

# How to Create A Digital Marketing Strategy That Drives Results



# How Do You Create a Digital Marketing Strategy?

Most people don't create a digital marketing strategy at all. They just take a marketing idea they like, chase after it blindly, and hope it all works out.

Inevitably, they run into roadblocks, and when they do they've already spent so much time and money they're afraid to change anything. That's where they get into trouble.

So, before you move forward with this guide, take a moment to decide why you're marketing and who you're marketing to. Got it? Good. Now we can get started.

Here's what you can expect to find in this guide:

- An easy how-to guide for building your buyer personas
- An easy how-to set goals guide for your digital marketing strategy
- A complete inventory of all your owned, paid, and earned media
- A complete content audit guide
- Easy to implement tips for building your email list
- A helpful checklist for creating remarkable content (and a remarkable content strategy)
- Easy to implement tips for kicking off your social media strategy the right way
- A PPC starter suggestion guide

## Getting Started

### Step 1: Build your buyer personas

We get that it's easier to set up a website, create a couple landing pages and pretend like you know what you're doing with Google Analytics than to actually understand people.

But when you create a digital marketing strategy and make an effort to understand your customers from the beginning, everything gets easier:

- You know exactly what to post on your blog
- You instinctively understand the perfect audience for your ads

- You naturally start forming relationships with other businesses, and create profitable partnerships

Your buyer personas should be a complete representation of your ideal customer(s). You can create buyer personas by researching, surveying social media, and interviewing your business's target audience.

Do your best not to make assumptions and base your notes on real data instead. Assumptions can literally make an ass out of you when building buyer personas because they can quickly take your digital marketing strategy down the wrong path.

To put together the best buyer persona's possible include an even mix of current customers, prospects and people outside of your contact lists that align with your target audience.

While building your buyer personas, you'll want to look at things like:

- Location, which you can use Google Analytics to easily identify
- Age, gather this by identifying trends in your existing prospect/customer database
- Income, gather this in one-on-one interviews
- Job Title, look at your existing customer base
- Goals, ask customers what their goals are and how your product / service has helped or is helping to achieve that goal
- Challenges, talk to your customers
- Hobbies, and Other Interests, talk to your customers
- Priorities, talk to your customers and find out what they value

If you really want to get inside the mind of your customer:

- Keep a running list of every time someone in your market mentions a pain point, a fear, a hope, a dream, or an obstacle. These are the things that give you a clear picture of your market.
- Use a variety of sources when building your buyer personas - Google Analytics, Google Searches, Facebook, Quora, Reddit, and good old-fashioned face-to-face conversations with people.

- Be playful and take a relaxed approach to your buyer persona reach. Be open to whatever you might find and take note of anything you find interesting or surprising.

## Step 2: Identify your own goals and the tools you'll need to achieve them.

Define the goals of your business, but whatever those goals are, just remember that you need to know how to measure them. Every business will measure the effectiveness of their digital marketing strategy differently.

What's vital is your ability to measure the effectiveness of your goals.

We recommend focusing on the ONE result you want from your digital marketing strategy because that's how you're going to see growth.

What do you want?

- To grow your email list?
- Make more sales?
- Get on Amazon's recommended list?

Once you start focusing on ONE goal, the one result you want more than anything else, understanding what you need to do to get there becomes much easier to figure out.

Plus, after you've achieved your ONE goal, you'll know exactly what to apply to check the next goal off of your list. Limiting your options may seem scary, but if you do it, your chances of accomplishing your goal increase exponentially.

## Step 3: Take inventory of your digital marketing channels and assets.

Once you've got your goals down take a look at your available digital marketing channels and assets. You've got to figure out what role they'll play in your digital marketing strategy.

The easiest way to categorize your digital marketing channels and assets is to group them into the three groups below:

- **Owned Media** -- Owned media refers to the digital assets that your business owns. This may include but is not limited to your blog, your social media profiles, or imagery.
- **Earned Media** -- Earned media refers to the exposure you've earned via word-of-mouth. This may include but isn't limited to things like guest posts, the customer experience you're providing, or recognition on social media (shares for example)
- **Paid Media** -- Paid media is pretty self-explanatory (we think) but just in case...paid media refers to any channel that you spend money on to catch attention and capture leads. This may include but is not limited to FB ads, Instagram Ads, or Google AdWords.

