

DIGITAL MARKETING BOOTCAMP RECAP

Planning

We need a marketing plan to properly map out what we'd like to accomplish, how we're going to do so, and how to measure progress. Although we walked through the Objective-First Framework in class, you can benefit from reviewing others as well.

In looking at the [One-Page Plan Summary](#), your marketing plan should include the following:

- Goals/Objective: What do we want to achieve?
- Strategic Initiatives: How do we plan to achieve this goal/objective?
- Tactics: In detail, what will happen against each of the initiatives?

If you have more than two or three goals, you may want to step back and re-prioritize what you'd like to accomplish in a reasonable time period. We'll also want to make sure we're creating [S.M.A.R.T. Goals](#) which set us up for success.

As discussed, there are several different approaches to planning. Take a look at this Digital Marketing specific strategy from [Smart Insights](#), which covers their RACE Digital Marketing Planning system.

Additionally, I strongly suggest checking out [MPlans.com](#), a comprehensive source for information on Marketing Plans. Beyond that, you can also explore sample Marketing Plans from a variety of companies and verticals.

Social Media Marketing

When some people think about Social Media Marketing (SMM), they're largely focused on actions such as Likes and Shares, but it's important to think beyond these high level metrics and consider the actual value created. The goal of Social Media Marketing is to "Create the kind of shareable, relevant, value-driven content that ensures consumers always pay attention to your story, no matter where they go, and then they pass on your content, creating the word of mouth critical to actually making the sale." Basically, we eventually want people to perform some sort of conversion event, so be sure to keep that in mind.

Social Media Marketing has a relatively low barrier to entry, so pretty much anyone can do it. However, that's exactly why you want to make sure you're following best practices in order to stand out from the noise. Review the [10 Laws of Social Media Marketing](#) from Entrepreneur Magazine, they've done an amazing job of packaging exactly what you need to know, and how to do it. My favorite recommendation is to add value to the conversation by sharing content that will make your customers' lives easier. Your SMM can't just be a series of lengthy

advertisements for your company. Make sure you're speaking to the needs of your target audience as a whole, not just the product/service you provide.

Beyond that, you'll need to know how to measure the success of your Social Media campaigns. In most cases, engagement is more important than reach. Meaning, I'd prefer for someone to comment or like a post, as opposed to just having a large number of people see it. However, you should review DreamGrows ["48 Social Media KPIs \(Key Performance Indicators\)"](#) for a detailed list of what you should consider measuring, based on your business need. SproutSocial also did an amazing job of breaking down ["Social Media Metrics That Matter"](#), by platform. Additionally, SproutSocial offers a free trial, and it's a great way to schedule, publish, and analyze your Social Media content.

As LinkedIn Marketing is huge for B2B, it's beneficial to explore specific best practices for that platform. The [LinkedIn Marketing Solutions Blog](#) is a great place to start, and it's updated quite frequently. Beyond that, you'll benefit from joining industry specific groups, as referenced in the article ["5 Ways to Use LinkedIn for B2B Marketing"](#). Beyond that, check out Click Zs article ["12 Best Practices for Using LinkedIn Groups as a Marketing Tool"](#).

Piggybacking on the success of Social Media Marketing, [Influencer Marketing](#) is being hailed as the next big thing. Don't believe me? Check out Social Times article ["10 Reasons Why Influencer Marketing is the Next Big Thing"](#). Now that you know how great Influencer Marketing can be, you'll need to find the right influencer. As we discussed in class, it's often someone who hasn't used your product before, and Kissmetrics also provides several valuable tips in ["The Definitive Guide to Influencer Targeting"](#).

Anyone can be an influencer, but the reach and level of influence will vary by individual.



When it comes to influencers with a high reach, you'll want to connect with their followers as well. People are much more apt to express an interest in your product or service when you don't just show up out of the blue claiming to be their buddy. Hashtags are a great way to accomplish this goal, but don't get crazy. [Too many hashtags](#) are just annoying, and can cloud the conversation. Along with the resources referenced in the deck, [Hashtagify.me](#) is a great tool to help you discover both influencers, and hashtags you may want use. Consider taking some of their [Hashtag University Courses](#) in order to fully leverage the benefits of hashtags.

