

Five essential marketing trends

What are the five essential marketing trends that your company needs to know about to move with the times?

Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the article and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

1. a retailer
2. knowledgeable
3. a consumer
4. a focus
5. to be ahead of the game
6. to move with the times
7. personalisation
8. to engage with

Definition

- a. to change your ideas or behaviour as the world changes
- b. a person or business that sells things to the public
- c. a central or important thing that a company pays attention to
- d. knowing a lot
- e. the process of changing something according to a particular person's needs, likes, habits, etc.
- f. a person who buys products and services
- g. to get involved with or have contact with
- h. to know more about new developments in a particular subject or activity than your competitors

Five essential marketing trends

The marketing world moves fast. Technology has changed the way we live and the way we promote and sell products. In the last ten years, increasing use of social media, online shopping and platforms like YouTube and Netflix have allowed companies to connect with customers in new ways. The number of people who go online every day is still increasing, and the marketing trends you need to know about right now are digital.

Here are five essential marketing trends that companies must take note of in order to move with the times.

1. Shopping on social media

Forbes reports that 72 per cent of Instagram users have bought something when using the app and 70 per cent of Pinterest users use the platform to find new and interesting products. Companies can now create posts that allow users to shop directly on social media instead of

companies' own websites. This allows retailers to reach their customers more quickly and easily.

2. Focus on customer experience

When a customer comes to your company, you want to make it as easy as possible for them to find what they need and buy your products. PricewaterhouseCoopers reports that 73 per cent of people say that customer experience is an important factor when making a buying decision. And when they say 'customer experience', they most value efficiency, friendly and knowledgeable customer service and easy payment options. Companies that can provide a good customer experience keep their customers and attract new ones.

3. Personalisation

There are so many marketing messages around us every day that people are very good at ignoring them, especially ones about products they're not interested in. So, in order to target the right kind of customer and connect with them, companies are personalising their marketing content. This is made possible by the data that people generate through their internet searches, online shopping habits and social media use. Online product recommendations, adverts and even the design of the marketing message itself is adapted to the interests and preferences of individual consumers.

According to a report, although 86 per cent of people were concerned about privacy issues, 90 per cent were happy to share data about their behaviour if it meant an easier and cheaper shopping experience. In the same survey, 72 per cent of consumers said they would only engage with marketing messages that are personalised according to their interests.

4. Video content

According to Forbes, 91 per cent of consumers say they prefer watching interactive and visual content to reading a traditional piece of information about a product. And consumers are 85 per cent more likely to buy your product after watching a video about it.

If an advertisement is interesting, amusing or unique, people will search for it online and share it with their friends. Live videos on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram are also known to attract large audiences and get people interacting with companies in the comments, where they can give feedback and ask questions about the products.

5. SEO

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimisation – the strategies companies use to get themselves high up in the results lists of search engines like Google, Bing, Yahoo and others. As the internet plays an increasingly central role in marketing and selling, it is vital for your company to appear in the search results when someone does a related search. For example, if you sell

coffee machines, you want your website to appear when someone searches for the best coffee machines or even ways of making coffee.

There is no doubt that the trend of digital marketing and an increased focus on individual customers is set to continue. Companies hoping to gain a larger market share should constantly update their marketing strategies to get ahead of the game.

Sources:

- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2019/10/03/top-marketing-trends-for-2020/>
- <https://marketinginsidergroup.com/marketing-strategy/2020-marketing-trends-you-need-to-know/>
- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2018/04/02/visual-content-the-future-of-storytelling/>
- <https://www.smartinsights.com/ecommerce/web-personalisation/consumers-personalized-marketing-engagement/>

Tasks

Task 1

Are the sentences true or false?

	Answer	
1. Television and newspaper advertisements are still the best ways to promote products.	True	False
2. These days, people use social media more, shop online more and choose the videos they want to watch.	True	False
3. Nearly three-quarters of Instagram users have shopped on the app.	True	False
4. Most people say that if they like a product, the buying experience doesn't matter.	True	False
5. Most people will agree to share their data in exchange for a better shopping experience.	True	False
6. Videos are a great way for companies to give information about their products and to interact with their customers.	True	False
7. SEO is about making sure people see your product or company when they do internet searches.	True	False
8. If your company is already using digital marketing, it doesn't need to change.	True	False

Task 2

Circle the correct marketing trend for each strategy.

1. Advertisements using people's names to get their attention
 - a. Shopping on social media
 - b. Focus on customer experience
 - c. Personalisation
 - d. Video content
 - e. SEO

2. A video about how to use your product
 - a. Shopping on social media
 - b. Focus on customer experience
 - c. Personalisation
 - d. Video content
 - e. SEO

3. Making it possible for people to buy your product on Facebook
 - a. Shopping on social media
 - b. Focus on customer experience
 - c. Personalisation
 - d. Video content
 - e. SEO

4. Making sure your website contains keywords that people will search for
 - a. Shopping on social media
 - b. Focus on customer experience
 - c. Personalisation
 - d. Video content
 - e. SEO

5. Customers being able to chat online with a friendly voice from the company to find out more about the product
 - a. Shopping on social media
 - b. Focus on customer experience
 - c. Personalisation
 - d. Video content
 - e. SEO

6. Showing clips of models walking around wearing the clothes you're selling
 - a. Shopping on social media
 - b. Focus on customer experience
 - c. Personalisation
 - d. Video content
 - e. SEO

7. Making recommendations to customers based on their interests
- a. Shopping on social media
 - b. Focus on customer experience
 - c. Personalisation
 - d. Video content
 - e. SEO
8. Making sure that your website is easy to use and customers can find what they want easily
- a. Shopping on social media
 - b. Focus on customer experience
 - c. Personalisation
 - d. Video content
 - e. SEO

Discussion

How do you think marketing might change in the future?

Answers

Preparation task

1. b
2. d
3. f
4. c
5. h
6. a
7. e
8. g

Task 1

1. False
2. True
3. True
4. False
5. True
6. True
7. True
8. False

Task 2

1. c
2. d
3. a
4. e
5. b
6. d
7. c
8. b