



Digital Media Creates New Marketing Channels for Businesses

Spotlight Article

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Digital media has paved the way for **new marketing opportunities** for businesses. With the popularity of social and professional networking sites, internet blogs, the use of video, search and mobile marketing, the trend to promote companies' products and services through digital channels continues to grow. According to a recent advertising and marketing report ¹, the largest growth in advertising in the next 10 years will come from digital media. Whether your company currently utilizes any of these marketing channels or not, digital media is changing the way companies are marketing their products and services to clients and prospects, and warrants a closer look.

Social and Professional Networking Sites

Based on the March 2008 **Internet World Stats** statistics, internet usage in the world has increased **291.3%** from **2000 to 2008**. With the rapid growth in internet usage, companies are seizing the opportunity to reach customers globally through online advertising and are poised to spend over \$60 billion in 2008.² In fact, popular social networking sites like **Facebook**, **MySpace**, and professional networking sites like **LinkedIn** continue to grow and offer advertising opportunities to target specific interest groups, people and regions with a **pay-per-click** advertising approach. Through well placed and creative online advertisements, companies are finding this to be a viable and cost-effective advertising option for driving interest and web sales.

Internet Blogs

Like social networking sites, **blogs** have become a popular **marketing tool** for companies over the past few years. While blogs started out as personal online journals for individuals, it has also become a corporate marketing tool for businesses – hence the birth of **corporate blogs**. So before you decide on starting a corporate blog, be clear on what the purpose of it will be. Will it be used as a channel to market your expertise, a place where your customers can provide feedback to you, or a way to showcase your products and services or a combination thereof? Whichever way you use this tool, many companies are now realizing the real value of having such a tool to help them market their own products and services online.

Use of Video

Video sharing sites like **YouTube** have popularized **video** and have attracted a mass audience. In fact, based on the recent **Nielsen Online** statistics³, YouTube had approximately **71.4 million** unique visitors in June, the **6th highest** unique visitor count for the **Top 10 Web Brands**. And with the popularity of YouTube and its high organic search results with the major search engines, companies have started capitalizing on this fact by producing short video advertisements of their products and services to post

^{1,2} "2008 Global Digital Media – Advertising and Marketing" – A report by Paul Budde Communications Pty Ltd., April 29, 2008

³ Nielsen Online Reports Topline U.S. Date for June 2008 – Top 10 Web Brands for June 2008 (U.S., Home and Work)

on this site. In addition companies are now producing video demonstrations to place on their own sites and have even gone as far as hosting contests to have their customers create video testimonials demonstrating how they use their products and services.

Search Marketing

With the top three search engines, **Google**, **Yahoo** and **MSN** consistently topping the list for unique visitors per month⁴, it is not surprising that many companies invest heavily in **search engine optimization (SEO)** where companies will buy up keywords and phrases in order to appear first in the search results. Taking this one step further, Google and Yahoo also provide **search marketing opportunities** for companies by putting them in front of interested prospects at the precise moment they are searching for what they are selling. The value here of course is in the timing of putting interested buyers in front of relevant sellers.

Mobile Marketing

When it comes to mobile marketing it is still a fairly new concept in Canada although in the U.S. and around the world it is already a viable marketing option. With the number of cell phone subscriptions reaching **3.3 billion worldwide** as of November 2007⁵, it makes sense that the marketing community is now tapping into this area to reach youths and young professionals since they are the largest demographic for cell phone usage and texting. Through **one-way text messaging (SMS)**, companies are able to reach their customers anywhere at any time because cell phones provide the portability and convenience for customers to pick-up messages easily.

So before allocating your marketing budget, consider the return on investment (ROI) that advertising in digital media provides today. This could be your chance to take your business or company to the next level by promoting your company's products and services in a timely, relevant, personal and cost-effective manner.

⁴ Nielsen Online Reports Topline U.S. Date for June 2008 – Top 10 Web Brands for June 2008 (U.S., Home and Work)

⁵ Source: Wikipedia under "Mobile Phone"

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