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# A Business Owner's Guide To Digital Marketing

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## INTRODUCTION

Think of your small business as a vehicle with which you can attain success in the industry. Your car may be small or ordinary, but it will get you to where you want to be, but only if you know where and how to drive it.

The best thing about driving is that you set your own pace, and in the business world, the same is true. Try not to see everything as a race. Yes, you will always have plenty of competition, some are more experienced and others have already established a reputation and gained renown. But as a yet inexperienced driver, you do not have the knowledge or skills (not yet!) to compete with these other drivers.

Remember: This is not a race. Think of it as driving in a highway. In a regular highway, when a driver is going faster than you, you don't try to outrun him, right? Instead, you give way, and you let him overtake you. So look at your competitors this way. You can either try to compete with them when you're not yet ready, and face the consequences, or, for now, use them as a benchmark for improvement.

As the title says, this guide will help you drive your small business to online success. It will provide you with sufficient knowledge to help you develop the skills needed to jumpstart your business with [e-commerce](#) and digital marketing in mind. And it will help you attain your goals the old-fashioned way: by taking it one step at a time.

In business, there's no such thing as overnight success, but it can be guaranteed with hard work and perseverance, in the same way that time and practice transforms an inexperienced driver into a professional one.

In business, you also need to go from Point A to Point B, in which the former is your current position, and the latter is your goal. It's not important how fast you go from Point A to B. What's more important is that you get there, having learned and developed as much skill and knowledge as you can in the process. As the saying goes, *"the journey is the reward"*.

Happy driving!

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## TERMINOLOGY/GLOSSARY

Before heading on to the first chapter of this guide, you need to familiarize yourself first with the terminologies that are commonly used in digital marketing. This glossary will provide you with a better understanding of these terms that you may have or may not have heard or used before.

You can always come back here when you come across terms that you are unfamiliar with in the following chapters of the guide.

**404 Error** – It is an error message that means the server currently cannot find or load the requested page.

**Alt Tag** – It is an HTML attribute that displays alternate texts in case images cannot be loaded. It is also a way for search engines to know what the image is about.

**Anchor Text** – It is the clickable, highlighted text in a hyperlink, which, when clicked, will lead to another website.

**Authorship** – This refers to the possession of a content. It serves as a digital signature to prevent other people from using or duplicating the content without permission. This is mainly used with Google+ so you will need a Google account.

**Black Hat SEO** – This refers to a technique of SEO that uses questionable techniques to gain a higher ranking on the SERPs, and often do not stick with the search engines' guidelines for SEO. This includes hacking and spamming other websites.

**Blog** – It is a site or an area of a site that contains the personal opinions, experiences, and entries of a person. It could be an online journal. It could also be your business' area to provide fresh, relevant content for their readers.

**Cloaking** – A black hat SEO technique that works by showing content to the search engine spider, but then present a different content on the browser.

**CMS** – Content Management System. It is a program that deals with managing, editing, publishing, and maintaining the content of a page. Wordpress and Drupal are examples of this.

**Conversion Rate** – It is the measure of people who go to your website and execute your desired action.

**CTR** – Click Through Rate. The rate by which people click on your ad or link.

**Duplicate Content** – Content that has been copied, or content that has been used multiple times in different websites.

**Google PageRank** – It is a ranking algorithm that Google uses to determine the importance of a website.

**Guest Posting** – It is the process of writing content that will be displayed on other websites. It's also the process wherein other people write content that will be displayed on your websites.

**HTML Tag** – It is an individual element found in an HTML document or web page.

**Inbound Link** – Also known as a backlink, this is a link that is directed to your website or a page on your site.

**Keyword Density** – This is the number of times your keyword appears on a page.

**Keyword Stuffing** – A harmful process of putting as much keywords as you can into one content without considering if the keywords fit naturally in the context of that content. It is an outdated technique often related to black hat SEO.

**Keywords** – These are words and phrases that serve as the summary of a web page's contents.

**Landing Page** – This is the page where you will “land on” when you click an ad or a website link.

**Link** – A clickable text or image that directs you to a corresponding web page.

**Link Building** – It is the process of increasing the links that are pointing to the website as a means to increase the flow of link juice, which will then affect a site's ranking on the SERPs.

**Link Juice** – It is an industry term often referring to the passing of a value of a link that is pointing to a website. The higher the quality of the links linked to a site, the greater the chance of higher ranking on the SERP.

**Meta Description** – This is the supporting text of the meta tag that provides more information on the content of the web page. In the search results, it appears below the title.

**Meta Tags** – These are HTML tags that show a summary of a page's content.

**Meta Title** – The name of the web page. This shows up as the title of your content on the search results.

**Navigation** – The ability to move from one page to another in a website.

**Negative SEO** – The act of intentionally decreasing the ranking of a targeted website by using harmful tactics.

**Optimization** – The process of enhancing all aspects of your web page.

**Organic Results** – These are the listings that appear on the SERPs, whose rankings are based on the algorithms that search engines have set.

**Outbound Link** – The link that you use to connect to other websites.

**Paid Directory Links** – A directory that sells links to those who engage in link building.

**Paid Link Building** – This refers to websites that will accept your guest posts and links, and agree to link back to your site for a price.

**ROI** – Return on Investment. The profit or the gain from an investment.

**Search Engine** – It is a software program that retrieves data according to the given keywords and relevance of the site to the keywords. In a word, it's called Google for most people as it is the most popular but depending on your area of the world, it could be Yandex, Baidu, Yahoo or [Bing](#). There are also others but those are the mainstream brands.

**SEO** – Search Engine Optimization. The process of enhancing a website to increase its ranking on the SERPs.

**SERP** – Search Engine Results Page. The result that search engines bring back when a query is made.

**Spider** – Software programs that search engines use to look at the relevance of the content of a website.

**URL** – Uniform Resource Locator. The unique address of a website.

**User Interface** – This refers to the commands and programs a user uses to execute a desired action and communicate with the computer. In the SEO world, user interface primarily refers to the ease of use that your site offers to the user. The better and easier it is to find what they want, the better your score is.

**White Hat SEO** – Techniques of SEO that adhere to the policies set by the search engines. You are optimising in a correct manner, using awesome content that actually contributes to the topic leading to natural actions for users that want to share your content or cite it as a reference.

Want to learn more? Check out our updating online [digital marketing glossary](#).





However, there's a downside to push marketing. Sometimes, push marketing is called interruptive marketing because a person becomes bombarded with information that he wasn't looking for or isn't relevant to his need. But it is effective when it comes to gaining visibility, so if you want to succeed with push marketing, make sure that your promotions won't be a burden to your audience, in terms of content and timing.

Pull marketing or [inbound marketing](#) means having to do everything you can to "pull" in people and drive them to your website or store. A mutual relationship between customer and seller exists. Here, people actively seek out your company and in turn, your duty is to give them what they want and need.



Both pull and push marketing have its pros and cons, but both can also work together to bring your company the best results, from popularity to becoming people's go-to website in times of need.

Digital marketing also involves several strategies, including search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC) ads, Social Media, and the list goes on. All of these will be discussed in the next chapters.



## HOW DIGITAL MARKETING WILL HELP YOUR BUSINESS

As mentioned before, [digital marketing](#) is the engine of the car that is your small business. In short, digital marketing keeps your business going, and it is one of the main factors that could guarantee the success of your company.

If you want to be able to compete with other businesspeople, then taking advantage of several digital marketing strategies will make sure that you get your share of customers. The best thing about the digital world is that almost everyone gets a level playing field. A small business can best a big-time company by building a reputation, establishing a personal connection with people, and by using tools that make it more visible.

### Advantages of Digital Marketing

Unlike traditional marketing, digital marketing provides you with an environment where you can constantly improve your strategies and implement these changes at the soonest possible time without worrying about cost. There's room for you to talk to people regularly, answer their questions, and ask them for feedback.

You yourself are able to track the progress of your business by using digital marketing tools that are also available online. And these strategies will often show noticeable results in terms of figures and sales.

Don't forget that the Internet is visited by billions of users every day, and these visitors are on the lookout for a website that will provide them relevant and useful results. More importantly, if they've come to shop, you can be sure that they will be looking for online stores where they can buy products and services at a more affordable price.

If you have what people are looking for, you have to make sure that they are able to find you, and that's the job of digital marketing. The process helps you reach your goals quicker, and as a businessperson, digital marketing provides you with a new platform to reach and engage more people, as well as continuously optimize your website to satisfy these people.



## **WILL ONLINE MARKETING WORK WITH TRADITIONAL MARKETING?**

When you say marketing, you instantly think of television commercials and print advertisements like billboards, magazines, and newspapers. Some of you might even think of flyers and coupons. These methods of advertising fall under traditional marketing.

Traditional marketing is a classic method of advertising, and it is one of the most trusted means of endorsements. When a company invests in television commercials, audiences immediately get the impression that this company is a big deal, and the products and services it endorses should be taken seriously.

### **The Downside of Traditional Marketing**

However, with the advent of the Internet, businesspeople have found other ways to reel in customers. Traditional marketing means are not that sought-after anymore by smaller companies because the Internet provides an unlimited space for ads and promotions for a lesser cost.

Another reason why digital marketing is quickly gaining on traditional marketing is because traditional marketing is a form of push advertising. The relationship between the company and the customer is one-sided, and there are hardly any options for the audience to make inquiries and voice out their concerns.

Another problem with traditional marketing is the difficulty in measuring the return on investment ([ROI](#)). Television commercials, radio broadcasts, print ads, and the like cost a lot of money, but because these mediums are made for all audiences, it becomes hard for a company to determine the specific demographics that were enticed by the methods.