Once you've gathered all this info together, categorize it in a spreadsheet so that it paints a clear picture of your existing paid, earned, and owned media.

Now you can easily see what you might try to incorporate more of into your digital marketing strategy and what you might cut back on based on the results you're seeing.

**Step 4: Audit your owned media. Understand that owned media is at the heart of digital marketing.**

Yeah, we said it. Owned media is the heartbeat of your digital marketing strategy. At least, it should be.

The thing about owned media though is that it almost always takes the form of content and that's why you need to audit it and plan it. If you're serious about building your digital marketing strategy, you have to decide what content is going to help you reach your goals.

Auditing your existing content is hard work but well worth it in the long run. To audit your existing content, make a list of your existing owned content, then rank each item on the list according to what performed best in relation to your current goals.

The idea behind auditing your content is to figure what's working, what isn't, and how to set yourself up for success with your future content plans. After this is done you

should discover any gaps in your existing content and be able to formulate a plan on how to fill them.

For example, if you're a camera company and you find out that one of your persona's biggest challenges is figuring out how to set up lighting for videos on a budget, but you don't have any content that addresses that issue, it might be time to create some. Based on the gaps you identify you can put together a content creation plan. The basics of any content creation plan should include:

- Title
- Format
- Goal
- Promotional Channels
- Why you're creating it
- Priority level

### Step 5: Start working backwards

Once you know your market, your goal, what you already have to work with, and what you need to focus on, it's just a matter of simple math to create your digital marketing strategy.

We suggest you start with list-building, specifically, building up your email marketing list.

## Email Marketing, the End All or Be All of Your Business

The money is in the list.

We know you've heard it before and it's true. So, if you want to get your digital marketing strategy off on the right foot, start by focusing on your email marketing and building an email list.

Here's 3 reasons why you should listen to us:

- Email outperforms every other online marketing channel According to a 2014 study by McKinsey and Company, for every dollar you put into email marketing

you get back 40x more than you would through Facebook, Instagram, and almost every other marketing channel.

- Email enables you to sell to 10 people or 1 million people You talk to someone on the phone. You had somebody a brochure. These messages are created once, seen/heard once, and then they're gone. But thanks to email marketing and automation, you can write one dope email and profit from it over and over again.
- You own your email list

It's super risky building your business on a platform you don't own. Facebook policies change on the regular and Google's algorithms are always updating. But you own your email list and nobody can take that away from you.

Email marketing puts you in the driver's seat of your business. This is the part where other digital marketing consultants would tell you how to suck every last cent out of your email list but we take a different approach at Z Coast Media.

We want our subscribers to be excited to open our emails. Every email we send must be valuable and must have a purpose where the reader is ready to buy or not.

That requires keeping people engaged. There are a few ways to do this:

- Give people the option to sign up for a newsletter (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly)
- Give people the option to obtain free resources (like this guide)
- Give people the option to enroll in a mini-course

All of these are great forms of email marketing but the latter two are what's most likely to benefit your readers the most. When people are excited to open and read your emails, they'll be more excited to buy from you later.

## Put the Remarkable Power of Content Marketing to Work

You've seen awesome writing before, right? Work that builds reputations and fuels businesses. Maybe you read blogs like HubSpot, Neil Patel, Brian Dean, Ann Handley or some other big-name bloggers who produce high-caliber content on the regular that you just can't get enough of.

Their superb content marketing elevated them into respected experts. They've built loyal fan bases and opened up huge opportunities for their businesses. All through content.

Great content is what keeps people coming in and coming back for more. The good news is that publishing remarkable content isn't some secret strategy that only works for big name bloggers.

Anybody can grow their traffic (and business) with content Marketing. How do you start publishing remarkable content? You can start by copying these questions and making sure every piece of content you produce answers these 7 critical questions with a loud YES:

- **Is your content relevant?** Write content that your audience wants to read. Create content that's entertaining, teaches them something, or gives them something new.
- **Is your content helpful?** Great content solves problems. Be the resource your audience is looking for.
- **Is your content organized?** Even the most remarkable content won't be read unless it's easy to process.
- **Is your content unique?** The best writers know how take old ideas and turn them into something new and exciting.
- **Is your content personal?** Be yourself when creating content. The more real you are, the more your content will stand out.
- **Is your content engaging?** Truly remarkable content inspires people to share their thoughts, comments, and feedback. It also inspires them to share your content with other people.
- **Is your content detailed?** Give your readers all the information they're asking for - just present it without overwhelming them. Like writing a blog post about digital marketing with a link to a digital marketing guide if they want more information for example.

