Flagship Marketing ®

Introduction to online marketing

Helping organisations grow

Why read this e-book?

Our aim is to give you a great foundation upon which you can build a successful online marketing strategy using any digital channel.

That's possible because all online solutions are inter-connected, and if you understand the basic building blocks you have the principles to build a great online strategy.

That will give you two advantages in a competitive world:

Although you won't become an expert by reading this book - you will know enough to get started, avoid the big pitfalls and make informed decisions. That's a lot more than many small businesses and NGOs.

If you decide to take on outside help - your knowledge will help you choose the right company, because you will be able to understand and assess the information they give you.

Our goal is to stop you wasting your time on content that no-one reads and your budget bringing visitors to web-pages that aren't achieving their goal.

If those are things you'd like to know more about, this short book will get you going.

Although online advertising can be daunting, once you crack it, the rewards are certainly worthwhile

Websites and users
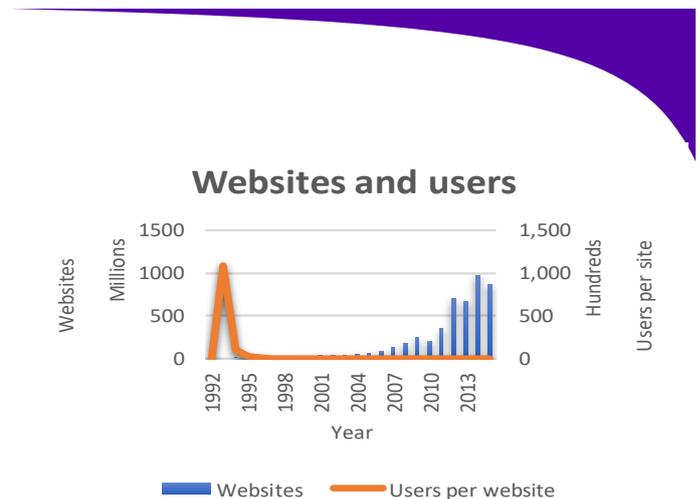
A competitive world*

In 2014 we reached a billion websites

75% are not active but 'parked' domains

There are 3.18 billion users of the internet

Data from Netcraft's 2014 Web Sever Survey and Internet Live Stats

If you have any questions about what we've written here, please contact us at info@flagshipmarketing.com

The appeal of your website
Do this first

Your website is the base on which your online advertising is built. It begins here!

In online advertising, your aim is normally to:

- attract people to your website

- interest them in your product, service or cause

- Move them closer to becoming a customer, donor or investor

Personas

Start by creating several buyer personas— which simply means categorising key facts about your ideal (but fictional) customers and grouping them together into groups which share key criteria and are distinct from other groups.

To do this you will need to analyse your potential clients in two ways:

Demographics
 These are the tangible attributes: gender, age group, interests, profession, income, location and so on

Psychographics
These are the intangibles; buying or engagement preferences and inhibitors.

Key thoughts—personas

1.   Who is reading your site?

2.   Why are they are reading it?

3.   What do you want them to do when they've finished?

The next step is to look for common information— similar preferences or inhibitors, and activities that could be important.

Group relevant information together, so that you begin to form types of people who will form your target audiences.

Give each group a name as a useful shorthand and help you to remember the personality of each one.

These personas are your reference for creating a communication strategy that will resonate with them because it has been written for them.

They should help you answer the 3 questions above.

Personas

Wendy

35 - 45 year old

Head of HR

Small or medium business

North America

Married with children

Less than 6 months in position

Growing her small HR manager team

She needs a way to track new candidate applications and share that knowledge within her team

Time poor

A question we're often asked is, "How do you get the information to create a persona?"

The answer is research and your existing knowledge,

There are great tools for social media listening, and each year, consulting giant, Forrester, assesses them in a comprehensive report.

Once we're up and running, we have will have web analytics to help us see who is coming to your website, what they searched for and what they did when they got there. Even beforehand, Google Analytics and Facebook analytics offer tools to help you understand and segment target audiences

And simply ask around—use what you know, and who you know to build a picture of the target audience you want to reach. With social media, research is easier and cheaper than ever before.

Wendy

I'd like you to meet Wendy—our new persona:

She needs recruitment management tools

She can be reached at places (sites, conferences journals etc) where HR professionals from North America consume information

And venues where professional women gather

And also venues where new mums visit (but NB Wendy will not be in 'work mode' in these venues, so care and respect is needed here).