If you cannot measure the sales and the people that were supplied by traditional marketing means, then it would be difficult to create and manage your brand to satisfy your target demographics.

## Digital Marketing + Traditional Marketing



(source: <http://uberflip.com/>)

On the other hand, traditional marketing and digital marketing go hand in hand. They complement one another's advantages, and provide solutions to disadvantages.

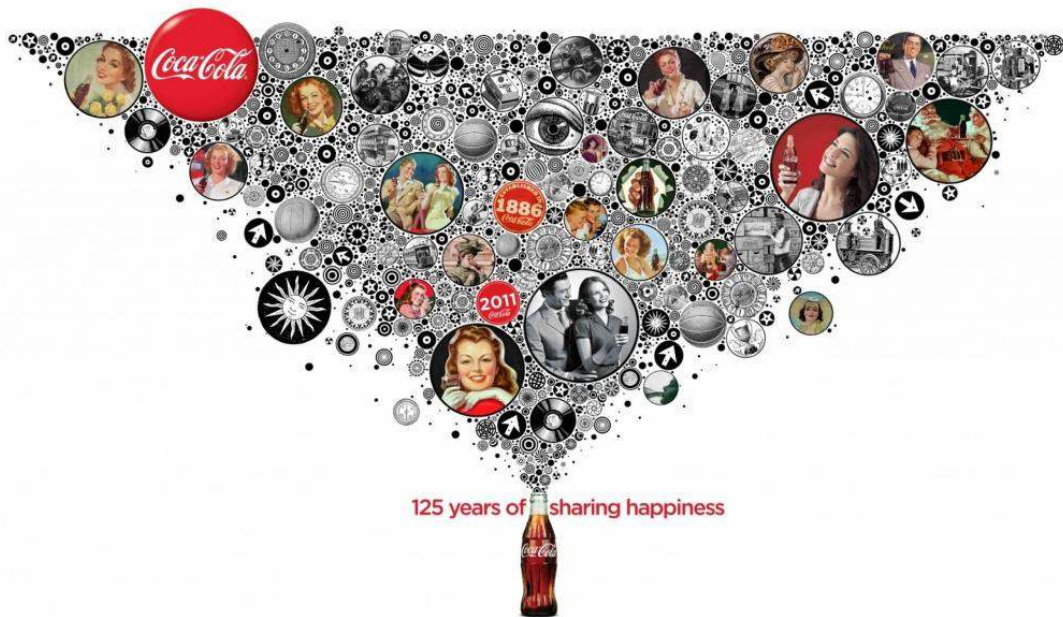
For instance, where traditional marketing is used to obtain universal acclaim, digital marketing makes sure to target specific demographics within the audience. Traditional marketing provides information about the product or service, digital marketing communicates with people about that product or service information.

Where digital marketing seeks to promote the business online, traditional makes sure to raise awareness to the business outside the Internet.

You need both to reach as much people as you want.

### Learn from the Experts

There are those who don't find digital marketing important because they argue that their store is already doing fine. They are already well-known in the neighborhood or in the city, or maybe they have established a following by using traditional marketing means (e.g. television commercial, space on the newspaper). So, should they still engage in digital marketing strategies? Of course. Look at the example of a household brand that everyone in the world recognizes.



Who in the world hasn't heard of Coca-Cola? The company has been around since 1886, and it has celebrated its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary last 2011. The company has all the reason in the world not to engage in digital marketing practices because it is a worldwide household name. Everyone recognizes the logo. It has certainly been successful in its entire traditional marketing means, specifically those timely television commercials that tell inspiring stories.

But do you think that Coca-Cola would stop marketing because it is already on top? Of course not! It's not an excuse. The company has the power and the money now to also dominate traditional and digital marketing means, so why not use them to its advantage? Since the brand already has a large number of followers, most of their marketing strategies are just focused on further raising awareness to the brand. This will keep the company on top, especially since it has a big competitor in the form of Pepsi.

Coca-Cola's strategies are very effective because they engage the audience in a very personal and endearing way. Its tagline is to share happiness. And their marketing means definitely spread happiness, as you can see [here](#).

So if the big-time companies are using digital marketing strategies, and these companies are your benchmarks for success, then so should you.

## CHAPTER 2. SEO

In driving, a car won't be able to start without an engine, but then again, if that engine does not have fuel, then the engine won't run, and the car would be useless. When a car runs out of fuel, it won't be able to move toward its destination until you give it enough gas, and the process of topping up is a continuous one, because your car can only hold a limited amount of fuel in its system.



In this case, since digital marketing is the engine, then search engine optimization (SEO) is the fuel. Among the many strategies involved in digital marketing, SEO is the best practice that will generate the most impressive results.

If your digital marketing strategies were created and implemented without SEO in mind, then all that effort will be for naught because they won't be seen by people. No matter how beautiful your website is, or how clever your advertisements are, without SEO, your creativity will be drowned by the sea of competition that has managed to integrate SEO in their endeavors.

One more thing to consider: If you own a car, then you know that it comes with a manual. In that manual is where you will find everything you need to know to maintain your vehicle, one of which is the kind of fuel that is required for the car to run smoothly. If you don't use what is recommended, you are putting your engine at risk of damage.

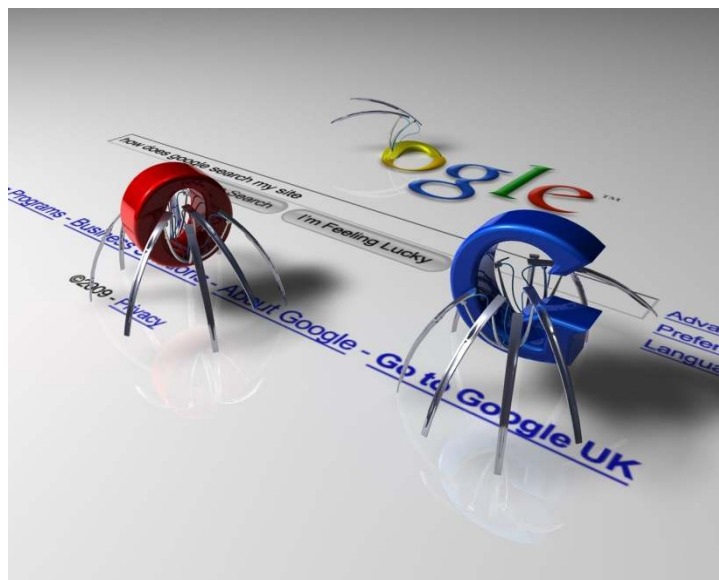
As with SEO, there are strategies that could be beneficial for your small business, but there are also SEO schemes that would do more harm than good to your company and negatively affect the digital marketing strategies you're working on. All of these will be discussed later on.

For now, let's start by defining SEO.

## WHAT IS SEO?

[SEO, or search engine optimization](#), is a process in which a website is optimized so that it will pass the standards set by search engines for relevance and popularity. It also involves increasing the ranking of the website in the organic search results pages (SERPs). More importantly, it is about knowing the algorithms set by these search engines, so you won't be in danger of penalties and de-indexing.

To understand how SEO works, you must first learn how search engines sort results according to relevancy and popularity. They use software programs called spiders or robots that crawl the contents of websites and index them according to the relevance of the keywords that were typed.



For instance, if you search for “fantasy books”, the spiders will search the web for sites that have topics that are relevant to “fantasy books”. In this case, the keyword is too general, so most likely, the websites that would occupy the front of the SERPs are those that define what a fantasy book is, or a list of the popular fantasy books today.

But when you change your [keyword](#) phrase into something like “cheap fantasy books”, the spiders will then give priority to websites that sell cheap fantasy books. It is the duty of the search engine’s algorithm to give a site a corresponding rank that will determine the site’s position on the SERPs.

Now, with SEO, the goal is to be one of those sites that the spiders will see as useful to the keywords that a person types. There are plenty of ways to achieve this, including keyword optimization, [link building](#), and content management.

## HOW CAN YOU BENEFIT?

One of the main benefits that you can expect from using SEO is an increase in the traffic that goes to your page. Nowadays, there are plenty of tools online that will help you measure page traffic. The more page traffic you get, the more exposure your business gets, and the higher the conversion rate.

Doing SEO won't require you to shell out money. In fact, most of the processes involved in SEO can be done without cost as long as you are open to learning and willing to put in the time and effort. There are also SEO tools that are free to use. Although if you can manage it, you're also recommended to try out paid tools and services, like Google AdWords, for your SEO strategies. Since most search data is now restricted, investing in PPC with AdWords will give you more refined data to work with for your SEO campaigns. Remember that SEO is an investment.

Social media websites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and others, have their own search algorithms. That is why it is also important that you optimise your social networking pages. Doing so will increase your visibility in these networks and in the search engine results. Billions of people go to these websites, and so doing SEO gives your business the chance to be seen by these billions of users.

Again, online, all businesses, whether big or small, have a fair chance of making it big. If you engage in best SEO practices, you can be sure that you have a fighting chance of besting your top competitors in the industry.

Finally, SEO can make you a better businessman because of the discipline that comes with implanting your strategies. SEO is not something that you do once; but rather, it's something that you do on a regular basis. Doing SEO regularly will give you a better understanding on what marketing techniques work, as well as an understanding of what people like at the moment. Plus, with this knowledge comes skills that will help you in the long run.

It can't be stressed enough, but SEO is an investment that, when done properly, will result in tangible and intangible assets for your company.