Please see below for some of the resources and tools I referenced.

Resources:

[Social Media Examiner](#)

[Search Engine Land Social](#)

[Mashable](#)

[Digital Trends](#)

Tools:

[Followerwonk](#)

[Buzzsumo](#)

[Keyhole](#)

[Hashtracking](#)

Platform Specific Analytics Guides:

Facebook

[Facebook Page Insights](#)

[Facebook & Instagram Insights FAQ](#)

[Facebook Page Insights Explained](#)

[Facebook Audience Insights Guide](#)

Twitter

[Twitter Analytics & Audience Insights](#)

[15 Simple-to-Find Stats to Help You Tweet Better](#)

YouTube:

[YouTube Analytics](#)

[Setting Up, Understanding & Using YouTube Analytics](#)

LinkedIn

[Understanding Company Page Analytics](#)

[Viewing Company Page Analytics](#)

Google Analytics:

[Google Analytics Guide](#)

[Campaign URL Builder](#)

Developing a Content Strategy

Your Content Strategy is absolutely pivotal to your overall Digital Marketing success. An excellent resource for learning more about this topic is the [Content Marketing Institute](#). You'll find great articles, resources, and case studies for your review.

As we discovered, it's important that your content strategy is aligned with your brand position and brand identity. This often becomes a challenge when multiple departments - or external business partners - are responsible for distributing content. You'll want to routinely do a content audit in order to flag misaligned copy.

We also had a healthy amount of conversation around getting more followers on social media, Facebook in particular. Again, never pay for these followers in bulk as this could result in your account being terminated. Beyond that, it dilutes the value of your "real" followers. Check out this article from Hubspot that discusses [How to Get More Likes on Your Facebook Page](#). This is a great starting point, so be sure to review it if you have an interest in growing your followers.

Additionally, here are some of my suggestions:

- Join Facebook or LinkedIn groups that are relevant to your target audience based on their interests/needs, and actively participate. For example, if you're selling high end water bottles for athletes, consider joining a [Facebook group for Cyclists](#).
- Create content that is relevant to your target audience - preferably not just about your company - and post it in the groups mentioned above. For example, a "Top Ten List of Bike Paths In NYC". If you provide high value content, people will be more likely to follow your page.
- Include a link to your Facebook page in all Email Marketing campaigns
- Include a link to your Facebook page in the signature of your work email address

You'll also want to use a content calendar to plan and track the content provided. This will also help you audit the content you've been providing, and will give you a good break down of sales and non-sale oriented content. As a rule of thumb, you want ~80% of your content to be non-sales oriented. Here's a link to a [Content Calendar template](#) for your reference.

For B2B, your Content Strategy may take a slightly different approach. As discussed, infographics work really well. Also, take a look at the [B2B Content Marketing Best Practices for 2016](#) from the Precision Marketing Group. As you'll notice, they suggest creating a Content Marketing calendar, which is a great idea for B2B as well as B2C.

Testing and Experimenting

I really enjoy the testing and experimentation aspect of Digital Marketing since it gives us the opportunity to explore some of the ideas we have for campaign improvement. If these ideas have a positive outcome, we'll want to do our best to continuing scaling these results by increasing the budget. Meaning, we'll try to continue getting the same great return on our advertising investment by spending more money. However, you'll eventually arrive at a point where you've reached the majority of people in your target audience who will respond to your offer, and spending more money won't get you these same great returns. You'll then want to go back to the drawing board, and start testing again!

Conversely, these hunches don't always work out the way we'd prefer, so I recommend using a small innovation budget as opposed to a larger investment. I typically reserve 20% of the total advertising spend over the pre-determined time period.

As we covered in class, a good test should include:

- What variable we're testing
- The desired outcome
- What metrics will determine success

You'll also want to make sure the results are statistically significant. Meaning, we're relatively certain the 'winning' version will continue to outperform the other version. As we discussed in class, you need a sufficient amount of data to reach significance. Therefore, it's challenging to say how long it will take until you start analyzing the data. I highly recommend reviewing this [blog from PPC Hero](#) which goes into more detail, and references additional measurement tools.

