

KEO Marketing MARKETER'S GUIDE



5 KEYS TO HIRING A DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCY



Insight
Selling

EDUCATION MARKETING



Inbound
Marketing

LEAD GENERATION



Outbound
Marketing

ACCOUNT BASED MARKETING



Content
Marketing

MOBILE • LOCAL • SOCIAL



Marketing
Automation

LEAD NURTURING

5 KEYS TO HIRING A DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCY

The digital marketing world is constantly changing due to the emergence of new trends and technologies that are fundamentally changing the way brands reach out to potential customers. This changing landscape is forcing all players to step outside their comfort zone and embrace new methods and strategies in order to attract high quality leads.

What is digital marketing? Briefly, “digital marketing” is an umbrella term for the marketing of products or services using digital technologies, primarily on the Internet but also including mobile phones, wearable technology and any other digital media.

Digital marketing activities include online channels such as search engine optimization (SEO) content marketing and social media marketing, collectively included in Inbound Marketing, as well as search engine marketing (SEM), influencer marketing, display advertising, e-commerce and more. It can also extend to non-Internet channels that provide digital media, such as mobile phones and text messages (SMS).

Because of the wide diversity of channels and methods, finding the right digital marketing agency is critical to meeting your goals and ensuring your digital marketing budget is invested to its maximum benefit. To help you make a decision, we have created a list of items to look for when you are considering hiring a digital marketing agency.



Client Focus



Current Industry
Expertise



Relevant
Experience



Wide Range of
Services



Satisfied
Clients



1. CLIENT FOCUS

The best digital marketing agency focuses on you and your customers first. You have a lot of business issues that you need to manage: the care and building of your brand, your online reputation, effective lead generation and great customer service, all of which delivers your brand message of quality and leadership. An effective digital marketing agency is aware of that. The best agency will not reel off their list of services at the first meeting but instead will spend significant time asking questions about you; your company, your business goals and objectives, your marketing goals, what digital marketing you have engaged with so far and so forth.

They will ask questions, or better yet, give you insight from their own research such as:

- What is the current state of the business?
- What are your 12 and 24 month business and marketing goals?
- What digital marketing have you engaged with so far and how has it worked?
- In which areas of digital marketing do you feel you need to strengthen your presence?
- What areas of digital marketing are your competitors moving into that you would like to address?
- Do you have any particular areas of focus such as lead generation or brand development?

An effective digital marketing agency wants to understand your business from a business perspective. This is important because digital marketing is composed of marketing channels that can be measured, adapted and adjusted on-the-fly to fit your needs. Because of this, the agency will want to know exactly how you are building your business so that you and they can work together to achieve the best business results possible for you. So before you decide on an agency, make sure they are focused on you and your customers.

2. CURRENT INDUSTRY EXPERTISE

Digital marketing is a fluid and constantly-changing environment. Social media service providers such as LinkedIn or Twitter upgrade their methods and technology regularly. Google search algorithms are updated more than 500 times per year which can impact a website's ranking. This means the strategies for digital marketing must be constantly examined, re-evaluated and adapted in partnership with best practices that tend to stand the test of time.



Google updates their search algorithm more than 500 times per year. **On average, four to seven of these updates are considered “major”.**

For example, according to Moz.com's [Google Algorithm Change History](#), Google updates their search algorithm with a major update an average of four to seven times per year. Considering that many of these updates can have a significant impact on a website's ranking, it is important that the marketing agency is aware of the updates and is capable of recommending changes to meet it.



An effective digital marketing agency stays on top of the current marketing trends at all times. Their employees make it a point to be aware of changes when they happen and make changes to strategy and tactics in order to optimize the results of their campaigns.

The agency will constantly be testing how these industry changes impact performance of campaigns. In addition, the agency will proactively, where possible, contact you when a major change is coming (or happens) in the industry that will require a re-evaluation of your strategies.

What must they be aware of? Here are just a few items:

- Search engine optimization (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM) and the factors that influence the results.
- Inbound marketing; the techniques and influencing factors.
- Social media marketing tools and analytics.
- Mobile marketing; both responsive website design and advertising on mobile devices.
- Influencer marketing; who your industry leaders are and how they will work with you.

SEO and SEM change constantly. Inbound marketing through content and outreach is a dynamic process. Mobile marketing is evolving every day. Video marketing is growing and more players are entering the market space. An effective digital marketing agency is on top of all of this and will direct you to the tools and techniques that will help you the most, not just the most recent fad.

3. RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Consider the experience level of the agency. You want to understand how much real-world, hands-on, digital marketing experience they have.

This is more important than some people realize. Because of the ease of access to today's technologies, there are entrepreneurs who will start a "social media agency" or "digital marketing agency" but will have little experience actually leading and managing those services. They are, basically, giving themselves on-the-job training and they are using you and your budget as the experimental subject. Effective use of your marketing budget is too important for that. A good digital marketing campaign integrates many different techniques and technologies to achieve the final result. A great digital marketing team will have successful experience with those channels and technologies. You want your budget utilized efficiently and your results optimized, so working with someone who only solely has experience building websites, for example, will not benefit you if you are looking for a lead generation program.

Examine the company for employees with several years of experience in social media development, search engine optimization, website building, online brand management and analytics. If they have previous experience in "traditional marketing" such as print advertising, so much the better. The 'old' techniques bring with them an understanding of market segmentation, response rates, conversion rates and media influencing that can translate into the digital world. Make sure that the agency you are considering has experience in the types of marketing that are important to you.



4. WIDE RANGE OF SERVICES

An effective digital marketing agency has a wide offering of services that are focused on specific categories of marketing. For example:



Social Media

Growing the social community with strategies such as building social networks, creating mobile networks and showing thought leadership in blogs, forums and social communities.