## BEST PRACTICES

Search engines have over 200 different standards for ranking a website on the SERPs. These different algorithms make sure that the results on the first page carry genuine relevance and value to the query made. Also, these prevent black hat SEO users from manipulating the ranking of pages to get their poor-quality sites at the top.

### Types of SEO



[Black hat SEO](#) pertains to the unethical techniques used to get to the front of the SERPs quicker. It is notorious for using manipulative and frowned-upon practices that are strictly prohibited by the guidelines set by search engines. When you are caught using these techniques, your site will be penalized, leading to lower rankings and sometimes, de-indexing. Examples are keyword stuffing, cloaking, spamming, etc.

White hat SEO, on the other hand, are the techniques that are morally ground and obedient to the rules set by the search engines. Examples are keyword and content optimization and proper content marketing.

Now, there is much talk about grey SEO, in which a company may use heavy white hat SEO, but still practice black hat SEO techniques occasionally and subtly. It is also referred to as engaging in suspicious activities, but because of “good intentions”. Think of the saying, “the end justifies the means”, and that’s how it works.

There is also what you call [negative SEO](#), but one uses its techniques to put other websites, like competition, in bad lighting. The intention would be to make other sites look bad, so you can look good.

In search engine optimization, you are greatly urged not to go down the road to black hat SEO or even “grey hat” SEO. Although some big-time companies admit that they practice these strategies, the risk is too big. White hat SEO is really not that difficult to practice. You just need to know the right strategies to use, and the discipline and patience to keep on doing these strategies.



## Best Practices of White Hat SEO

Since there are over 200 aspects that search engines look at to rank your page, it is almost impossible to pinpoint the exact strategies that will ensure your site the front pages of the SERPs. However, there are main aspects that you can focus on first, starting with your market research.

## Market Research



Before you can implement any SEO strategy, you first have to do your [research](#). You have to know where your business stands now, and where you want to go. You should be clear with your goals because these will help you steer you in the right direction to reach them.

In market research, you have to familiarize yourself with the marketing tools that are available to you online. You should also spend time in studying your target customers, particularly how they behave and react toward different types and forms of content.

Finally, you shouldn't forget to study your competition, and observe what they are doing to succeed. It was mentioned at the introduction of this guide that you can use your biggest competition as benchmarks to monitor your progress and then apply the same strategies that will help you reach your goals.

## Keyword Optimization

One of the most popular and important practices in SEO is keyword optimization. This is the process of selecting the correct keywords and putting them in the right places in a

natural way, so that when people make queries that contain the keywords that you have used, your page will be given a higher ranking on the SERPs.

Keyword optimization also refers to the process of [using your keywords](#) wisely. Before, many companies were able to game Google's algorithm because that time, the more times that you use your keywords (keyword density), and the more variants of the keywords you use, on one page, the higher your ranking on the SERPs. Fortunately, Google caught on the scheme and changed its whole algorithm altogether.

As much as possible, during the initial phase of your SEO campaign, you should use [long-tail keywords](#) to lessen your competition and increase the chance of getting a higher ranking. Using specific and long keywords and phrases are very effective in filtering out the more general keywords that do not point people to your website.

Keep in mind, search engines are now smart enough to read through grammatical errors so forcing keyword-phrases that are searched a lot with the full intent of ranking for it, should be avoided.

### High-Quality Content

It cannot be stressed enough, but using high-quality content on your page is what will ultimately get your page to the front of the SERPs. Remember that search engine spiders rank the websites according to the relevance of the page to the intent of the user. And so you have to be sure that your site can satisfy the wants and needs of the searcher.

High-quality content is not only useful for driving people on your page, but also very effective when it comes to making these people stay on your page and convert.

As a general rule, high-quality content and keyword optimization work perfectly together. If you're planning to do your SEO on your own, you are encouraged to find the balance between the two. It works well if you create content around the keyword phrases you choose. This way, you'll have a better opportunity of making sure that your keywords fit the content naturally.

### Link Building

Link building is the process of strengthening your relevance and increasing your ranking on the SERPs by connecting to and being connected to other popular and high-quality websites. When you do this, link juice, which signifies the value of the link, will pass through these connections, and flow through your website.



As a result, your site's value will also be affected, but be warned that link building can affect your website's reputation positive or negatively. It depends on the quality of the websites that you are connected to. This was another thing that Google focused on in changing its algorithm for SEO.

Before, the ranking of a website on the SERP will automatically increase based on just the number of links connected to a website. However, one black hat SEO tactic involves linking and buying lots of links from poor-quality sites. And so these sites get higher ranking, even though their contents are not relevant to the queries of the searcher.

Now, if you buy multiple links, or put your listings in every directory you can find, Google will give you a warning regarding the activity, since it could be a sign of black hat SEO strategies like link networks and blog farms. When you link to poor-quality websites, your own link value could also be negatively affected.

That is why it's important for you to only link to websites, and accept links from websites, which are of high quality and of good standing. There's nothing wrong with posting your listings on major and minor directories, but you have to be sure that these directories will benefit your business. For instance, you can post your listings on directories whose niche is similar to the nature of your business.

## HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

Based on the best practices of SEO mentioned earlier, the first thing you need to do is do your market research. Of course, you have to have a clear idea on what your goals are, and how you will reach them. Once you've gathered enough data, it is now time for you to apply these information on your website with SEO in mind.

First, take a good look at your website and find the ways by which you can improve it, especially in terms of user interface and experience. Your website should be designed in such a way that your visitors will find it appealing, and not overwhelming. Make it easy for your reader to share you content so adding social buttons is a must. More importantly, your site should feature it's value and a good way to do this is by making content the king because at the end of the day, that is why they are on your site.



# CONTENT

Using high-quality content on your different sites that point to your website is also important. If you are using social networking pages, then the content comes in the form of your status updates, pictures, and videos. Regardless of where you put your content, you just have to make sure that the content is useful and valuable to your audience.

It is also important that you incorporate your [keywords on the content, as well as in other strategic areas of the web page, which you can read further about here](#). You can come up with your keywords and phrases on your own, but if you do run out of ideas, there are plenty of tools that you can use to generate keywords and get reports on how well these keywords might perform.

An example is the Google's Keyword Planner, which will help you get keyword ideas and give estimates on how much traffic the keywords will drive to your page. Tools like Suggester and uber Suggest are useful for finding long-tail keywords based on the phrases that Google suggests while a person is typing on the search engine.

Speaking of long-tail keywords, if you are new, then you should target very specific keywords or long keyword phrases to get more traffic early since it will be harder for new sites to compete for competitive keywords. [Long tail keywords](#), since they are very targeted, will also yield higher conversion rates.

In terms of link building, you can start with internal linking. This is when you link your page to another page on the site that is relevant. This is really effective so doing it earlier, will yield better results for future pages but remember not to force it.

Another easy thing to do to acquire links, is to make sure that your social networking pages, your Tumblr/other third party blogs, and other partner sites are all linking to your official website.

Don't forget to look for major directories where you can post your business listings. Minor directories are useful for link building but you do have to be careful in choosing where the information about your company will appear in. If you go overboard and rely on easy, low quality links, then your site will be in trouble so keep this at a minimal.

If you have a brick-and-mortar store, you have to consider what is known as local SEO, which uses SEO techniques that will complement the store's geography. Think of SEO, but more specific to the exact address of a business. With local SEO, keyword optimization will also include incorporating geography-specific keywords to increase the ranking of your listings on the SERPs.



Be sure you have a standard Business Name, Address and Phone Number or usually known as NAP. You can start practicing [local SEO](#) by creating listings on Google Places (or your Google+ Business page) and on social networks like [Foursquare](#) and Yelp. As usual, the key is to optimize everything that goes on your listing, from the specific keywords to the meta description.

You can also edit your listings in such a way as to show the most important details about your company, like the business name, the complete address, the phone number (be sure the NAP is consistent) your store hours, a brief description about it, and even the reviews from your past customers. All of these will appear on the "SERP's" when a person uses keywords and phrases that match the profile of your company and its services, plus the location.

If you need more help on where to upload your listings, you can use tools like GetListed, which will show you where your listings are currently posted, and where they're not and where they should be. This tool will also tell you if you have made duplicate listings in certain directories.

### Learn from the Experts

Nowadays, it is clear that content is king if you want to get a higher ranking on the SERPs. While there are over 200 algorithms that search engine spiders look for when classifying your websites according to the searched keywords, it's no secret that high-quality and relevant content are ranked first.

So whether you have an official website, a hosted e-commerce site, a blog, or social networking pages, you are encouraged to spend your time and effort in content marketing, which is basically the process of generating high-quality content to engage people. This could lead to the people converting into customers. [Content marketing](#) is focused more on communicating, and not on selling.

There are plenty of brands that invest on content marketing, as you can read [here](#). You can get inspiration from how these brands are using content marketing to encourage their audiences to participate in discussions about anything related to the company and its services.

However, there are those companies who were also caught trying to manipulate search engines' algorithms to guarantee a place on the top of the SERPs. These brands are then worth noting as an example of what not to do. One famous company, J.C. Penney, became the talk of the town when the [New York Times exposed its scheme to manipulate Google's SEO algorithm for link building](#).



J.C. Penney was guilty of using poor-quality and paid links to take advantage of the link juices that pass through the connections. The company also used multiple keywords and phrases, both general and specific, in each of its pages. This is a form of keyword stuffing. As a result, J.C. Penney's website will appear at the top of the SERPs, even if the searched keywords have nothing to do with the brand's products and services.

Once the New York Times alerted Google about this possible scheme, an investigation was launched, and suddenly J.C. Penney fired its SEO department, which could indicate that J.C. Penney intentionally engaged in these bad practices, instead of pursuing its initial statement that it could be a negative SEO attack.