In regards to what we can test, pretty much everything is up for grabs, but don't get crazy with it. You'll want to make sure what you're testing is measurable, and likely to be impactful. For example:

- Ad Copy
- Landing Pages
- Target Audience
- Images

Beyond that, you'll want to make sure your data is 'clean'. Meaning, variances in behavior were not cause by factors outside of the test. For example, you ran an amazing Super Bowl ad during the test that got your product or service a lot of positive attention.

When possible, I recommend testing different versions of the experience within the same campaign. Having both data sets side by side will make it much easier to compare.

Here's an example of how that would look in Facebook. Please note, both of these ads are going to the same landing page.

Ad ?	Delivery ?	Results ?	Cost ?	Reach ?	Frequency ?	Clicks ?	Click-Through
Ad A	● Not Delivering Ad Set Completed	26 Conversions	\$4.74 Per Conversion	44,446	1.09	2,453	5
Ad B	● Not Delivering Ad Set Completed	21 Conversions	\$10.01 Per Conversion	55,978	1.08	3,295	5

As you'll notice Ad B has a higher click through rate than Ad A, but the cost per conversion is much lower for Ad A. Meaning, we're getting more out of our budget from Ad A. In this case, I'd say Ad A is the clear winner since the goal here is getting conversions at the lowest cost.

Lastly, I also recommend checking out a great blog from Kissmetrics '[10 Things Every Marketing Should Know About A/B Testing](#)'.

User Experience Fundamentals and Trends

A person's user experience can have a huge impact on overall Digital Marketing performance. You'll want to make sure your site layout is intuitive, as well as eye appealing. Beyond that, the process flow should be well planned out in order to make the conversion process as seamless as possible. We want to reduce the friction in the conversion process. Meaning, we want to make it as easy as possible for a visitor to convert once they land on your page. Check out this blog, [How to Win the War Against Conversion Friction](#), which further explores the topic and provides additional best practices.

Many marketers take a super analytical approach towards user experience, this process is known as Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO). This is a growing - and lucrative - industry where the blend of art and science can result in massive conversion rate increases. I suggest reading [The Definitive Guide to Conversion Optimization](#) if you're interested in learning more. This guide also reinforces some of the testing and experimenting techniques we previously discussed.

[Optimizely](#) is a great resource for testing out different designs and layouts of your website. With this tool, you can edit and/or remove content from your website, and then run A/B tests to measure performance. Beyond that, all the statistical analysis is done for you, so it's easy to identify winning layouts. As a stretch goal, create a free account and experiment with variations for your final project company website. Please note, this will look exactly like their website, but this is hosted locally on your computer, and you're the only one who will be able to see it. To get you started, here's a list of [10 Common Experiments](#).

Lastly, you may be able to benefit from helping you determine how visitors are behaving once they land on your page. Meaning, you can see what calls to action and links they engage with. A simple way to do this is via the [Page Analytics](#) extension from Google. Please note, you'll need to have access to the domain's Google Analytics account in order to see this data.

Email Marketing

This is a legacy form of Digital Marketing, but is still one of the most effective . . . if you're actually doing it right. Low cost, the ease of segmentation, and the ability to automate are some of the biggest selling points.

Take a look at this article from Ciceron, [4 Email Marketing Best Practices for 2016](#), which recaps some of the tactics we chatted about in class. Beyond that, you're not as constrained by advertising guidelines associated with other Digital Marketing channels. For example, it's challenging to advertise products related to health and fitness on Facebook. You're not allowed to detail expected outcomes from using your product, and you can't use before and after images. However, you're free to do so with Email Marketing, and you get more than 140 characters to get your point across. Although you have a bit more freedom here, you'll still want to make sure everything is ethical and legal, check out the [7 Email Marketing Rules You Should Know](#).

There should always be a call-out to forward your email to a friend! As discussed, this is a great way to grow your list. This can be done with or without capturing the friends email address, just make sure you do it. Many programs let you track how many times your email has been forwarded, so you may want to consider this as another success metric in addition to clicks and opens.

