



DIGITAL MARKETING FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS THE 80/20 RULE



Prepared By

**PINPOINT
LOCAL**

connecting your business to local customers

Understanding the Problem with Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is absolutely the key to success for pretty much every single business. With close to all new customers today first finding a business online, It's safe to say that if you don't nail the specifics of digital marketing, you're just not going to be successful, particularly if you are a new business.

Even if you are an existing business, you're just not going to get the new customers, it will be increasingly difficult to keep your existing customers, and you're not going to increase your order value.

However, it can be a frustrating nightmare for small business owners because there is just no common repository of knowledge of help and advice. While it's critically important to devote a good chunk of your efforts to online promotion, it's ridiculously frustrating and hard to get right.

What Do You Focus Your Marketing On?

The internet is key to getting new customers, whether it's from Google or Facebook, referrals or reviews.

Any marketing plan needs to focus on the following three things:

1. Getting new customers
2. Keeping existing customers
3. Increasing average order values

This has always been true for any business in history. Things are exceptional today, as never before has there been so much power available in the hands of a small business owner.

Just 25 years ago, the marketing platform of choice would have been the Yellow Pages. Sure, you had radio ads, television, mail and the newspaper, but for the Google of search 25 years ago, everybody went to The Yellow Pages! End of story.

Today, though, we have a huge variety of sources to market our business:

- Google Search
- Google Maps
- Email marketing
- Text marketing
- Paid advertising
- Facebook and social media
- Review sites and online directories
- Video media
- Podcasts

Unfortunately, all this power and choice causes all sorts of problems due to the incredible complexity and the inability to really focus. As a small business owner, what do you choose?

With so many options, you may suffer from “paralysis by analysis” because since you have so many things you could be doing, nothing gets done.

Worse, you may be constantly worried that your competition is doing so much better than you are, and understands everything they need to know about digital marketing. They seem to show up when people search for the services you also provide.

How do you even know where to start?

3 Solutions for Small Business Owners

So what is the solution to this dilemma and complexity of choice?

Solution 1: Become an expert in digital marketing

You could spend all of your time trying to learn how to be an expert Facebook marketer, how to be an expert with reputation management, how to build the best customer relationship management software you can possibly can, how to do search engine optimization within Google, etc.

You could conceivably become an expert in all those things but is it not easy to do. Where do you have the time, when are you able to focus on it? After all, you have your own business to run!

It's not that it's impossible to learn it all, but it takes time and an investment that most small business owners don't have. After all, they are busy trying to grow their own business services!

The other annoying thing is about digital marketing is that it changes regularly, and is often hard to keep up with.

You shouldn't have to take the time and effort to learn the complexity of digital marketing, especially if it detracts from your own business.

Solution 2: Hire somebody

Since digital marketing can be complex, a lot of small business owners don't really know what questions to ask. This makes it more difficult to evaluate people and what kind of a job they say they are going to do.

As there really is no certification or definition of who constitutes a "digital marketer," there are a lot of really bad actors out there. You're probably getting bombarded by calls and emails by people vowing to do your "SEO" for you and "rank you #1 on Google."

You don't know these people, and you don't know exactly what techniques they are going to do to market your business online. On top of that, they could charge you \$5,000 or more for their services, and you won't exactly know how well that \$5,000 is spent.

Solution 3: Hybrid 80/20 rule with hiring a digital marketing expert

The final solution is a hybrid solution. That is, figure out what to focus on, and apply the 80/20 rule (aka the "Pareto Principle").

The concept of this is that 20% of what you need to focus on will give you 80% of the reward.

Let's learn a little bit about what this 20% is. With this quick foundation of knowledge, you can then be more informed when you approach a digital marketing expert to help you. You'll know the questions to ask and you'll know exactly what you need and what you'll receive for your budget.

The 80/20 Rule of Digital Marketing - 4 Key Activities

While digital marketing encompasses a huge range of activities, there are four key areas that will give you the biggest bang for your buck - this is the 20% that will give you the 80% value. You should focus on these:

1. Google
2. Customer Relationship Management
3. Reputation Management
4. Facebook Presence

Let's look at each of these four key activities.