J.C. Penney was heavily penalized by Google because of the controversy. The company suffered low rankings. And Google restructured its algorithms to make them stricter in terms of ranking websites based on link building.

## RECAP

1. Your website should stand out. Be awesome and make it easy for your user.
2. Put up great content on the site. Even if it's just an About page, or even just a product page. Be sure that it's the best.
3. Using your NAP (Business Name, Address, Phone Number) on your site is vital to Local SEO. Be sure it is consistent on your directory listings and other pages you put your details on.
4. Link your pages together. Internal Linking is a must. If you think an older post can help a reader further understand what you are talking about, then link to it.
5. Link building is not the easiest thing in the world. That is why a lot of people want to cheat their way through. Remember to be natural and acquire links from high quality sites. If the site is unmoderated, with a lot of links to other sites or if most of the site is broken, then it's safe to say that you need to stay away. Good sites will always have real people behind it. Always think and ask yourself "Is this natural?" when acquiring your links. It will save you a lot of grief from all the algorithm changes that Google applies.



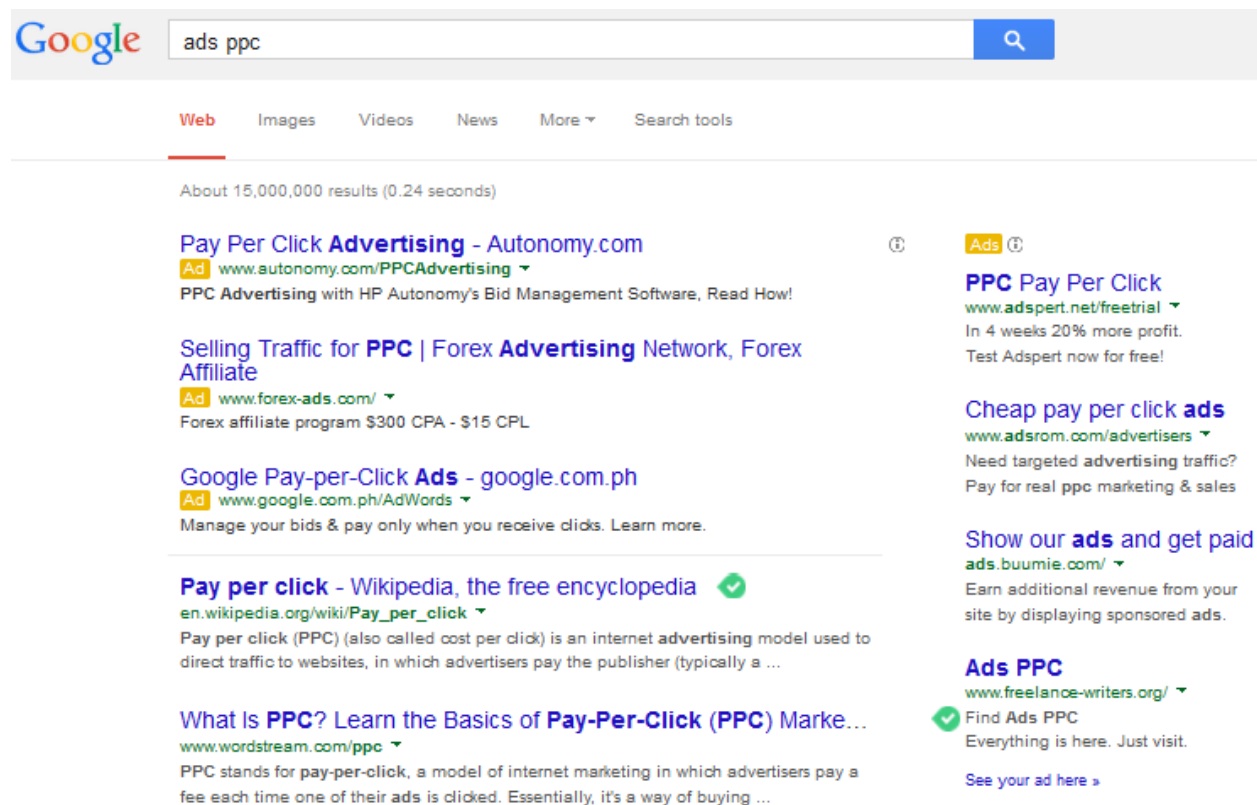


## WHAT IS PPC?

[Pay-per-click \(PPC\) is a marketing strategy](#) in which you pay for a spot on the SERPs. As mentioned before, these ads can be placed anywhere, from the SERPs to social networking pages. (Note: In this chapter, we will mainly focus on Google Adwords when we talk about PPC. There are other networks but Adwords is the biggest and most successful. We also consider Facebook as a PPC network but to simplify it, we will talk about it in the following chapter.)

When you use PPC ads, and a person uses the search engines to search for keywords that are related to your ad, then your PPC ad is guaranteed a spot at the top of the SERPs, above the organic results.

Below, the PPC ads are those that are indicated by the yellow “Ad” mark. They go before the organic results, which began with the Wikipedia page for pay per click.



The screenshot shows a Google search for "ads ppc". The search bar is at the top left, with the Google logo to its left. Below the search bar are navigation tabs for "Web", "Images", "Videos", "News", "More", and "Search tools". The search results are displayed below, starting with "About 15,000,000 results (0.24 seconds)". The first three results are PPC ads, each marked with a yellow "Ad" icon. The first ad is for "Pay Per Click Advertising - Autonomy.com" with a URL "www.autonomy.com/PPCAdvertising". The second ad is for "Selling Traffic for PPC | Forex Advertising Network, Forex Affiliate" with a URL "www.forex-ads.com/". The third ad is for "Google Pay-per-Click Ads - google.com.ph" with a URL "www.google.com.ph/AdWords". The fourth result is an organic search result for "Pay per click - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia" with a green checkmark icon. The fifth result is another organic search result for "What Is PPC? Learn the Basics of Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Marke..." with a URL "www.wordstream.com/ppc". On the right side of the search results, there is a vertical column of ads, each marked with a yellow "Ads" icon. The first ad in this column is for "PPC Pay Per Click" with a URL "www.adsper.net/freetrial". The second ad is for "Cheap pay per click ads" with a URL "www.adsrom.com/advertisers". The third ad is for "Show our ads and get paid" with a URL "ads.buumie.com/". The fourth ad is for "Ads PPC" with a URL "www.freelance-writers.org/".

As you might have guessed from the name, you will be charged every time a person clicks on your PPC ad. The term “pay-per-click” actually means you pay for you to be able to post your ads on prominent parts of a webpage. Many people have the misconception that with PPC ads, it is you who gets paid.

Now that we’ve cleared that up, the big question is how much you will pay the search engine or the webpage that showed your PPC ad, which was clicked. In some websites,

the owner will talk with the advertiser regarding the fixed rate for a certain number of generated clicks. This means that the advertiser will pay the agreed upon amount every time the number of clicks is achieved.



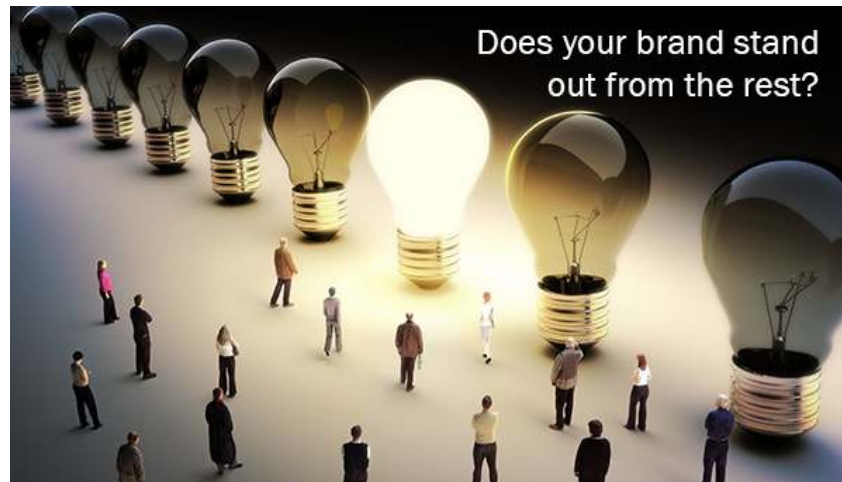
Other sites (like Google Adwords) determine the price per click by using a bid-based model. This method is often made easier with PPC ad tools. The advertisers engage in an automated bidding war, in which each advertiser states the keywords he'll target for the ad, as well as how much he is willing to pay for that spot.

These bids are given corresponding Ad Ranks by the automated auctioneer. The Ad Rank is the product between how much one is willing to pay for the ad and the site's quality score. The quality score, in turn, is the score given by the search engine to a website. The most important factor in the quality score is how the ad is relevant to the keywords searched. You also have to factor in, how well-received your ad performs.

The person with the highest overall score is given the spot on the website.



## HOW CAN YOU BENEFIT?



One main benefit of a successfully optimized PPC ad is that it helps your brand stand out from the rest. Because it's difficult for a small business to land the front pages, let alone the first page, of the SERPs, you will need the assistance that PPC ads will give you.

Remember that if you've created your PPC ads properly, there's a good chance that your ad will appear at the very first page of the results pages. Not only that, but if you also use **Google's Display Network**, your ad will also be shown on other websites, mostly blogs, where people can see it and click on it. For online businesses, visibility means everything.

