be a good time to update your sales process to reflect that the relationship is being built in a different way.

Terms and Concepts You Should Know

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the process of designing your online presence such that search engines can match your website with searches regarding similar topics. Essentially, SEO makes it easier for people who are searching for similar services to be able to find you.

Backlinks are links on websites (not your own) that link back to your website. A large number of links from other credible websites tells the search engine that your website is trustworthy. More trustworthy websites are shown to the people browsing first.

Website Traffic is the number of people who go on to your website, whether that is from an online search, social media, or by typing in the URL directly. Higher levels of website traffic mean that more people are visiting your website, but this metric does not consider whether those people are within your target market.

Social Media Impressions is the number of people who have had the post appear on their social media feed. Depending on the platform, this number may be calculated differently. For example, on LinkedIn, an impression is a view where the post is at least 50% on screen, or when it is clicked, whichever comes first.

Bottom Line

While traditional marketing tactics are more familiar, they are also typically more expensive and no longer have the success rates that once occurred. By diversifying your marketing activity with digital marketing, you can reach more potential customers in new and exciting ways!

About the Author



Jacqueline McGee, Project Manager, Robbinex Inc.

Jacqueline began at Robbinex as a co-op student in the Phase One department in the Spring of 2022. She has since completed her fourth year of the Honours Bachelor of Business Administration (Information Systems) program with a minor in Economics at Brock University.

Jacqueline has experience in project management, analytical, and administrative roles. Upon graduation, Jacqueline plans to explore career options that combine business, technology, and law with a specific interest in modernizing the M&A process.

Jacqueline leads the implementation of the digital marketing strategy for Robbinex.

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