Here are a few programs you may want to explore, and some of them are free based on the number of emails you'll be sending:

[MailChimp](#)
[Constant Contact](#)
[Emma](#)

While you'll want to track unsubscribe requests as a measure of how effective your emails are, unsubscribes can also be a positive. Reason being, this may be an indication that you're contacting the wrong people, and you're skewing your success metrics by targeting non-responsive recipients. However, you should be fully confident that you're adhering to best practices for Email Marketing before arriving at that conclusion. If your emails are just plain bad, unsubscribes aren't good news. But if you're sending out good - or at least decent - emails, unsubscribes can be hugely beneficial. People who aren't interested in your emails at all definitely aren't going to take any positive actions, such as a click, so this will automatically lower some of your success metrics. You can't pick up on the signals from people who are actually interested in your product/service when they're drowned out by the noise from people who are uninterested. It's easy to get a super low click rate when 70% of your list never even entertained the option of engaging with your email. In this case, it's better to have a smaller more engaged list, and then get back to hacking for new emails.

Search Engine Optimization and Search Engine Marketing

Note: You'll notice I talk about Google a lot, but this largely applies to Yahoo/Bing as well.

It is absolutely vital to understand the difference between Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM, PPC, Paid Search). Both show up on the search engine results page (SERP), but the reason they appear is completely different. Please reference this Hubspot blog "[What's the Difference Between SEO and SEM?](#)" for a detailed reminder of what we discussed in class.

Search Engine Optimization

SEO influences how you show up for non-paid search results, but it takes a long to determine how this is performing. It can take **months** to actually see the results of your efforts, so you'll need to properly manage the expectations of any stakeholders who ask for progress updates. Get used to saying "This is a marathon, not a sprint" when they check in. Beyond that, SEO can be a bit pricey, so those questions are probably going to keep coming no matter how many times you explain the process. However, if you have a good SEO strategy implemented, the benefits should far outweigh the cost since you'll be attracting highly qualified traffic over a long period of time. While SEO is more of a long term strategy, you can't just set it and forget it since search engines constantly update how pages are ranked. Check out this article from the American Marketing Association, "[Six SEO Rules for 2016](#)" which states "Google, right now, is making 500 algorithm changes a year". That's almost 10 changes a week! Fortunately, there are several free training courses out there to help you, check out the "[2016 Guide to Free Online SEO Training Courses](#)" from Search Engine Watch.

Also, you'll need to rely on a developer for much of your SEO activities since you'll need to augment the code of your page. If you're launching a new site, make sure to address this **before** going live. Want to see how your page is doing in regards to SEO? Check out the [Google Open SEO Stats tool](#).

Search Engine Marketing

As you now know, with Google AdWords, you can potentially create a campaign and see conversions data within 20 minutes. Put simply, you'll bid a certain dollar amount for keywords you think your customers may search for, and then create an ad which encourages them to click through to your site.

Not sure what keywords to bid on? Start with the tips referenced in the presentation, and then review best practices [from Google](#). Be sure to check out the [Keyword Planner](#) tool on a regular basis in order to adapt to the latest trends. Need help writing ads? Good news, you only have to write 95 characters, and Google has [tips for creating ads](#) as well.

As you know, there's a bit more to it than that, so check out the "[6 Steps to Building a Brilliant Paid Search Account Structure](#)" from WordStream.

The goal of SEM is generate performance aligned with your KPIs, but it's super easy to waste money if you don't properly set up and monitor your campaigns. If your goal is to make \$5 for every \$1 you spend, that's fine, and completely aligned with the results I've been able to achieve. Just be sure to monitor what keywords and text ads are helping you get there, and make sure you're bidding the correct amount. The supporting materials referenced below will help you achieve these goals.

Along with the previously provided resources, I strongly suggest reviewing the [How to be successful with AdWords](#) training modules from Google. Once you get the basics down, check out their [Best Practices Series](#) in order to get more strategic advice on tactics that will help you get the most out of AdWords.

Additionally, consider joining the [Google AdWords Community](#) where you can learning about new features, getting inspired, and help others out as well. The [Google Inside AdWords](#) blog is another great source for all the latest information.