It's not a secret that you will need to pay a lot of money if you want your ads to appear everywhere and at any time. For instance, big-time companies are willing to pay millions just to show a fifteen-second television commercial. However, another benefit of PPC ads is that they don't cost as much. It can also be tracked and measured while reaching specific targets unlike most traditional print media.

Your main expense is your ad budget. It's optional, but you can make use of a PPC ad tool, to help you monitor your competitors and your campaigns. For companies, they can hire a PPC marketing team to help manage their ads, but the price is still pretty affordable, so adding up all those expenses is still not as compared with other forms of traditional marketing.

Since PPC ads can be tested, allowing you to see whether the keywords, or the content of your ad (in general), have more traction with netizens, you'll be able to see if your PPC strategies are also working. If not, it won't take too much time, effort, or money to re-strategize and test your new PPC ads. That's something you can't do with a TV spot.

Speaking of testing, you also have the ability to your ads on different target audiences. With this, you can discover different profitable markets that you normally wouldn't be able to find. You can tailor the right landing page for these specific demographics and increase your visibility further. You can do all of these with minimal costs!

Like SEO, PPC ads are an investment. You have to be willing to spend, and then hope that this investment will result to great returns. If you've done your research and manage to do your PPC management right, then you can be sure that your investment will be fruitful, and not only in terms of popularity and other benefits.

One of your aims with PPC ads is to get a high click-through-rate (CTR). A high click-through-rate means more people are clicking on your ads and being directed to your landing page. When many people go to your landing page, you have a higher chance that these visitors will convert into customers or followers. The higher the CTR, the less money you'll pay per click in the future.



## BEST PRACTICES

Within the scope of PPC, you have three main things to think about.

**First, is to choose the networks that you will use and test ads consistently.** There are a lot of PPC networks out there, but stick with the biggest ones, like Google AdWords. Facebook also has a huge PPC network but it's targeting system is bit different as it relies more on interests, age, status and much of the data they can use from all the Facebook user accounts.

Both Yahoo! and Bing also have a PPC network so it's something you can test in the future. If upon your research, you have a demographic that relies on Yahoo and Bing, normally an older market segment, then it's wise to start testing ads early for these 2 search engines.

In all of these networks, it's vital to keep testing ads. Most products are seasonal so it's important to tailor your ads to the time of the year. Sometimes, you will 2 identical ads showing leading to different sites. This means that one of the ads is working very well so the competitor copied it. Why do they have to do such an unethical thing? It's because great ads will lead to better CTR, hence, cheaper clicks and better positioning.

So, never stop testing!



**The second best practice for PPC ads is to use keywords wisely and turn off unprofitable keywords.** If you remember our discussion on SEO, you know that keywords are vital to search marketing. Your target user will probably type a keyword phrase on the search engine just to look for the product you are offering. Knowing this, you have to know the right keywords to use. You need to use keyword tools like Google's Ad Planner to gather a list of keywords. If you have been running your website for a long time, you probably have data within your analytics software so make use of that as well. [Google Webmaster Tools](#) is also a great place to get relevant keywords.

Once you gather enough keywords, you'd need to start testing them. Normally, for broader keywords, like "Shoes" for example, you will be charged higher since you have a whole lot of big money competitors and your conversion rate will be significantly lower since people looking for "Shoes" might not be looking for your product, say, Yellow Puma Shoes, and instead, are looking for information about Tom's Shoes. So that is something that you will need to keep an eye on if you are going to test broad keywords.

So, if you are new to PPC, try to start off with very specific keywords. While it's true that using generic keywords and phrases could mean more visibility, it also means that your listing could appear with results that are not related to the content of your landing page which will hurt you and your wallet instead of actually helping you.

**Finally, you have to optimize the landing page where people will be led to when they click on your listing.** Your landing page should contain the content, and at least, the keywords, that a person is looking for which is factored in the quality score.

The most important thing here is to test your content against the traffic you get to see if it's effective. If you take your time creating a very beautiful design for the website, but you don't have what people want and need, they will go to another site in a heartbeat.



The process of optimizing your landing page and ads is called conversion rate optimization or CRO. This refers to making sure that both have everything that a visitor needs to convert. Conversion, to some people, may mean converting into a customer, wherein one buys a product or service from the company's website.

However, conversion is defined as having done something that *you*, as the advertiser, want your visitors to do. It doesn't necessarily mean buying something from your website. It could be that the purpose of the landing page is to encourage people to follow your social networking websites, leave a review, download your content, etc.

## HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

If you're new to PPC ads, and you want to incorporate it into your digital marketing strategies, the first thing you have to do is jump in! Do not worry about over spending. Set a budget from the start so you do not go over that. In this example, we will assume that your landing page or website is already ready. Remember, you can make your ads link to other pages of your website, not just the homepage.

Start off by [signing up on Google AdWords](#). If you host your own website, then your web host might have a free AdWords coupon that you can use.



One of the best features of Google AdWords is that it provides you with the data required for a fruitful keyword research. Google's new tool, which replaced the old Keyword Tool, is the Keyword Planner. Like with their past AdWords tools, you can only access this tool if you have an AdWords account. What the Keyword Planner does is, yes, help you plan your keywords. It recommends keywords and phrases that are related to the ones that you type.

But the most important feature of the Keyword Planner is its ability to give you the statistics you need to know when targeting an audience and the keywords. When you input a keyword or a phrase on the planner, it will show you estimates on how much traffic (clicks) you'll get by just having those words on your ad campaigns.

Since you are new, start off with one campaign targeting highly specific keywords. Start creating ads based on what could catch your target's attention. Since you want your ad campaign to be successful, you need to create multiple ads that will increase your chances for visibility across the web.

***Pro Tip:*** You shouldn't only come up with one ad that will target only one audience and use one keyword phrase. You can, but you shouldn't.

Google has transformed the Google AdWords interface over the years to make it easy for advertisers. However, some people still find it hard to use or just a little bit slow for their taste. That's where the Google AdWords Editor comes in handy.



The Google AdWords Editor is a free tool that will guide you in managing your current ads, which you have created using Google AdWords. The editor is an application that you need to download and install on your computer which works for both Mac and PC.

The AdWords editor helps you manage all of your ads at once. The application features tools that will help you raise or lower your bids on keywords at the touch of a button; edit the content of your ads; change your keywords and phrases; copy and move your ads from one campaign to another; and look at the performance of all your campaigns, either individually or collectively.

### What Are the Experts Doing Now?

Although PPC ads are technically advertisements, it is important that they don't overly sound like one. Otherwise, your listing could look and sound like spam. That's why it's important for you to optimize these ads as much as you can. Be creative on how you will summarize what the people can expect from your landing page once they click on your ad.

If your field is competitive, then you can definitely learn from what other companies are doing. You can also look at how other businesses do it.

An example of a company that is noted for its effective PPC ad campaigns is Audi. It helps that the company name is very unique, and it has already gained the status of a brand. But in spite of its popularity, Audi is investing on creating high-quality PPC ads to engage more people.





Audi's PPC ads are noted for using call-to-action verbs that encourage the reader to click on the ad for the purpose of knowing more about Audi's products, and not just because of an intention to buy a car. The PPC ads are without the usual verbs like "buy" or "click now"; instead, it uses creative verbs that will appeal to people like "experience" or "discover". It also helps that the landing page provides the visitor the relevant information that he is looking for in the first place.

Audi's PPC ads also make use of site links, which are additional links that you can include on your PPC ads to direct the person to certain pages of your website. For instance, the site links here are below the main title tag and meta description of the PPC ad. It will cost a little bit more but it does boost effectiveness. Since you are starting off, you might want to put this in your bucket list of things to test.

Ads related to **audi** ⓘ

**[AudiUSA.com - Audi Official Site](#)**  
[www.audiusa.com/](http://www.audiusa.com/)  
Experience New **Audi** Luxury Cars And Models At AudiUSA.com.  
Audi USA has 1,467,025 followers on Google+

<a href="#">Locate A Dealer</a>	<a href="#">View Pictures &amp; Video</a>
<a href="#">View All Upcoming Audi Models</a>	<a href="#">Request A Quote</a>
<a href="#">Lease An Audi</a>	

Audi also uses other ad extensions to direct the people to their social networking pages, more likely to increase the following base, as well as for a more informal platform for Audi to communicate with these people. These ad extensions come in the form of badges and buttons that link to these social network pages.

## CHAPTER 4. SOCIAL MEDIA

We mentioned before that your small business is the car, digital marketing is the engine, while SEO is the fuel that makes the engine operate smoothly. However, an engine and a sufficient amount of fuel are not the only things a car needs to run, in the same way that SEO isn't the only technique that you can use to promote your small business.

Before firing the engine, a car needs a battery to be able to start once you turn the key in the ignition. If you take the time to read about car parts, you will learn that the battery is responsible for creating a "spark", which is required to power the engine and the other electronic systems your car has.

In this case, your business can use social media to give your digital marketing strategies a certain spark. For some people, social media is what encouraged them to engage in digital marketing, in the same way that a car's battery also brings power to the engine.

Using social media is a good way to promote your company's products and services. It can also help you establish an online presence, in the same way that when you start the battery, the vehicle will emit a rumble that alerts people that your car will move soon.

Taking advantage of social media is a must nowadays if you want more room to reinforce your brand.



But before we can learn how to use social media to your advantage, we must define it first.

## WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

Basically, social media is about sending and receiving a message. It is communication and interaction through various platforms, usually depending on what's modern and relevant at the time. Before, social media involves just a pen and a piece of paper, but now, people interact using mobile phones.

The purpose of social media is simply to bring people and societies together. It also seeks to understand how people in a society behave toward each other when using these platforms for communication. There's no "definite" tool for social media because our technology is improved every day, and new tools are constantly being introduced that you can use to reach out to other people.

