

#DigitalMarketing: 5 Important Rules to Remember

New to digital marketing in South Africa? Or are you a social media marketing maven who wants to take it up to eleven? Either way, these top 5 must-remember rules will help you on the way to social media advertising success this year.

1. Without connection, there's no digital marketing success.

Social media marketing is about connecting and engaging people. Gone are the days where simply pushing sales is all that's needed for success. You need to bring people into the fold, letting them know the why's of your business, and drawing them into a deeper connection with your brand. People are social animals, so effective social media advertising hinges on creating a genuine brand connection with your audience, giving personalization geared to the client [and, in turn, giving you the data needed to gear your advertising and targets to what they need]. Know what your client needs, so you can deliver it. Building that connection can be challenging, we know. Aim to create a sense of connection with your people behind the brand, a 'peek behind the scenes' if you will, to help engage the customer in your people and your brand.

2. Let data drive your social media advertising targets.

Building on from the first rule, we have this one. Take the data you learn from personally engaging with your customers, and use it wisely. Reinforcing your pitches with solid, real and above all correctly targeted data will help boost them immensely, especially in South Africa where we have a collective allergy to poorly-targeted spam approaches.

This means employing a few of the clever tools [free and paid] available to you to gather and interpret this data to help you focus on your strong marketing points [and weed out your weak ones]. Spend a little time on researching the same for your competitors too. Without knowing the full competitive landscape surrounding your clients, you cannot run a successful social media advertising campaign, or boost your SEO. Data driven approaches to digital marketing are persuasive ones that will boost your ROI.

3. Be valuable to your client.

No marketing approach has long term traction without real value. The digital landscape is one where sales and marketing collide, so your marketing is what will assist your pre- and post-sales processes. Value is a nebulous idea, but often achingly simple to create. It can be created by making your pages easy to navigate on all devices, or making your content address real issues [and solve them]. Something as simple as well thought out FAQs and easy to access contact details all help create value for your clients.

4. Use creativity.

Have you ever noticed how many of the successful social media marketing platforms are visual? The internet is a visual medium, for the most part. If customers cannot easily consume the marketing approaches and campaigns you use, they will not perform- no matter how clever and well researched they are. Compelling visuals enhance retention. Try to grab attention without gimmicks, which pass quickly and look dated fast. Your gathered data will help you decide what approach works well for your specific audience- emotional, humorous, or more cerebral messages all have their place. Use that intimate knowledge to help you build a creative campaign that's attention attracting, and you're well on the way to social media marketing success

5. The 80/20 rule still is very valid.

The Pareto Principle, or the idea the 80% of results come from 20% of your target pool, still very much applies in modern marketing. 20% of your targets will engage with you, 80% likely won't. Studies suggest that only 5% will go beyond basic interactions to the meaty ones, like responding to calls for action. Know which customers are most likely to make up that 20% and structure your digital marketing to target them to enhance retention and boost your returns on your efforts.

Social media marketing in South Africa is often seen as an intimidating arena, but it needn't be if you use these 5 rules wisely.