Search Marketing

Search engine optimization (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM) and local search advertising.



Influencer Marketing

Outreach and partnering with industry leaders and influencers in order to access their networks and tap into their earned credibility.



Content Marketing

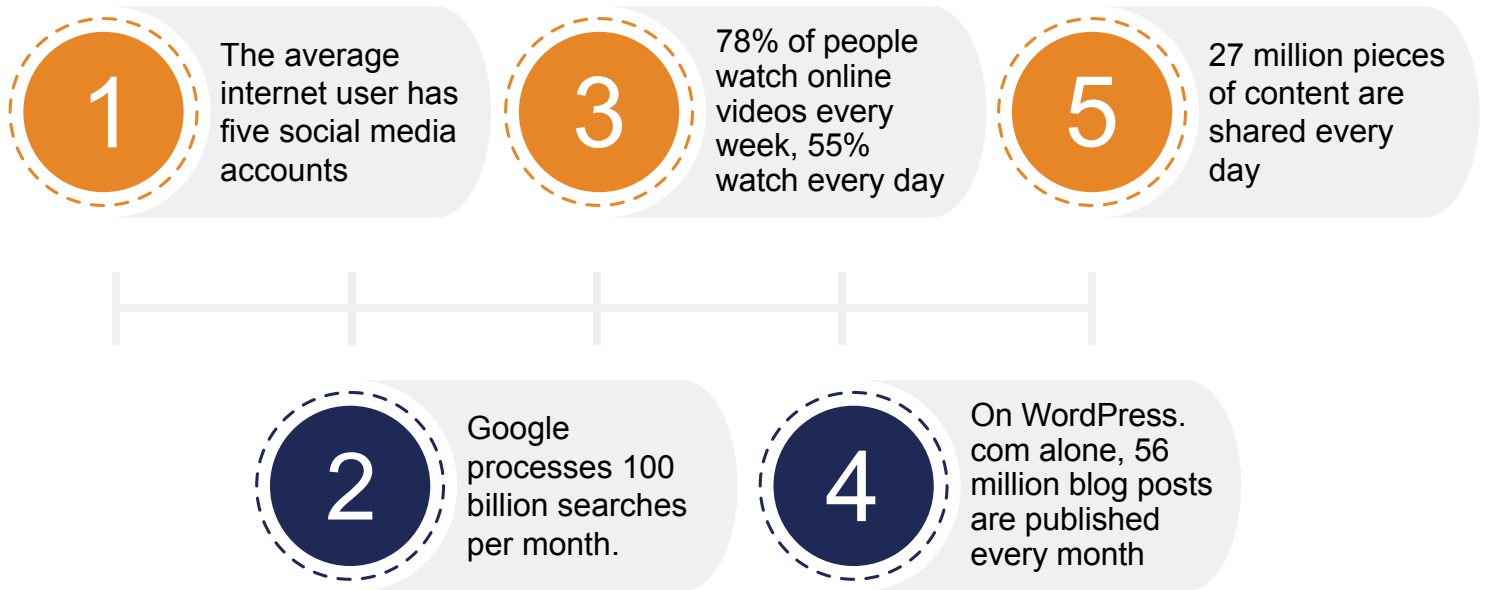
Developing engaging content such as thought leadership pieces, blog posts, web pages and articles in order to attract potential clients and build brand credibility.



B2B Marketing

If your business is B2B focused, experience building a strong B2B marketing and sales channel through lead generation, lead nurturing, marketing automation and sales support.

The reason for the necessity of a wide range of services is that digital marketing is an integrated function. Prospects online are not connected to only one service. They access and utilize many different online sites including search engines, social media and news sites. Here are a few statistics according to BrandWatch.com:





When the marketing agency offers a wide range of services their department experts can meet, discuss and combine strategies in order to create an integrated campaign whose total results will be larger than the sum of the individual parts.

Ensure that the agency offers a wide range of services and has demonstrable experience in all of them. The strategies must fit into a comprehensive marketing plan in which all the strategies and tactics work together to help you achieve your goals.



5. SATISFIED CLIENTS

An effective digital marketing agency has a list of clients, both new and repeat, that will vouch for them through testimonials and ratings. While this may seem obvious, many times it is overlooked. Just like you, other clients have concerns about developing and promoting their brand. The agency should have a list of clients who are similar to you that they have worked with and built strong campaigns for and those clients feel compelled to tell their story about the experience.

Check their client list for companies similar to your own. Look for services rendered that you want and look for positive testimonials. Check the industries to ensure that the company has experience working within your industry arena. If you are considering a very large project, ask the company representative to provide you with the contact information of a satisfied client or two with whom you can talk about their experience with the agency. A good agency will have clients who will be happy to talk with you.

To summarize, invest the time to carefully research any digital marketing agency you are considering. Look for:



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An effective digital marketing agency will build a relationship with you in order to help you reach your long-term goals. Because of that you will want to make a good choice. Consider the points above and research your options carefully before making the final selection.

ABOUT **KEO MARKETING**

KEO Marketing is an award-winning business-to-business (B2B) inbound marketing agency in Phoenix. The marketing agency develops and executes successful marketing strategies and plans that significantly grow business. Some of the world's largest brands have depended on KEO Marketing for marketing programs that deliver tangible and substantial results.

Led by a team of experienced marketing experts, KEO Marketing specializes in B2B marketing strategies that deliver results. Some of these solutions include website design, search engine marketing and optimization, online advertising, social media, mobile marketing, local marketing and more.

For more information and to request a complimentary marketing audit visit keomarketing.com.



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