If you want to do more with personas, we'd love to help. Please contact us at info@flagshipmarketing.com

Personas

...and she's on your website!

What Wendy is doing on your website?

Yes, she is looking for candidate application tools but we don't know where she is in this process. This will be important for the type of information you will need to provide for her.

Website users can be divided into one of two groups; transactional users and content consumers.

As a transactional user

Wendy is ready to buy and is coming to contact you or make a purchase online. Transactional users can also include people who are looking to get something in exchange for their contact information.

The design needs to make it as easy as possible for the user to make this transaction.

If this is difficult for whatever reason, it is likely that the user will go elsewhere and you lose a customer or donor.

As a content consumer

Wendy needs more information regarding the product. She might be comparing pricing, finding out if your product has a particular feature or trying to find out what kind of company or organisation you are.

Key thoughts—content

1. Information needs to be easy to find on your site

2. Users who can't find what they need will simply go elsewhere

This information also needs to be as easy as possible to find.

If Wendy wants to compare prices, but your price is buried under several layers of website, she is likely go elsewhere.

Similarly, if Wendy hasn't got to the point of checking prices, but simply wants to know if your product solves her needs, or reflects her interests properly, this information needs to be easily accessible.

Web Analytics

Many websites already have a basic analytics tool installed, either as part of a hosting package or implemented by a web-designer as part of their service.

If you don't have one, Google provides the industry standard analytics tool. It's completely free for anyone with a website and relatively straight-forward to set-up.

You can find out more about this here: https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1008080?hl=en

The information which Web Analytics can give includes:

> The number of users arriving at a site via Facebook posts, reading content, but not signing up.

Know your client

This shows that visitors who are coming from social media are at the information gathering stage, so you can plan your site design and

Which blog posts are getting more pageviews than others.

Know your client

Web analytics allows you to draw some conclusions about what is really attracting readers.

If they have moved to the site from certain keywords in your search ads, and are clicking on a specific link, altering the landing page for them will speed up their search and give you a happier potential donor or client.

To learn more about how analytics can be used to inform your own website design, the gold standard is Google's own Google Analytics Individual Qualification.

Alternatively, we can help with implementation, one-to-one training, strategy insights based on Google Analytics or troubleshooting for existing campaigns.

Simply contact us at info@flagshipmarketing.com

If you have any questions about Web Analytics or SEO, please contact us at info@flagshipmarketing.com

Search Engine Optimisation

The organic user is someone who comes to your website through a search engine suggestion and will have been driven by a specific need of their own.
They are already preparing for some interactions. Making your website as accessible as possible to these people is a very important aspect of your overall strategy and why SEO is a basic building block of the digital marketing strategy.

Step 1—technical setup

This involves making sure that a search engine can understand the content on your website.

Is the website's robots.txt file is configured correctly?

Has an XML sitemap been created?

Is the site's HTML mark-up is properly optimised?

The full checklist of technical setup for SEO is outside the scope of this eBook, but you can find lots of good information with a quick Google. Two of the most trusted resources for SEO are ahrefs and Moz.

These companies offer many paid tools to help users with their SEO, but their blogs and academies are also full of great information that you can use for free.

Key thoughts—SEO

Search Engine Optimisation makes your website clear to search engines, so they can point searchers to the most relevant sites on the web.

Step 2—Content

Most search engines prioritise websites that have 'high quality content'. This is because they are trying to deliver both relevant and authoritative results for a user's search query.

For help with your SEO technical setup and continued delivery of great content you can also talk to us at
info@flagshipmarketing.com.

Social Media

Social media is a valuable way of informing users about your products.

Through social media channels, you can encourage them to visit your website, to lead them through the sales funnel or to contribute to your cause.

Depending on your target audience, some social media platforms will be more valuable to you than others.

Choosing the right platform

For B2B companies, the big three are Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. For selling fashion to consumers, platforms like Snapchat or Instagram are well-placed.

This is where your persona comes in useful again. Using the persona we created earlier, we can easily conclude that, for our purposes, whether or not Wendy has a Snapchat account needn't concern us.

This is because we can be certain that we won't find her concentrating on HR issues there, and that means she won't be receptive to us whilst she's on Snapchat.

How do we know? Social Media platforms provide you with lots of information about the types of users they serve. You can broaden your research using tools like SimilarWeb.

