

Marketing Online: The Six Essential Elements to Focus On

This is a special report for SMBs wondering what things they must focus on to ensure a strong online presence. It reveals the six essential elements that can help your SMB generate leads, build buzz, and level the playing field with much larger companies.

Now that technology is something associated with SMB marketing. It's worth your company's attention and time to increasingly find better opportunities to serve and communicate with prospects and customers.

In many ways, the online space is more than just another marketing media; it's a new media requiring a different mindset and a new set of organizing tools.

Element #1. Planning

Every offline and online marketing strategy succeeds to the extent that they are goal-oriented, focused on the audience and message. Before you can begin working, you need a clear idea of the needs and attitudes of your audience and the action you want them to take. This means planning before action. You need to be certain of the purpose of your communication and the obstacles you must overcome to achieve it.



Element #2. Content

What information will best attract visitors to your site and keep them coming back on a regular basis?

Customers come to websites for two reasons, to seek out more information about something they're already aware of, or because they organically stumbled onto the site and are interested in their first impression of it. Either way, marketing online succeeds when it appeals to the reader's self-interest. Content and design decisions must be made with the reader in mind. Ask yourself:



- What are my reader's problems?*
- How can my product solve them?*
- What story can I provide to backup my claims?*
- How can I employ design tools like color, type, and layout to make my message easier to read?*

Marketing communications succeed to the extent they are designed to satisfy the reader, not the association, firm, or individual sending the message.

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Element #3. Design

There's always a "what do I do" moment when people first see your site. Do you understand how design influences their choice?

One key to ensure successful conversion is a clear call to action. What does your website want the customer to do?



If the call-to-action is evident customers will know to move forward in that direction. Try and think outside of the box, instead of the call-to-action asking customers to "click here to speak with a sales representative" think about pushing the customer towards a demo, or more information. By showing the customer that your business is more invested in providing them with answers to their questions, offering solutions to problems, and focusing on the customers' needs rather than attempting to sell them, the customer will in turn feel as though your company is an expert in their industry, cares about them as a customer and wants to help them rather than just sell them a product.

Customer loyalty is increased, and website traffic tends to increase. Customers will turn to the site for answers, because they can find them easily and they see the business as an authority.

Element #4. Involvement

How effectively do you use interactive tools, like blogging, financial calculators, and/or editable worksheets to involve visitors instead of having them just read?

Because we here at Indispensable Marketing love blogging, let's focus on that.

It used to be (about 15 or 16 years ago) a blog was someone's online journal. Let me start by saying that blog (back then) and the blog (of today), are not the same thing.



Today a blog should be thought of in terms of a resource center and positioned as such. Businesses of all sizes and industries are being encouraged to put relevant and useful information online, and much of this content is freely available to view. Each time a company adds something about their brand, product, or

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service on the internet they enlarge their own digital footprint. Whenever a prospect or customer mentions them, they enlarge that company's digital footprint.

In sum, a business should only add a blog to their site in order to help customers find answers to the problems they seek.

For example, if your SMB offers Technical, Plumbing, HVAC, or Electrical services you may want to offer content that tells customers how to troubleshoot before calling a service representative. Providing this information could save the customer money on a service call; and, positions you, the small or midsize business, as an expert. It also demonstrates that your small or midsize business cares about its clients, not just the money involved.

Element #5. Promotion

How visible is your website to search engines?

Is it linked to other sites?

Do you promote your web site off-line in media, mailings, and wherever your name appears?



Your website must be visible in order to draw traffic. A 2013 analysis done by Conductor.com shows that 47% of website traffic comes from search engines. Modern SEO is all about creating and distributing, relevant and valuable content so that other people want to promote it by linking to it or sharing it, which increases your trust and authority and helps the pages you want to rank well for certain keywords.

Other promotion tools include:

- Use of signature lines in e-mail.
- Participate in discussion or news groups related to your field.
- Distribute original articles on free content sites.
- Send press release announcing your site or a new product/service.
- Host a chat related to your expertise.
- Offer a free newsletter/e-zine.
- Write an information course and offer it via autoresponder.
- Write an e-book.
- Provide information about your service/product in an online mall or trade show.
- Run classified ads in your industry newsletters.
- Host a teleclass (class offered via the telephone).

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Element #6. Maintenance

Do consistently change, update, freshen and renew your web site?

Is technology used appropriately, to increase the site's information value, or is technology used decoratively, in a show-off fashion? Sound, video clips and animation can either enhance or hinder communication.



Yes, there's other stuff....

There are other elements as well, such as URL structure and keywords, keywords in image alt files, tags and categories, and various other minutia. If you focus on the six areas above, however, you're covering the vital elements of marketing online.

About Us



Patrick McFadden is a marketing consultant, highly recognized for his role as an American Express OpenForum Advisor and his company Indispensable Marketing being hand selected by Manta as a company to help grow your business.

His marketing blog, ideas, and articles has been featured on Inc.com, American Express OpenForum, IBM Midsize Business Leaders, KDOW 1220am The Wall Street Business Network, NYC Department of Small Business Services, and Rescue A CEO just to name a few.

About Indispensable Marketing

Started by Patrick McFadden, Indispensable Marketing LLC. is a strategic marketing consulting firm specializing in highly tailored marketing plans and strategies for SMBs. We show business owners and their employees how to grow their business on purpose with strategic and online marketing. Not with bland, unprofitable or complicated marketing advice created to mystify and confuse. With creative ideas, and real-world marketing strategies that attracts attention, drives traffic, and builds businesses.



Hire Patrick McFadden Marketing Consultant

As a consultant for your business I help you develop and complete a marketing plan to increase customers and maximize profits. You'll receive one-on-one attention from a marketing pro that can help you craft a powerful marketing plan, hold you accountable for completing each step, and then show you how to implement the plan to grow your business.

Hire the best!
Get started now!

To get started email me: pmcfaddenmarketing@gmail.com to set-up a free 30min discovery session. This session will allow me to discover more about your company and identify marketing solutions that best meet your needs.

What others are saying.....



"There are certain special people who come into our lives bringing the ability to look at issues just a bit differently. They are able to come at issues with a 90-degrees different perspective. In the course of doing that, they challenge our assumptions and change our perspectives. Patrick McFadden is one of these special people. Give yourself a gift and spend 30-minutes exploring your world through Patrick's creative mind. You will find you time well spent."

-[R Rushton Paul, J.D., SPHR](#), HR/Employment Practices Consultant