In the business sense, social media is an important factor for communicating with potential customers and stakeholders. Before computers and cellphones, businesspeople make use of newspapers, print advertisements, radio broadcasts, and television commercials to raise awareness for their brand.

Now that you have the Internet and other modern gadgets, you can engage in SMS marketing and email marketing, and use social networking sites to engage other people, as well as observe how your target customers react to your ads, marketing approach, and the like.

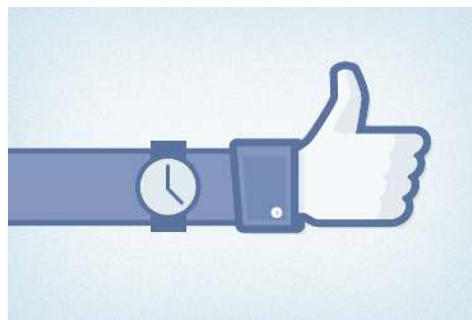


If you've read our article on [social media](#), you will know that there are seven types of social media, namely: social networks, blogs and microblogs, collaborative works, social news sites, content and media-sharing communities, and virtual social and game worlds. All of these types help you to socialize with other people using them.

Since we're talking about business, we will only be focusing on social networking sites. Social networks are the most popular platform for interaction today because they allow people from all walks of life and from all over the world to "meet" and talk with one another online.



[Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Google+](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Pinterest](#), [Instagram](#), and even [YouTube](#) are considered as social networks because they are platforms where people can create profiles, and then socialize with each other via these profiles about anything and everything. Most of these networks already allow companies to create business pages. If you haven't done so, feel free to create pages where you can promote your products and services, and showcase your brand.



### HOW CAN YOU BENEFIT?

Social networking sites are visited by millions of users daily. Facebook alone has over a billion active monthly users, and as a businessperson, you shouldn't ignore this large number of people who could become your customers someday.

This is why it's important that when you do create business pages on these social networks, you have to optimize your posts in such a way that they will be eye-catching. With these interesting pieces of content, your post will have a chance to go viral, which means more visibility online. That kind of mass visibility will then contribute to more traffic to your page, and a higher chance for conversion or brand building.

Another benefit that you can get from social media is that you are given a platform from which you can sell your products and/or promote your business. In [Google+, you can promote your company by posting statuses](#) that would serve as announcements for your products and services. You can also use your statuses as a means to tell the people in your groups about discounts and upcoming events.

On Pinterest, Instagram, and YouTube, you can upload and share photos and videos that are relevant to your business. You have the opportunity to produce pictures and videos that people won't be able to ignore. When you post these high-quality and interesting contents, your followers are more likely to share them on their other social networking pages.

On Facebook, you can create an official business page where you can encourage people to be your followers. The more followers you have, and the more interesting and high-quality the post, the better chance you have that your followers will like, comment on, and share these posts.

The result will be that your posts will be prominently displayed on your followers' profiles and walls. Thus, more people will see your posts, which would inspire them to go to your profile, and like your page. You will gain more followers, and when you post more beautiful content, don't be surprised if your followers would help you promote them.

The same is true with Twitter, where you can use your status updates to engage your followers. Since Twitter is more of a microblog, you should try hard to optimize your posts in such a way that they will stimulate the readers to reply, retweet them, and add them as their favorites.

Your social networking pages can also be linked to one another, and they can be displayed on your company website. By doing this, you encourage the people who visit your site to also go to your social networking pages.



Finally, social networking sites provide you with all that you need to promote your company. Aside from the business page where you can post everything that is related to your products and services, these company pages often feature tools that will help reinforce your brand. For example, there are tools that will help measure the traffic that goes in your page.

Most of these social networks allow you to make ads, which will be displayed within the site. You can also manage and test these ads. Of course, there's a fee for this, as you may have learned from PPC ads, but again, when you want your business to be successful, you have to be willing to invest.

## BEST PRACTICES

Once you've created a company page, you have a lot of work to do for this page to be able to compete with other company pages. Having that profile or page is not enough, as you will need to gain more followers first for your posts to go trending.

### Complete Your Page Information

The first thing you have to do would be to complete your page. Don't forget to put the most important details about your business, such as the name, the address, the contact details, and a display picture. Doing this makes sure that your followers have the information they need to find or contact you.

For brands, Buffer (shown below) has a great profile on Twitter that you can try to imitate. It shows all the important things based on their goals as a company.

**Buffer** @buffer

Buffer helps you share to Twitter, Facebook and more. We're a team of 17 spread all across the world. Oh and we're hiring, too! jobs.bufferapp.com :-)

San Francisco, CA  
bufferapp.com  
Joined October 2010

TWEETS 102K | PHOTOS/VIDEOS 1,278 | FOLLOWING 51.1K | FOLLOWERS 222K | FAVORITES 42K

**Buffer** @buffer · Jul 1  
We'd love to share our best social media tips with you! Free email updates, just a click away:  
Join our list to receive daily social media tips!

Who to follow: Mr. Marketology @mrrmarketology, Make Money Home Biz @Makemoneyhomebiz, Glen Gilmore #SocBiz @GlenGilmore

When your About page is complete, the next step is to adorn your page with high-quality and striking content. Optimize your status updates, pictures, and videos so that they will catch the attention of people. Do your best to engage your followers through your posts. For instance, you can ask questions about your products, or you can run contests to get people to participate and be more active on your page.

### Optimize Your Page's Contents for Your Target Audience

The means by which you can optimize the contents of your social pages depend on the social network you're using because each of these sites has its own algorithm and features for marketing. Twitter and Facebook use @ (mentions) and # (hashtags) to look for and engage people. Pinterest and Instagram focus more on the quality and look of pictures. YouTube factors your popularity by how much views your videos get.

Let's not forget that each of these social networks also cater to different demographics. Pinterest is mostly used by women, while Instagram is famous with young people. Facebook and Twitter have mixed users, while Google+ and [LinkedIn](#) are more popular with businesspeople and other professionals.

This is important to know because this knowledge will help you plan your marketing approach, in terms of how you can deliver products and services to your target audience. If your brand is about fashion and women's clothing, then you have a higher chance of getting customers by using Pinterest. If your priority now is to establish relationships with influential people to get connections for your business, LinkedIn is a good place to start.

### Add Followers

Once you feel that your page is fully optimized for business, the last step that you need to do is to gain followers. You can suggest to your friends and family members to like your business page, for starters. You can also use the search toolbar to look for and like other business pages that you think are relevant to the nature of your company. One of the easiest things to do in social networks is to add friends and become members of public pages or groups.



A quick tip, though: Instead of spending your time adding people you barely know, why not invest on ads and high-quality content to reel in people who have a certain interest in your company and its products? Let them come to you, so to speak, but you also have to be willing to follow them back once they follow you, like on Twitter. Promote a two-way relationship. Ads on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter will bring in a lot of targeted followers for you.

### Observe What the Experts Are Doing

Most big companies today are taking their marketing strategies online. And why not? Social media sites are populated by billions of people every day, so it's natural for companies to take advantage of tools that will reach this many people. The competition is now based on how effective your content marketing strategy is on how to appeal to these people, particularly to their target demographics.

The key is to find the best means for you to communicate with your followers, and then continuously engage them in discussions. You are also recommended to post high-quality posts that will catch the attention of your followers and their friends. You are hoping that your posts will be attractive enough that your followers will share them with other friends.

You can get inspiration on how you can do this by looking at what big-time companies are doing, which you can read [here](#).

You will also find that it's important to use the best platform for engaging your followers. For instance, Starbucks's Instagram account is enjoying over two million followers because the page is more follower-focused. If you look at the page, you will see that it is laden with Starbucks-related contents that were submitted by the followers. This is actually encouraged by Starbucks, and sometimes, the company will hold contests to determine the best of these follower-submitted contents.

Starbucks also uses a Twitter account to communicate with followers and to announce latest deals and news.





## HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

Pick a social network that you want to use as the platform to promote your business. It will help you greatly if you're already familiar, or if you've had experience in using, the network that you choose. For this example, let's choose Google+ because it is currently the fastest growing social network with over a million active users, and we've already tackled Facebook at the previous section.

So what you are going to do first is create a Google Account or Gmail address for your business. It has to be a Gmail account because this is required if you want to access all of Google's services. Now once you log in to your Gmail account, at the upper right corner, you will see a plus sign before your name: +Name. If you click on it, you will be directed to a page where you can create a Google+ account.

If you like, you can click on it and create a "personal" Google+ account for your company. Once you have your own, you should create a Google+ Business page for your business.