1. Google

Google has an entire separate website search called the “local” search results, designed just for small business owners like yourself. It includes:

- Organic (regular) Search
- Local Search (also called the local pack)
- Google Maps

Why is it important?

Simply put, this is where most of your new customers will come from. Both locals and “tourists” use Google to search for the services they need. If somebody is looking for a restaurant in their area, there is a good chance they will look on Google Maps or use an app on their phone that is powered by Google Maps.

Similarly, if somebody who lives close to your business or within your service area is looking for a plumber, guess where they will look first? That’s right, through a Google search.

Local search works in multiple ways, through multiple devices, such as the Google website, Google Maps, “Hey Google” voice search, Android phones, and apps.

What are the goals?

- Show up when people search on their desktop
- Show up when people search on their mobile devices

How Do I Show Up?

For local search, you first need to create or claim your business listing on Google through a “Google My Business” account. From there, you can describe what your business is, your address and/or service area,

your hours of operation, a category that best describes your services, and images of your place of business or the work you have done.

To rank in regular search, and to give power to your local listing, you need a website. This website needs to have a minimum level of "quality" to even to be accepted into the mix of prioritization.

By quality we mean on-page optimization like:

- Responsive design - how does your business site look in Mobile?
- Load time and website speed
- Any errors
- Title and other HTML tag issues

So how do you do this yourself? Find a good and trusted web designer! When searching for somebody, ask for samples of websites that they have designed that perform well online and are ranking well.

Keep in mind that your designer is likely not a digital marketer. However, in today's market, they would definitely need to know how to optimize a website to rank properly in Google.

Once your website is complete, or if you have an existing website already, you can run an audit to check your website page speed:

<https://tools.pingdom.com/>

- You need to get a B or better for page speed
- Be absolutely certain your website is "responsive" - does it change and look good on Mobile?
- Ask about other errors and things that come up on Pingdom report
- Run the Pingdom tool once quarterly or so

Having a great website isn't enough, of course. Not everybody can rank at the top of the search results with just a fast-loading site with no errors or issues. Google determines who is located at the top based on a number of factors. The #1 factor is the number of relevant and quality backlinks from other websites. Backlinks are simply a link from another website.

The theory is that the more people that are talking about, mentioning and referencing a certain website, the more popular it is.

So how do you get backlinks? There are a variety of ways, but for the purposes of ranking in the local results, there is a special kind of backlink that works best – these are known as citations.

Citations are links from business directories and review sites such as Yelp, Foursquare, Facebook, Superpages, Yellowpages, BBB, etc. There are actually hundreds of citation sources, along with specific sources based on your industry, such as Autotrader for car dealerships or Weddingwire for catering services.

Each of these websites reinforces trust. While any spammer can get their website linked to hundreds of citations, the power comes in the reviews and engagement with each citation source. So, if a lot of traffic comes to your listing in Yelp, Google will notice this and bump you up a little bit higher in local search. Combine this with activity, engagement and people leaving reviews in other citation sources, and you will have a great chance of your business listing ranking high in local search and your website ranking well in organic search.

2. CRM - Customer Relationship Management

A CRM is a central repository of your customers' information and communication – mainly, their email addresses and phone numbers.

Why is a CRM important?

Your customer list is an incredibly valuable asset. We can use it to:

- Run promotions

- Keep your current and past customers engaged with you
- Increase average customer value

You want to continue your dialogue with an existing customer, because they already know and trust you. If they ever need your services again, you will be in their mind first.

Word-of-mouth advertising is also powerful in that you can also be referred by the friends and family of your customers, resulting in new business at zero cost to acquire them.

Finally, for the purposes of digital marketing and local search, you can use a CRM to solicit reviews.

What are the goals?

You want to get enough reviews on prominent platforms – at least 10 or more. If people don't see enough reviews about you on the right websites, they could pass you over for a competitor.

With lots of great reviews and a high rating, a potential customer will look more closely at your business and your services.

Finally, by being in communication with your existing customers, you're increasing customer retention and order value through regular promotions and repeat business.

Simple Start

To start, you've just got to start collecting it! You can do this through email lists, your point of sale systems, or even email archives. The sooner you start, the sooner you have this asset to run promotions and get reviews.

