

Skills4Retail
Building sustainable growth

INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL MARKETING

Lect. univ. dr. Ștefan-Alexandru CATANĂ

UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are, however, those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Co-funded by the European Union

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. WHAT IS DIGITAL MARKETING?
- 2. WHY SHOULD WE USE DIGITAL MARKETING?
- 3. THE EVOLUTION OF DIGITAL MARKETING AND ITS IMPORTANCE
- 4. DIGITAL MARKETING CHANNELS
- 5. DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES
- 6. ASSIGNMENTS

Co-funded by the European Union

1. WHAT IS DIGITAL MARKETING?

- Digital marketing is considered "the marketing of products or services using **digital technologies**, primarily on the internet, but also including **mobile phones**, **display advertising**, and **any other digital medium**" (Desai, 2019).
- Digital marketing refers to the **use of online channels and platforms to promote products and services.**
- It encompasses a wide range of activities such as **social media advertising, search engine optimization (SEO), email marketing, and paid advertising (PPC).**
- It is a **dynamic process** that requires customized strategies tailored to the online behavior of consumers.

Co-funded by the European Union

2. WHY SHOULD WE USE DIGITAL MARKETING?

- **Precise targeting:** It allows for specific audience segmentation and targeting based on demographic, behavioral, and geographic data.
- **Performance measurement:** It provides the ability to monitor and measure the impact of campaigns in real time.
- **Lower costs:** Compared to traditional marketing, digital marketing can be more cost-effective, offering a higher ROI (return on investment).
- **Direct interaction with customers:** Digital channels enable fast and efficient two-way communication between brands and consumers.

Co-funded by the European Union

3. THE EVOLUTION OF DIGITAL MARKETING AND ITS IMPORTANCE

- In the contemporary world, **technology** has become increasingly important. As a result, we live in times where the theme of **digitalization** is a transformative force, reshaping our daily lives and fundamentally changing the way we interact, work, and perceive the world around us. Thus, the concept of **digital marketing** has emerged as an indispensable companion for modern business strategies (Catană & Barbu, 2024).
- **Digital marketing is a current field that has its origins at the beginning of the last decade of the 20th century**, with the development of the Internet and the World Wide Web platform, within the context of the information society (Ayhan, 2017).

Co-funded by the European Union

3. THE EVOLUTION OF DIGITAL MARKETING AND ITS IMPORTANCE (2)

- Over time, digital marketing has evolved from the simple interaction of customers with a company's or product's website to the exploitation of modern digital technologies, such as (Dwivedi et al., 2021):
  - **digital devices and platforms** (e.g., Internet of Things, Facebook, Instagram, Google, YouTube etc.),
  - **digital media** (e.g., email marketing, search engines, etc.),
  - **digital data** (e.g., audience profile information),
  - **digital technology** (e.g., chatbot).
- **Digital marketing is influenced by factors such as:** audiences, platforms, technologies used, quality content, expenses, and interactions (Balaji, 2021).

Co-funded by the European Union

4. DIGITAL MARKETING CHANNELS



Co-funded by the European Union

4. DIGITAL MARKETING CHANNELS (2)

- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)** – the process of improving a website to increase its visibility on search engines (Google, Microsoft Bing, etc.) whenever people search for: products you sell, services you provide, or information on topics in which you have in-depth knowledge and/or experience (Search Engine Land, 2024).
- **Social Media Marketing (SMM)** – using social networks to build a company's brand, increase sales, and generate website traffic. In addition to providing companies a way to interact with existing customers and reach new ones, SMM offers specially designed data analytics, allowing marketers to track the results of their efforts and identify even more ways to engage (Hayes, 2024).
- **Content Marketing** – a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience (Content Marketing Institute, 2024).