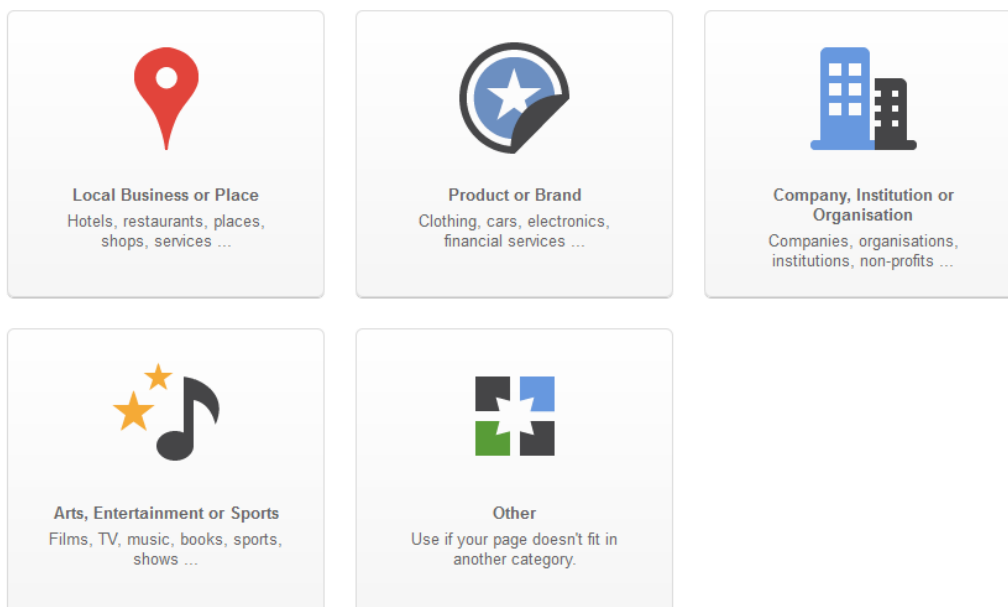
Do so by going to: <http://www.google.com/+business/>. Click on "Get your page".

## Get your business on Google for free

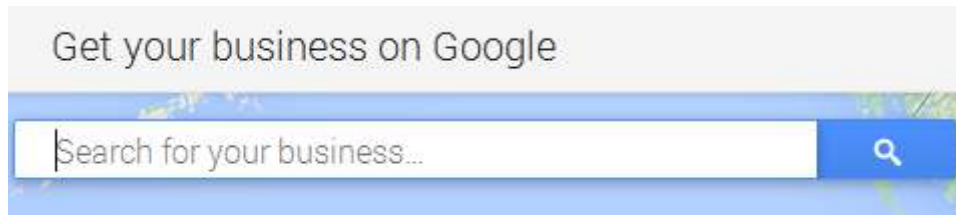
Your Google+ page connects you with customers, whether they're looking for you on Search, Maps, Google+ or mobile devices. Best of all, it's free. Really, we mean it.

Get your page

You will then need to select the purpose for your Google+ page from five categories:



Since you are going to use this for business, click on “Local Business or Place”. You will then be shown a map and a toolbar where you are required to search for your business.



This is to claim a listing, which will be very beneficial for your company, in terms of providing people the information they need about your store. If you can't find your business, you have the option to create a listing.

If you do create a new listing, you will then be required to fill out the information required to complete your profile, as seen below. As much as possible, complete all fields that are useful in bringing customers to your store, such as the company name, address, and phone number.

#### Enter your business details

Business name

Country / Region

Street address

Postcode

City

Province

Main business phone

Category

I deliver goods and services to my customers at their location – [Important information](#)

Submit

It's also very important to fill the field that asks for the category of your business. That way, even if your products and services are not included in your store's name, by classifying the nature of your business, people will still be able to look at your listing when they search for your products and location.

After this, what's left for you to do is to customize your profile to your liking, and don't forget your profile picture. You'll know when you've finished customizing the page when all the essential details are there. You can learn more about the importance of a [Google + listing here](#).



You should also promote your Google+ Business profile with your other social networking pages. Your website can also help by using the G+ badge. People can follow and plus you just by seeing that badge on your website.

You can also take advantage of Google+ tools to promote your business page, hosting Hangouts that can help your market, adding loyal followers to Circles where you can send them regular promotions, joining Communities relevant to your business, etc.

On a side note, though not related to Social Media "marketing" - [Google Authorship](#) is another best practice you have to apply to your site.

This will make sure that you are given the official ownership for the content you've created. It's a digital signature that prevents other people from duplicating your content and passing it off as their own. Plus, studies show that listings that use Google authorship are more likely to be clicked, as they are enhanced by rich snippets and by-lines.

Google applied a new update in June 2014 to remove the author photo from showing in their search results. All the other benefits are still there though so it's still very important.

So if you have a blog on your website, be sure to use your personal Google+ profile as the author. Then assign your Google+ Business page to be the publisher for your website.

That way, Google will know what the Google+ profile's and business page's relationship is with your website and to your brand.

## CHAPTER 5. OTHERS

When driving your car, you don't only rely on your fuel or on the condition of the engine for assurance that you get from Point A to Point B safely, right? You also have to keep the condition of the entire vehicle in mind.

Are your tires properly inflated? Are you carrying a spare tire? Is your brake working perfectly? Are you equipped with tools necessary for emergencies? All of these may be minor details, but you cannot deny that they are very important, especially in terms of smooth driving and safety.

You can also make sure that your vehicle is same from accidents with other drivers by using brake lights, signal lights, and the car horn. And again, though these parts have a crucial role when it comes to getting you from one place to another in one piece, many drivers fail to recognize their importance.



The same is true about these other marketing strategies that, unfortunately, many businesspeople take for granted. However, these are very effective when it comes to getting more exposure for your brand, as well as connecting with your target demographics. They also help draw attention to your company, which is always welcome.

## CLASSIFIED ADS



Many people who are yet to create their own business websites often rely on classified ads sites to promote their wares. Overseas, Craigslist is very popular, while here in the [Philippines](#), OLX (formerly Sulit) and AyosDito.ph are household names.

These classified ads sites allow you to create an account, and provide you with an outlet where you can sell your products and services. While doing so may not have as much impact as when you use your own website or social media accounts to promote your brand, classified ads sites are good for exposure.

Every time you post a listing, you are given space to write all the important information about your business. When doing so, don't forget NAP – name of your business, address of the store, and the phone number. If you can, you can also include a brief description of your store, and the link to your store.

With classified ads, your main aim is to make the most of the space that is given to you. Just let your creativity flow through you and decorate your page in such a way that visitors will be more encouraged to browse your other items. And don't forget to include your company's most important details.

Using these classified ads sites will definitely go a long way, especially while you're still on the road to creating a website. And they rank really well in the local search results.

If you are in the [Philippines](#), we created a post about your options when selling online [here](#).

## MEDIA BUYING



Media buying is characterized as the process of buying space where you can place your advertisements.

It involves a lot of time spent on market, competition, and customer research. It is concerned with the actual size, look, placement, and content of the advertisement.

When you say media buying, it involves all platforms for advertisement, from the Internet down to the usual print advertisements.

For this part, we will specifically refer to online media buying as offline media buying has a different set of rules you will abide by.

Online media buying basically is sourcing for blogs and sites where your target audience is likely to go to. If you want to promote your latest products for parents, then looking for parenting forums and blogs will be the best choices for you to target. If the site already has traffic, they usually have a media kit you can ask for where they list their ad prices.

The key to success lies in optimizing the advertisement and making sure that the ad appears at an optimal time and place.

How do you know if you're doing media buying right? First of all, you need to know your target audience. Find what your competitors are doing. Test what images, colors and tag lines will appeal to them in order for them to click on your ad.

After doing your research, it's now time for you to come up with a strategy about how you want your ad to look like or be presented. You can test your ads by focus groups (for traditional marketing techniques) or by monitoring how an ad will fare online. (TIP: Use Google's Display Network to target a huge number of websites instantly.)

Remember that testing ads online is generally low cost, so you can be sure that you won't have anything to lose by taking the extra time and effort for testing.

## ONLINE REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

Basically, as the name states, this process is all about monitoring and managing your business's online reputation. Think of this as the public relations sector of your small company. This department is responsible for handling customers.

Online reputation management is all about connecting with other people, and knowing how these people perceive your company. This also provides you with the platform to talk about any issues and concerns that people may have about your brand. You can also take the opportunity to ask past customers to provide you with feedback about your products and services. Feedback is essential for improvement.

Another issue that online reputation management is responsible for is handling negative comments and controversies that affect the credibility of your company. If your business is doing well, you can expect some of your competitors to play dirty, and do everything they can to taint your reputation, like made-up reviews and reporting you on business review sites.



Online reputation also helps prevent cybersquatting, which is an act wherein a person or an organization buys domain names, then sells them to companies that might need that domain name.

For example, your business name is "Website", and you want to register your domain name as [www.website.com](http://www.website.com), but then you find that someone's already taken that name, though he might not be using the website at all.

The owner would then sell that domain name to you for a higher price. If you don't pay, you won't get the domain name. That is cybersquatting.

Cybersquatting is prevented by registering the domain name for a company early, so nobody can "steal" it.

## SMS MARKETING



SMS Marketing is simply marketing using SMS messages, or texts. It's probably the most popular [mobile marketing strategy](#) and usually, the cheapest. This is the process wherein you send texts about your company, your products and services, promos, upcoming events, etc. to the person who gave you permission to send these advertisements.

SMS marketing is still very common today, and it's an effective means to communicate with your target audience. Most people nowadays have mobile phones, and whether they use ordinary cellphones, smartphones, or tablets, each of them can send and receive SMS messages. This spells out a wider audience where you can get customers.

The most important thing you need to engage in SMS marketing is the permission of the people you're going to send the messages to. If you haven't received permission, and you keep on sending your promotions to them, you might offend them, losing all hope for you to connect with these people.

Content of the SMS messages is very important. Aside from enticing people with good deals and promos, why not use the platform to get them to know your brand better? It's also essential that your texts have the right, friendly tone to keep the recipients engaged and encourage them to reply.

[Here](#) are some examples of the companies that use SMS marketing to encourage people to subscribe to a newsletter or follow their websites and other pages.



## APPS MARKETING

Aside from SMS marketing, you can also take advantage of Apps Marketing for people who use smartphones and certain kinds of mobile phones.

One of the ways that you can make use of apps to aid you in marketing is by using messaging applications on your smartphone to reach people who are using the same applications. Most of them, like Viber, WhatsApp, and WeChat, require an Internet connection to be able to make calls and send messages.