Identify the 2-3 key platforms that you will focus on.

Setting up a professional looking profile

Each platform has slightly different information that you can include, but a good rule of thumb is to be as complete and consistent as possible during setup.

Create one boilerplate 'About Us' that you can use on different platforms to reduce the amount of work you have to do.

Reaching your users

Social media platforms also have analytics sections and these should be a primary source of information to help you build your online marketing campaigns.

From this information you will be able to discover what is interesting your customers or donors, highlighting areas where you can build more content or drop ideas that aren't working.

The bigger your network the more success you will have. The more often you engage with active profiles by contributing quality comments the larger your network should become.

For help building a Social Media strategy our team of experts will be glad to provide an initial consultation to get you started. Get in touch with us at info@flagshipmarketing.com for more information.

If you have any questions about Socia Media, please contact us at info@flagshipmarketing.com

Online Advertising
Buying traffic

It takes time for unpaid strategies like SEO and Social Media networking to build up to full steam and you will probably need more immediate results and reach a much larger audience.

Paying for advertising

Media buying is a complex topic with **specialist** companies engaged in a variety of business models designed to **make money by encouraging** relevant users to **visit vendors'** website**s**.

If you have been using this eBook as a step-by-step guide, your Analytics and Web Design should already be in good shape to start doing this.

At its core, digital media buying involves paying an online property which include websites, social media channels and apps, that already has a lot of relevant users ,to show your advert. These on-line properties or places which show adverts are known as publishers.

The way that you pay for this will vary from publisher to publisher but there are three common models:

CPM - Cost per mille (thousand)

Buying traffic on a CPM basis means paying a publisher to show your advert to 1000 users. Each time a user sees the ad, is called an impression.

Key thoughts—Social Media

There's little point setting up and maintaining a social media presence on platforms which your customers and donors don't visit!

CPC - Cost per click

Cost per click (also known as PPC or Pay per click) is paying a publisher for each click on your advert. With this model the responsibility to show the ad to the right kind of user for your website rests on the publisher.

CPL - Cost per lead

Cost per lead campaigns are where the publisher is paid when a user provides their contact information on your site. Selling traffic in this way is risky for a publisher, as they have limited control over what a user does when they come to your website.

Online Advertising
Buying traffic

CPx - Cost per x

There are many other different ways that a publisher can sell their traffic to you, and naturally each model will have their own advantages and disadvantages.

Looking for the best deal, what do I ask for?

If you're in a conversation with a publisher about placing adverts with them, make sure you understand the business model that you will be working with and think carefully about why it is advantageous to you and the publisher.

Buying for myself

The most common place to start your journey into media buying is Google's AdWords product which is a 'self-serve' media buying platform.

Self-serve simply means that you only need a credit card and your own website to get started. You do not even need to interact with a marketing specialist at Google.

AdWords places adverts either on the Search Network which are those ads you see above the search results on Google or in the Google Display Network (GDN).

The GDN is a network of websites that allow Google to place adverts on their website. Google then sells these placements to users of Google AdWords.

Most of the major media buying platforms (Google, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.) have guidelines on how to start placing adverts on their platforms and you can find further information on their pages.

We hope this helps you to get ready to dive into the world of online marketing. The web is a powerful tool for your business or your organisation and leveraging the reach and power of these tools will be key to growing well.

If you have any questions or need guidance on the topics we've outlined above, please reach out to our team at info@flagshipmarketing.com

If you get stuck buying online media, our specialists will be happy to help you to make a start.
Contact us at info@flagshipmarketing.com

Final Checklist

Your website is the cornerstone of your digital presence—start here ☑

There are a billion websites out there—relevance is the most important factor ☑

Start with **personas**—know your client! ☑

Research personas—use what you know, listen to social media, ask your networks. Don't assume! ☑

What is Wendy doing on your website? Is she a **transactional** visitor or a **content** consumer? ☑

Build your content to anticipate Wendy's need. If she can't find what she wants she'll go elsewhere. ☑

Know your client—engage with web analytics. Google analytics is free and powerful ☑

Start developing an **search engine optimised** site. It will increase your traffic over time. ☑

The key to great SEO ranking is great content. Develop good relevant material for your clients ☑

Build your **social media network**—use personas to identify the right platform ☑

Use social media analytics to target better ☑

Complement organic growth with faster online ☑

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