Co-funded by the European Union

4. DIGITAL MARKETING CHANNELS (3)

- **Affiliate Marketing** – an advertising model in which a company compensates third parties for generating traffic or directing users to the company's products and services. The third parties are affiliates, and the commission motivates them to find ways to promote the company (The Investopedia Team, 2024).
- **Native Advertising** – a form of paid advertising where ads match the look, feel, and function of the media format in which they appear. They blend "natively" and seamlessly into the webpage. Unlike banner or graphic ads, native ads don’t really look like ads, so they don't disrupt the user’s interaction with the page (Outbrain, 2024).
- **Marketing Automation** – a type of software that allows companies to effectively target customers with automated marketing messages across channels, including email, websites, social media, and text messages to generate leads. This technology is a segment of customer relationship management (CRM) and is typically used by marketing departments to eliminate repetitive tasks from staff workflows and increase overall marketing efficiency (Fluckinger, 2024).

Co-funded by the European Union

4. DIGITAL MARKETING CHANNELS (4)

- **Pay-Per-Click (PPC)** – a form of advertising where ads are displayed on a website or search engine, and payment is made for advertising based on the number of users who click on that link. The main benefit of PPC is that you only pay for qualified leads—people who are likely to be interested in purchasing your product—and do not pay for ads shown to individuals who browse without noticing them (Coursera, 2023).
- **Email Marketing** – a form of marketing that can make clients on your email list aware of new products, discounts, and other services. It can also be a softer sale to educate your audience about the value of your brand or to keep them engaged between purchases (Intuit, 2024).
- **Inbound Marketing** – a digital marketing method that helps attract customers by creating valuable content and experiences that resonate with the audience. It prioritizes content creation and sharing information as a way to reach customers, rather than relying solely on advertisements. It can help create an engaging environment for customers by providing educational tools, interactive media, or communication opportunities in addition to familiar products (Amazon Ads, 2024).
- **Online Public Relations** – the activity of public relations communicators through available online communication channels (and also communication tools). In addition to the online pages of traditional media, these channels include social media, blogs, and websites (Smart PR, 2024).

Co-funded by the European Union

5. DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES

- **A digital marketing strategy** is a comprehensive plan that outlines how an organization will use digital channels to achieve its marketing objectives.

- The digital marketing strategy is crucial as it provides a **roadmap for businesses to connect with their target audience, generate leads, increase brand awareness, and drive conversions in the online space.**

Co-funded by
the European Union

5. DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES (2)

- 5.1. Understanding business objectives
- 5.2. Defining the target audience
- 5.3. Creating buyer personas
- 5.4. Setting SMART goals
- 5.5. Digital marketing tactics
- 5.6. Budget allocation
- 5.7. Creating an action plan
- 5.8. Measuring and monitoring activities
- 5.9. Optimizing activities
- 5.10. Data evaluation and analysis

Co-funded by
the European Union

5.1. UNDERSTANDING BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

- Setting clear business objectives is essential as it **provides direction for all marketing efforts** and ensures alignment with the organization's overall goals and vision.
- Common business objectives include **increasing sales revenue, expanding market share, improving brand visibility and reputation, and enhancing customer loyalty and retention.**
- **Digital marketing objectives should be closely aligned with global business goals** to ensure that marketing efforts directly contribute to the organization's success.

Co-funded by the European Union

5.1. UNDERSTANDING BUSINESS OBJECTIVES (2)

- **Example: Increasing revenue by 20% in the next year.**
  - **Motivation:** Increasing revenue is a common objective for many companies, reflecting the desire to improve financial performance and strengthen market position.
  - **Relevance to digital marketing:** This objective can be supported through various digital marketing tactics, such as search engine optimization to increase online visibility, social media advertising to attract new customers, and content strategies to educate and engage the audience.
  - **Measurability:** Revenue can be measured in financial terms and tracked over time to evaluate progress toward the goal.
  - **Resource acquisition:** To achieve this objective, additional resources may be required in terms of marketing budget, team, and technological tools.
  - **Deadline:** The objective has a one-year fiscal timeline, providing clarity and guidance for digital marketing efforts throughout the period.