Some messaging applications also have built-in features that can be useful for advertising. A good feature of WeChat is that you can use it to locate other WeChat users nearby. WhatsApp, on the other hand, is now being adopted and used in local neighbourhood marketing campaigns. Obviously, these apps will be dependent on the number of people that use them in your area.

Again, before you can communicate with people, you need to get their permissions first so as not to offend them.

Another way of app marketing is by creating an app for your business. This has proven to be a really great way of getting customers to remember your business, especially if it makes things more convenient for them.

Just a side note, promoting your app will be a different matter. But to be brief, you will need a combination of traditional internet marketing, and knowledge of how Google's PlayStore and Apple's AppStore ranks apps in their search results.



## EMAIL MARKETING



As the name says, [email marketing](#) is about advertising through email. Email marketing has plenty of meanings:

1. It is the process of sending emails with a commercial message or any form of advertisement to a person or a group of people;
2. It is the process of sending emails to raise awareness of the recipient about your brand. The context of the message doesn't necessarily have to be promotional. The purpose is more on acquiring customer loyalty and trust; and
3. It is the process of sending emails to reach more customers and encourage them to get to know your company better.

Of course, before you can start your email marketing campaign, you want to first plan a strategy that will be appealing to your target recipients.

The first thing you have to do is get the permission from people that you will be sending the emails to. This is a crucial step. If you don't ask for their permission, and still frequently send them emails about your company and your products, your messages will appear as Spam, and people won't think twice to move your messages to the trash bin.

So how do you get the permission of these people? You can post subscription options on your web page so that you know that when people register, they are doing so at their own will.

As always, you need to optimize these subscription features so that they will catch the attention of your page visitors. It's recommended that you clearly state the benefits that they will get when they subscribe.

# SUBSCRIBE?

Yes Please   
No Thanks



One of your goals with email marketing is to make sure that when people opt to receive your emails, these messages will not land on the Spam folder. You can do this by getting your email address white-listed, which can be done by encouraging your recipients to add your email address in their Contacts.

But how do you encourage people to add you to their contact lists? Well, in this case, you need to be creative. Some websites will just add this request with the initial email that is sent to the person once he subscribes to your email messages.

Speaking of initial emails, one of the most important things that you should have with email marketing is an autoresponder service.

Autoresponder services will save you a lot of time and effort when it comes to sending emails to recipients at specific times. It will minimise your chances of landing in a client's spam-box and it will keep them engaged.

You can also use auto responders to schedule messages for upcoming events and when offering seasonal deals and discounts.



However, it will have a minimal cost to be able to use a program or a service (like Aweber, GetResponse, MailChimp and a lot of others) that will help you create, manage, and test these forms and track email statistics.

Still, if investing on these will help you engage potential customers, then the risk is worth it and you can make the money back almost immediately if you build a responsive email list.



There's also a need for you to optimize your autoresponders, in terms of the subject line of the email and the look and context of the content that will be on the message.

With emails, you are given the freedom to be as creative as you like with your messages. You can put pictures, videos, and links, if you wish, but it's important to be aware that your message should be easily read using various platforms, so keeping it simple works.

Once you've created your auto responder messages or newsletters, before putting them into operation, remember to test them first. Sending a bad email might just make the recipient lose trust in your brand.

The programs and services that you use to create and edit your auto responder messages and newsletters, often give reports on how your emails are performing.

The reports usually have statistics that shows the messages that are often opened, and the links in the message that are clicked.

From this report, you will see what kind of emails appeal to the recipients, giving you an idea on how to construct your next emails to increase the click-through rate and the traffic driven to your page, and then measure the chance for conversion rates.

As a company, we love using email marketing for the sites we work on. It's a great way to retain customers, re-engage with them, promote content and many more. It's simply the most important tool when we do [blogging](#) and content marketing.

For some inspiration, you can look at household brands that use email marketing strategies [here](#). Amazon is one of these companies that use what the customers write in the subscription form to determine what kinds of emails they would want to receive and read.

## CONCLUSION

Your business is the vehicle that will get you from Point A to Point B, where the former is where you currently are, and the latter is where you want to go. Before you can drive your car, you have to make sure that it is perfectly conditioned to take you where you need to be. You check if the engine is clean and properly oiled, if it has enough fuel, if the gas pedals aren't yet worn out, if the battery is working alright, and if your signal lights and horn are fine.

If you fail to check these things before driving your car, you won't be sure if you can go to your destination in one go, or maybe in one piece. As a driver, you need to know the essential functions of your car parts to be able to appreciate how important they are, as well as how to use and maintain them properly.

With the right knowledge, you'll be able to pinpoint the problem when something goes wrong. The same is true for your [business marketing](#) strategy. You first have to understand what one strategy does and what it's all about before you can properly use it to your advantage.



In the same way, you learned that as the engine, digital marketing will jumpstart your business on its way toward its goals. Not only that, but while it is running, it will continually provide the vehicle with the energy to keep it moving. It really is the prime mover.

Digital marketing will tap into the true potential of your company by showing you the many ways by which you can promote your products and services and raise awareness for your brand. If your goal is to reach a national status in terms of popularity, then digital marketing will help you achieve that goal by increasing your visibility online, which is home to billions of netizens.

Your digital marketing strategies will not be complete without SEO, or search engine optimization, in the same way that the engine won't be useful without fuel from which it will convert energy. SEO helps in optimizing your websites from the inside out in such a way as to improve your visibility on the SERPs. Another important contribution of SEO that many fail to realize lies in pull marketing, in which you help people find you and information about you.

How is SEO connected with pull marketing? Remember that SEO prioritizes on optimizing the content of your websites. If you have high-quality contents that are useful to what a person is searching for, not only will your page be given a higher ranking on the SERPs, but you will also be able to effortlessly attract that person and make him stay on your page, which could then lead to conversion. This is what digital marketing is about: pulling people in, and one of the ways by which you can do that is investing in SEO.



Once you've planned your digital marketing strategies and applied your SEO techniques, you will find your vehicle/small business will start to move. As with any new driver, your speed would still be slow, even with little to no traffic. You are still getting used to the road, in the same way that you are still familiarizing yourself with the changes that digital marketing and SEO bring.

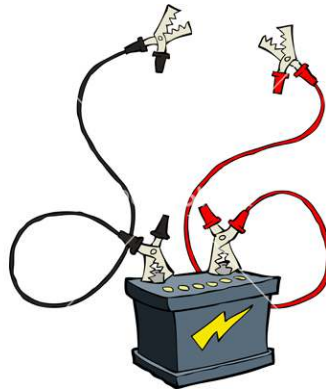
It could take a long time before you feel any improvement on your business, but if you want to go faster, you can use PPC ads, or pay-per-click ads, to give you an edge in visibility. This is like the first time you push on the gas pedal. You could be scared because you're not used to the speed, and you might be tempted to push on your brakes quite often. But sooner or later, you will get used to it, and you will be yearning to drive with the pedal to the metal at all times.



When you use PPC ads, it is the same as stepping hard on the gas pedal because these ads can help drive you to the very top of the search engine results pages, above

the natural traffic. Of course, as you learned from our PPC chapter, landing that coveted spot on the SERPs takes more than just money. You will also need to apply everything you learned about SEO to optimize your ad and the keywords that it will use.

Moving on to social media, which we likened to the battery that also allows the car to run, though in different aspects.



The battery gives life to other electronic parts of the car, such as the air conditioner and the radio. More importantly, the battery also starts up the engine, which we know is useful to make the car move. It does this by creating a spark that would begin the combustion process. It connects everything together.

That is basically what the role of social media is: It creates a spark that will start the engine, as well as the other electronic parts of your car. In this case, social media could be the starting point of your digital marketing. If you don't yet have an official website for your business, you can begin by creating business pages on social networking sites, and build your brand from there.

Social media is really useful for building an online presence, and simply promoting your products and services. However, if you want to sell your products and services, it's recommended that you invest on your own website where you can create a means for people to buy using plenty of payment options. After you've built up your brand, it becomes easier for you to drive towards your goal.

Those are the biggest parts of digital marketing but they aren't the only important things that can help you reach your destination.

Like in business, there are so many other things that will help you attain your business goals, and these include: classified ads sites, online media buying, online management reputation, SMS marketing, apps marketing, and email marketing. There are many others, and all of these parts work together to move you forward.

On the other hand, don't do digital marketing for the sake of being able to say that you are doing digital marketing. Be all in even if you already have an offline marketing campaign that is running. They can actually work really well together.

Before, we talked about only looking at your competitors as a benchmark, and this is a good idea if you are still at that stage where you are planning your goals and strategies. It is always good to learn from the examples of others.

But sooner or later, if you have been doing your marketing strategies correctly, there will come a point when these benchmarks would become very real threats to your business. They are your competitors, after all, so it would be natural for them to race you to the top and maintain that position.

So you have to be ready to compete, and you'll know when you're ready when you've conditioned your car and when you have clear goals in mind, most especially if success is what drives you.



As mentioned before, starting a business is not an easy feat, but let's add that engaging in digital marketing practices is even harder. It's not enough to do it, but you also have to have that passion and drive to see your marketing endeavours to succeed.

It could be the key to your future, after all, so why not invest whole-heartedly to make it successful? There's really no reason why you shouldn't.



So what are you waiting for? Grab your keys, get in the car, start your engine, and drive.





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## A Digital Marketing Agency

**Note:**

This eBook was written for business owners and not for advanced marketers. You will notice that some key terms are different from the usual marketing lingo and a lot of technical terms were omitted.

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