You can start using content to drive traffic to your website right now if you want to. All you have to be willing to do is sit down, do a little research, and then start writing.

Of course, if you'd rather have some help you can always reach out to Z Coast Media.



## Content Marketing + Social Media Marketing

You don't have to - and you shouldn't - spend hours posting on social media. What you should do is take the remarkable content that you're creating and schedule it to automatically post on your social media profiles.

### Tip #1 - Use a Social Media Scheduling Tool

There are a ton of tools out there that will do this for you but at Z Coast Media we use Buffer. Buffer helps you share your content at the best possible times throughout the day on multiple social media channels including Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Pinterest.

### Tip #2 - Say Thank You

Have you ever bought a product or signed up for an email list and be redirected to another page? We call those "thank you" pages and they're a critical piece of your digital marketing. Allow us to explain.

So, few people take advantage of the "thank you" page when it's prime real estate for displaying one more piece of content that you can ask new people to share.

It's as simple as embedding a tweet / image and writing a line or two of copy asking people to share it (after you've thanked them for whatever action they just took of course).

Boom. You've got a nifty social media marketing tool right there on your own thank you page.

### Tip #3 - Ask for Help

There's no shame in it and people are often more willing to help out than you give them credit for. Send your email list a message announcing a new idea for a course, webinar, or maybe even a survey giveaway and give your readers the option to share right from the comfort of their inbox.

Then ask them to share the news / signup link on their social media accounts. Just make sure it's easy for them to do so. This will help drive traffic to your landing page to sign up to participate which means fresh names for your email list.

## Dive into PPC – Pay Per Click Advertising

You know the ads you see on Facebook or in Google? Those are examples of PPC ads. And they work. But the key for you as a business owner is knowing how to use it. Duh, that's why I'm reading this guide you goof.

We know, but it's our duty to drive that point home. If you start off on day 1 with a \$5,000 budget for the month to spend on PPC you're a dead duck. You're just setting money on fire because you don't know your numbers yet.

Timing is everything and you shouldn't rush it.

For PPC advertising to work you need to know your numbers and you need to be tracking where your leads and revenue are coming from. One acronym you should commit to memory is **CPA = Cost Per Acquisition**.

Simply put, CPA is how much money it costs to get one paying customer. It's the only way to calculate your ROI. For example, if you're selling a \$10 limited edition t-shirt using advertising, your CPA needs to be less than \$10.

That means if you spend \$100 on ads, you need at least 10 paying customers to break even. Google Ads used to be the place to start with PPC but things have changed. In our opinion, it's easier to start with Facebook Ads as a PPC newbie because Facebook allows you to target a very specific person – the kind of person most likely to buy from you.

Remember those buyer personas you created?

They come in handy here. With Facebook Ads, you can filter who sees your ads by criteria

like:

- Age
- Behaviors like recent websites they've visited

- Education level
- Gender
- Interests
- Location
- And connections like “friends of people who follow me”

If you wanted, you could target men in your city under 30 who’ve recently visited DIY car maintenance forums to build an email list for your garage’s How-To car maintenance blog posts. The point is, when you get super-specific with who you reach, you avoid setting money on fire because you’re not showing your ads to people who would never buy from you.

See how doing the work to understand your customers makes digital marketing strategies - like PPC - so much easier? That’s why we built the guide in this order.

## What’s Next?

Whether you’re just getting started, or you’ve already got a successful online business, you’ve got all the tools you need to put together a successful digital marketing strategy that drives traffic to your website.

You’ve got:

- An easy how-to guide for building your buyer personas
- An easy how-to set goals guide for your digital marketing strategy
- A complete inventory of all your owned, paid, and earned media
- A complete content audit guide
- Easy to implement tips for building your email list
- A helpful checklist for creating remarkable content (and a remarkable content strategy)
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- A PPC starter suggestion guide

Now that you know the basics it’s time to put these tips, checklists and guide to work for you! But if you’d rather just tell us what you have in mind and have us develop the strategy for you, that’s cool too. You know where to find us.