Co-funded by the European Union

5.2. DEFINING THE TARGET AUDIENCE

- **Understanding the target audience** is essential as it enables companies to create personalized and relevant marketing campaigns that resonate with the needs, preferences, and behaviors of their potential customers.

Co-funded by
the European Union

5.3. CREATING BUYER PERSONAS

- **Buyer personas** are fictional representations of ideal customers based on market research and real data. They include demographic information, goals, preferences, and purchasing behaviors.
- **Example:**
  - **Name:** Aida
  - **Age:** 30 y.o.
  - **Occupation:** Surgeon
  - **Objectives:** Increasing brand awareness
  - **Personal interests:** Travel, Technology
  - **Preferred communication channels:** social media, e-mail

Co-funded by the European Union

5.4. SETTING SMART GOALS

- **S**pecific – clearly defined and focused
- **M**easurable – quantifiable and trackable
- **A**ttainable - realistic and achievable
- **R**elevant – aligned with business objectives
- **T**ime – with deadlines

- ***Examples:***
  - ***1. Increasing website traffic by 25% within six months.***
  - ***2. Achieving a 5% conversion rate in email marketing campaigns by the end of the month.***

Co-funded by
the European Union

5.5. DIGITAL MARKETING TACTICS

- There are various digital marketing channels and tactics available to companies.
- **Choosing tactics that align with business objectives and the characteristics of the target audience is crucial.**
- It is important to adopt an integrated marketing approach that uses multiple tactics for the greatest impact.

Co-funded by the European Union

5.6. BUDGET ALLOCATION

- **Budgeting and resource allocation** are crucial for the efficient distribution of resources and maximizing return on investment (ROI).

Co-funded by
the European Union

5.7. CREATING AN ACTION PLAN

- **Key elements of an action plan** include:
  - setting objectives,
  - defining tasks,
  - assigning responsabilities,
  - establishing deadlines.

- Setting realistic milestones to guide implementation and track progress.
- Allocating tasks and responsibilities to team members based on their skills, expertise, and availability.

Co-funded by the European Union

5.8. MEASURING AND MONITORING ACTIVITIES

- Monitoring campaign performance is essential for **evaluating effectiveness, identifying areas for improvement, and making data-driven decisions.**
- **Measurement tools:** Google Analytics, Facebook Insights, etc.

- ***Examples of KPIs:*** *website traffic, conversion rates, click-through rates, and return on ad spend (ROAS).*

Co-funded by
the European Union

5.9. OPTIMIZING ACTIVITIES

- **Continuous optimization** involves testing, analyzing results, and making adjustments to improve campaign performance over time.

- **A/B testing** allows marketers to compare different versions of a campaign element to determine which performs better and optimize accordingly.

- **Agility and responsiveness to market changes**, consumer behavior, and industry trends are key to maintaining campaign effectiveness.

Co-funded by the European Union

5.10. DATA EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS

- **Evaluation** is essential to assess the success of digital marketing efforts, identify strengths and weaknesses, and establish future strategies.

- **Data analysis** provides insights, trends, and patterns that can inform decision-making and refine strategy.

- **Compiling findings into comprehensive reports** with clear visuals, key metrics, analyses, and recommendations for stakeholders is crucial for effective communication and strategic planning.

Co-funded by the European Union

6. ASSIGNMENTS

- **1. The company's audit regarding its promotion on social media.**
- **Instructions:**
  - 1. Choose a company with a significant social media presence.
  - 2. Evaluate the company's social media profiles (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, TikTok) in terms of content quality, engagement levels, follower demographics, posting frequency, and consistency.
  - 3. Identify strengths and weaknesses in the company's social media strategy.
  - 4. Provide recommendations for improving the company's social media presence and increasing engagement.