Need a refresher on any acronyms or other Google AdWords terms? Take a look at the [Google AdWords Glossary](#).

For an extremely granular understanding of all things AdWords – and review all material needed to be certified in specific Ad Networks – visit the [AdWords Certification exam study guides](#). I recommend studying ~10 hours, before taking the test. Additionally, be sure to keep a notepad handy so you can write down any areas you may need to revisit. Don't just take my word for it though, check out WordStream's [guide to the AdWords Exam](#). Beyond that, I also suggest taking [another practice test](#).

As I mentioned, this platform and industry are always changing. Here's a list of resources to keep you current and competitive.

Blogs:

[Search Engine Watch](#)

[Search Engine Land](#)

[PPC Hero](#)

[Moz](#)

[Various Blogs](#)

Tools:

[Spyfu](#)

[SEMRush](#)

Facebook & Instagram Marketing

Facebook is an amazing platform to reach new or existing customers, especially for B2C. [Facebook Blueprint](#) is absolutely the best way for you to learn how to create and measure campaigns on Facebook. You have the opportunity to enroll in learning objective based modules which are updated on a frequent basis. In October of 2016, Facebook announced [Blueprint Certification](#), which recognizes individuals who have achieved advanced-level proficiency in Facebook's family of products and services. I'm currently training agencies and other organizations for certification, so please let me know if this is something you'd be interested in.

Once you've had a chance to get the fundamentals down, I strongly suggest checking out Facebook for Business. Here, you'll find information on best practices, as well as industry specific [case studies](#).

You'll definitely want to make sure you've added the Facebook pixel in order to build your custom audience based on people who visited your page. Here's a [step by step guide](#) for how to create and install the pixel. Remember, you'll need to place this code on your page, so a developer may need to get involved. Want to make sure your pixel is working properly? Install the [Facebook Pixel helper](#) in your Chrome browser. You'll then be able to verify the pixel placement, and troubleshoot any challenges you may encounter.

Also, this pixel allows you to retarget website visitors by creating a Website Custom Audience. Here's [another guide](#) which walks through the process in detail. You can now serve additional ads to website visitors, with the goal of them completing an additional action. Lastly this pixel allows you to take advantage of [Lookalike audiences](#). These audiences help you find more people who look like your current customers, visitors to your website or Page fans.

You'll then need to make sure you're measuring conversions. In order to do so, be sure to review the [Defining Conversions](#) section of the Facebook Pixel Implementation Guide. I strongly recommend enrolling in the [Facebook Blueprint training module](#) which covers creating conversions, as well as various use cases.

Once your campaigns are up and running, you'll want to know how to measure their performance. To do this, review the [Guide to Ad Reporting in Ads Manager](#). Be sure to read the

section on [Customizing Columns in Ads Manager](#), as this will allow you to view metrics specific to your unique goals and objectives.

As you get a more advanced with Facebook Marketing, you may want to use a few tools to help manager your campaigns. [AdEspresso](#) is one of my favorites, and you can even get a free 14 day trial.

I also encourage you to like [Jon Loomer Digital](#) on Facebook, and follow his [blog](#) as well. This is another great way to keep up on the latest with Facebook Marketing.

As we mentioned, video is a great way to capture the attention of your target audience, but you'll want to provide captions as well. Here's [a guide](#) that walks through how to manually and automatically add these captions.

Additional Reading:

[Social Media Examiner](#)

[Nanigans Blog](#)

[Social Media Today](#)

[Facebook Ads Guide with Dimensions and Text Limits](#)

Display Marketing

Display Marketing is a great way to achieve your branding objective. It's important to remember this, as we can't expect conversions - or even clicks - to be as high as other channels. However, we can measure ad/message through tools such as [Vizu](#) and [Google Consumer Surveys](#). Although we discussed the various ways to buy inventory for display ads, the [Google Display Network](#) is probably the easiest entry point. These are run out of your Ad Words account, and don't require any additional partnerships. However, take a look at [AdNetworkDirectory.com](#) for a robust list of all your options.

Check out this [blog from Marketing Land](#) to discover all the latest on Display Advertising.

Lastly, don't ever hesitate to reach out with any questions!

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