To communicate, email is the de facto standard, but text messages get a lot better engagement and a better open rate as well.

Using Autoresponders

Autoresponders are email list systems. They store your customer information and you can send them emails such as promotions.

There are many autoresponders on the market, such as:

- Aweber
- GetResponse
- Mailchimp

Autoresponders don't just allow you to store a customer's email and allow you to send them emails. You can also send them chains and sequences of emails.

For example, when your customer has just been added, you could send out an email sequence that says "Could you leave a review?" Five days later you can automatically send out an email for a coupon on their next purchase or service with you. Most email systems allow you to send sequences based on when they joined your list, on certain specific dates or times of the week, and if they trigger a certain event such as clicking a button in your email.

Of course, all allow you to send out a broadcast, such as a monthly newsletter or flash sale.

Text Communication

You can do the same thing with text as you do with email autoresponders. This means you can send automated sequences or an ad-hoc broadcast. Some good text services include:

- Clicksend
- EZ Texting
- Chomp SMS

These tools can be expensive, and while there are a couple of 'free' services out there, most start out as free and then move to paid if you

send a certain amount. Unfortunately, a lot of them have bad delivery rates and are leveraged by spammers and bad actors.

You can also subscribe to pay as you go plans with a minimal monthly fee. It's routine to see a small business to spend \$300 - \$750 a month on this. However, if done right, it is usually worth it. For instance, if you are a restaurant and send out a text for a happy hour promotion the same day, you can typically do quite well.

3. Reputation Management

Your online reputation is critical to maintain! This mainly has to do with reviews at certain websites, such as:

- Yelp
- Facebook
- Google (which has its own star ratings in local search)
- Specialized review sites like Realtor.com, Trip Advisor, etc, depending on your business niche

This is all about getting reviews and maintaining good ratings for your business.

What are the goals?

You want to ensure you claim your listings on all platforms and to identify yourself as the business owner for your listings on Yelp, Google, Foursquare, etc, as well as any prominent specialty review websites in your niche.

You also want to:

- Create a Facebook page for your company
- Encourage reviews on major platforms - 10 or more

You will need to monitor these reviews sites all the time and:

- Read each new review
- Respond to each new review, positive or negative
- Ensure 4.5 or higher rating across all reviews
- Appeal 'bad/fake' reviews to get them removed where possible

So what's the easiest way to increase your score if you only have a 3.7 review? Get more 5 star reviews! You can do this by encouraging new reviews using your CRM and simply asking for them from your satisfied customers.

4. Facebook Presence

With so many people on Facebook all the time, this is a great place to advertise your business. However, it is a source that is actually quite difficult to gain new customers from, unless you do advertising. Facebook has made changes recently to filter and block out a lot of content from business pages, mainly due to user complaints.

At its core, Facebook is a service to connect with friends, not necessarily businesses. However, it is a great platform for brand awareness and customer engagement once you build up a following of a couple hundred or thousand people.

Here's how to market on Facebook correctly.

Create a Facebook page

First, create a Facebook page – there is tons of great information online to help you out. Simply Google "setting up a Facebook page for my business". You don't have to do fill out every little detail. Just get your page up and running so you have something.

Gaining Followers

Now, it's time to gain some followers and Likes.

- Friends and family at first

- CRM - at the end of each email sent out say "hey like us on Facebook"
- Text message campaign
- In your location - put some signage up
- Business cards

Posting on Facebook

Post on your Facebook page regularly with updates. Two to three times per week is sufficient.

This is all about engagement. The idea is for people to talk about you by sharing your content. The more people share and comment on your content, the more chance that other people will see it.

Some ideas of content to post include polls, contests, funny pictures, images of your work or you working, some interesting tidbits about your day, motivational sayings, etc. These are all great ways to engage your audience.

The other thing you can do is find some viral content from others that you can share yourself.

You can use a tool like Buzzsumo to find out the latest trending content and viral ideas, and you can track your own content to see how effective you are communicating with social media.

The 80/20 Rule - One Thing You Should Do TODAY

It is now time to decide on the 80/20 rule. What will you focus on today? How will you approach and attack it? Build your plan and act on it. This is the single most important thing that you need to do today in order to make a start on your digital marketing!