Co-funded by the European Union

6. ASSIGNMENTS (2)

- **2. Perform a competitive analysis for a chosen company**
- **Instructions:**
  - 1. Select a company that operates in the same industry or niche as the one you have chosen.
  - 2. Search for and identify information about the competitor’s digital marketing strategies, including their website, social media presence, content marketing efforts, email marketing campaigns, and paid advertising activities.
  - 3. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the competitor in comparison to the chosen business, focusing on aspects such as brand positioning, audience engagement, content quality, and overall online visibility.
  - 4. Identify opportunities and threats presented by the competitor’s digital marketing tactics and think of potential strategies to differentiate your business and gain a competitive advantage.

Co-funded by the European Union

REFERENCES

1. Alexander, L., The Who, What, Why, & How of Digital Marketing [online] Available at: https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/what-is-digital-marketing, last accessed 2024/01/15.
2. Amazon Ads, Inbound marketing [online] Available at: https://advertising.amazon.com/library/guides/inbound-marketing, last accessed 2024/04/23.
3. Ayhan, B.: Digitalization and Society. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH (2017).
4. Balaji, K.: Digital Marketing - A Boost to Today's Businesses. In: Second National Virtual Conference on Recent Advances in Technology & Engineering, pp. 1046-1049, Chittoor: Vemu Institute of Technology (2021).
5. Catană, Ș-A., Barbu A., A Systematic Literature Review of Trends in Digital Marketing Research in Romania (to be published).
6. Content Marketing Institute, What Is Content Marketing? [online] Available at: https://contentmarketinginstitute.com/what-is-content-marketing/, last accessed 2024/04/23.
7. Coursera, What Is Pay-Per-Click (PPC)? [online] Available at: https://www.coursera.org/articles/what-is-pay-per-click?utm_medium=sem&utm_source=gg&utm_campaign=B2C_EMEA_google-cybersecurity_google_FTCOF_professional-certificates_country-multi-pmax-braze-ftp-180d_coursera-non-mdf&campaignid=20858198818&adgroupid=&device=c&keyword=&matchtype=&network=x&devicemodel=&adposition=&creativeid=&hide_mobile_promo&gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjwuJ2xBhA3EiwAMVjkVNkF2DUThOyfzfmZKezktj3sI8BTHwJInLzphhmtmll3CONQqW0ZNRoCSm0QAvD_BwE, last accessed 2024/04/23.
8. Desai, V.: Digital Marketing: A Review. International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development, 196-200 (2019).

Co-funded by the European Union

REFERENCES (2)

9. Dwivedi, Y., Ismagilova, E., Hughes, D., Carlson, J., Filieri, R., Jacobson, J., Jain, V., Karjaluoto, Kefi, H., Krishen, A.S., Kumar, V., Rhman, M.M., Raman, R., Rauschnabel, P.A., Rowley, J., Salo, J., Tran, G.A., Wang, Y.: Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research: Perspectives and research propositions. International Journal of Information Management, 102168 (2021).
10. Fluckinger, D., What is marketing automation? [online] Available at: https://www.techtarget.com/searchcustomerexperience/definition/marketing-automation, last accessed 2024/04/23.
11. Hayes, A., Social Media Marketing (SMM): What It Is, How It Works, Pros and Cons [online] Available at: https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/social-media-marketing-smm.asp, last accessed 2024/04/23.
12. Intuit, Email Marketing [online] Available at: https://mailchimp.com/marketing-glossary/email-marketing/, last accessed 2024/04/23.
13. Outbrain, Native Advertising: The Smarter Way [online] Available at: https://www.outbrain.com/native-advertising/, last accessed 2024/04/23.
14. Search Engine Land, What Is SEO – Search Engine Optimization? [online] Available at: https://searchengineland.com/guide/what-is-seo, last accessed 2024/04/23.
15. Smart PR, What is online PR? [online] Available at: https://www.smart-pr.de/en/what-we-do/online-pr/what-is-online-pr/, last accessed 2024/04/23.
16. The Investopedia Team, Affiliate Marketer: Definition, Examples, and How to Get Started [online] Available at: https://www.investopedia.com/terms/a/affiliate-marketing.asp, last accessed 2024/04/23.

Co-funded by the European Union



Co-funded by
the European Union