

5 Digital marketing trends and innovations for 2021

When you're in need of cooking assistance mid-process, you ask Alexa to help you out with measurement conversions. On the way to a brand-new restaurant downtown? You check out their Facebook reviews and Google ratings. If you're bored on your commute to work, you'll likely check out Instagram stories and posted videos, but sans the sound.

These may seem like meaningless behavioural quirks expressed by the modern-day digitally-savvy individual, but they are actually industry-changing trends that are shifting how modern brands position themselves online. Companies need to understand precisely what customer behaviours will affect their marketing campaigns in order to implement them as these changes occur. For 2021, some changes are more relevant than others, so it's vital to stay ahead of the game and implement them into your own digital strategy.

Automation is the new norm

With so many digital outlets to take care of, brands need to make sure that they are constantly available to their customers, with no delay. The only way to do that without overworking your busy customer support agents is to actually utilise the latest automation *tools such as AI-driven chatbots* that will take care of your customers while portraying your brand in the best possible light.

Automating social posts, even portions of your optimisation, and a whole range of other marketing strategies are becoming more essential every day to give your business the advantage necessary for success.

Getting personal when you mean business

No, using your customer's first name in the email is no longer enough. Personalisation has had a makeover in the past few years to obtain a new depth: now brands need to provide personalised content, use refined email segmentation, and collect customer data every step of the way.

Cross-platform data mining and complex data analytics enable businesses to take personalisation to a whole new level in order to differentiate their experience from all the rest. It's the basis for establishing an emotional bond and boosting customer loyalty in the months to come.

Refined SEO strategies

Fast-advancing regions such as Hong Kong put more pressure on their local businesses to create competitive SEO strategies in order to rank higher and retain their digital presence. As a result, a brand in these highly-competitive areas will often collaborate with an SEO company in Hong Kong to constantly stay ahead of the latest optimisation trends and stay relevant in their industry.

SEO is changing exceptionally fast, especially if brands wish to rank locally as well as globally, and professionals in the industry fuel their strategies with advanced data-collection, customer behaviour analysis, and ongoing adaptation. In essence, digital marketing will more than ever depend on forward-thinking SEO experts to provide a stronger presence to the most competitive businesses out there.

Customer voices matter – literally

Just like you ask Alexa to help you with that recipe, or you ask Google to give you directions while you're driving, customers today like the convenience of voice search to browse. That simple fact has pushed search engines to treat voice search as a relevant ranking factor, especially since the trend is showing the potential to grow over the months to come.

That said, companies need to adapt not just by improving their content to reflect the voice search trend. They also have the option to use AI to go beyond

voice search *straight into voice commerce*. Now, customers can use their voice assistants to make purchases, and it's up to brands to make this process simple and streamlined.

Social shopping

Social media is no longer just for engagement – although engagement is never “just” anything, it's the foundation of customer retention and loyalty. Social networks are now shopping platforms in the most literal sense, and while many still choose to stick to their website sales exclusively, the shopping game is slowly leaning towards going more social. Why? Because *54% of users use social media* to explore products at the very least, showing intent from the get-go. With Instagram Checkout available, you can actually enable shoppable posts within your social strategy and shorten the journey for each follower on this platform.

Simplifying the buying experience and keeping the checkout as quick as possible are still a top priority. Now, you can infuse your social strategy with a profitable twist that will position your brand even better for your social audience.

While digital marketing is as fluid as it gets, you need to make sure that your business implements the latest relevant trends without delay to ensure better positioning and a stronger reputation in the upcoming months. All the while, you need to keep an eye on innovative marketing solutions that are bound to pop up and disrupt the industry, so as to provide your own customers with the finest experience they could wish for.

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