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Attract new business with 6 digital marketing tips for your business - by Mitch Sullivan

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I see it all the time – a business that is great at what they do, but isn't able to effectively communicate that to prospects. Or, even worse, they think they already are communicating effectively.

And it makes sense. You're busy. Your staff is busy. You've probably got referral business coming in, or partnerships that are steadily bringing in new business. So, why worry about promoting your business online?

“Marketing has always been about connecting with your audience in the right place at the right time. Today, that means you need to meet them where they are already spending time: the internet.” (HubSpot).

Your customers are already spending time searching for you online, either before, during, or after you've encountered each other. Give them something good to find. Here are 6 digital marketing tips for your business:

1. Modernize your website/online presence. Your website doesn't have to be perfect. It does however need to address the reason why your customer is searching for you in the first place. It can't address that reason if your site isn't searchable, navigational, or informational. WordPress, Wix, Squarespace, etc. – these website builders have made it easier than ever to build and maintain a professional looking website. And if you don't have the time to build your own website, try a freelance marketplace, like Upwork where you can outsource your website update for a reasonable price.
2. Create a Google My Business account. It's free. It's easy. It will directly and positively impact the number of local inquiries you receive online. And Google My Business also helps drive prospects to you – it helps your customers find you (Google Maps) and contact you, learn about your opening/closing hours, and discover additional information.
3. Update your website security. HTTPS vs HTTP – sure, that may be technical lingo, but know this - If your website isn't HTTPS, you're affecting the number of online inquiries you'll receive. HTTPS simply means your website is securely encrypted. From a Google perspective, they would prefer to send their customers (who are also your customers) to a website that will protect their data. Don't worry, HTTPS is provided by your website hosting company and is often free (or very inexpensive).
4. Get some reviews – “93% of customers will read reviews of local businesses to determine its quality.” (BrightLocal). First, create an account for every third-party review site you can (you don't know where your customers/prospects like to leave their reviews. Have a presence on as many of these websites as possible). As the old saying goes, you don't get if you don't ask. If you've had a positive experience with a customer, don't be afraid to ask them to leave you a review.
5. Give them a reason to find you – Create some content. Your customers are looking for something

when they're on Google. Often it isn't as direct as searching for X Y Z business. Think about your own usage of a search engine (Google). Sometimes you will directly search for a company <Nordstrom>. Other times, you will search less directly <Men's Clothing>. Take this into account. Think about what your customers might actively be searching for in relation to your business/industry – and answer their search query with a blog or video content. While this may require more effort than the other steps in this article, it is the most rewarding.

6. Use social media – Or in other words, a content delivery platform. You can create the best content in the world – if nobody sees it, then what's the point? The goal of digital marketing is to find your customers where they like to be found. If your customers are on Facebook, be on Facebook. If they are on LinkedIn, be on LinkedIn. What I like to do – is find Facebook Groups relevant to the industry. For example, "Title Talks" is a Facebook Group where people post commonly asked title insurance questions. If I can answer their question, not only do I establish my business as a trusted thought leader, but I am also building brand awareness.

It's sometimes hard to explain why a business should use digital marketing if they've never used it before. But I typically pose this question – think about yourself as a customer. If you have a large purchase to make, do you research the company/product beforehand? If so, how do you research them? For most people, that research starts online. And again, it's better if they have something positive to find.

If you have any questions about this article, please feel free to email me.

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