

What's inside: An introduction to the **Internet and the Marketing Mix**, some **key terms and** concepts around strategy and a guide to **developing a marketing plan**. We look at the correlation between **digital marketing and marketing**, using **online tools for gathering market intelligence** and a **digital marketing strategy in action**.

1.1 introduction

A strategy will dictate the most advantageous direction for an organisation to take over a defined period of time. It will also indicate which tactics and means should be used to execute this direction. Originating as a military term, strategy is about using your strengths, as well as the context in which you are operating, to your advantage.

In marketing, strategy starts on the outside, considering the needs and expectations of the consumer and moving inwards to the crux of the brand's identity, to see where the business can gain advantage and add value.

1.2 key terms and concepts

term	definition
Application programming interface (API)	A particular set of rules and specifications that software programs can abide by when communicating with each other. It serves as an interface between different software programs and facilitates their communication, similar to the way a user interface facilitates communication between humans and computers. APIs are often used by third-party developers to create applications for social networking websites like Twitter and Facebook.
Cluetrain Manifesto	A set of 95 theses organised as a Call to Action for businesses operating within a newly connected market place.
eMarketing	The process of marketing a brand using digital channels.
Market share	Market share, in strategic management and marketing, is the percentage or proportion of the total available market or market segment that is being serviced by a company.
Metric	A unit of measurement.
Online Reputation Management (ORM)	The understanding and influencing of the perception of an entity online. This entails ensuring that you know what is being said about you, and that you are leading the conversation.
Pay per click (PPC)	Pay per click is advertising on search engines where the advertiser pays only for each click on their advert.
Return on investment (ROI)	The ratio of cost to profit.

Really Simple Syndication (RSS)	RSS allows you to receive/ syndicate this information without requiring you to constantly open new pages in your browser. Also known as a feedreader.
Search engine optimisation (SEO)	SEO is the practice that aims to improve a website's ranking for specific keywords in the search engines.
Short Message Service (SMS)	Electronic messages sent on a wireless network.
Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP)	A simple XML-based protocol to allow for the exchanging of structured information over HTTP.
Strategy	A set of ideas that outline how a product line or brand will achieve its objectives. This guides decisions on how to create, distribute, promote and price the product or service.
Tactic	A specific action or method that contributes to achieving a goal.
WebPR	Public relations on the web. Online news releases and article syndication promote brands as well as drive traffic to sites.
eXtensible Markup Language (XML)	A standard used for creating structured documents.

1.3 what is marketing?

A simple, old-school definition for marketing is that it is the creation of demand for your product or service. If all goes well, this demand should translate into sales and, ultimately, revenue.

In order to drive people to pay more for your product or service, or to consider you superior to your competitors, you need to create meaningful benefits for the consumer. The value that a marketer should seek to create should be equal to or even greater than the cost of the product to the consumer. Doing this often enough will result in the creation of trust in and loyalty towards the brand.

1.4 what is digital marketing?

If marketing creates demand, digital marketing drives the creation of demand using the power of the Internet. The Internet is an interactive medium. It allows for the exchange of currency, but more than that, it allows for the exchange of value.

A business on the Internet can gain value in the form of time, attention and advocacy from the consumer. For the user, value can be added in the form of

entertainment and utility. The reciprocity of the transaction is what's important here – in other words, the exchange is a two-way street that provides benefit to both parties simultaneously.

The Internet has changed the world in which we sell. It reaches beyond being a new channel for marketing and offers a new paradigm for the way consumers connect with brands and with each other. The online medium provides consumers with more choice, more influence and more power. Brands have new ways of selling, new products and services to sell as well as new markets in which to sell. The roles played by marketing agencies are shifting too. Traditional agencies are getting better at digital marketing, while agencies that started out as digital shops are starting to play in the above-the-line space. More than ever, integrated strategies that speak to an overall brand identity are vital to achieving an organisation's goals.

However, marketing on the Internet does not necessarily mean throwing out the rule book on marketing and business foundations and principles. Instead, the Internet provides a new environment in which to build on these principles. Profit is still revenue less cost. The Internet does not change that.

Brands build loyalty through users who love their products or services. Users fall in love with products and services when their experience is tailored to their needs, as opposed to serving the brand. More than any other type of marketing, digital marketing is measurable. This gives brands the opportunity to build tailored, optimised brand experiences for consumers.

1.5 what is digital marketing strategy?

Digital marketing strategy builds on and adapts the principles of traditional marketing, using the opportunities and challenges offered by technology and the digital medium.

User-centric thinking, which involves placing the user at the core of all decisions, is vital when looking at building a successful digital marketing strategy. The advent of new technologies means the digital marketing strategist of today is offered not only a plethora of new tactical possibilities, but also unprecedented ways of measuring the effectiveness of chosen strategies and tactics.

The fact that digital marketing is highly empirical is one of its key strengths. Everything can be measured: from behaviours, to actions and action paths, to results. This means that the digital marketing strategist should start thinking with return on investment (ROI) in mind. Built into any strategy should be a testing framework and the ability to remain flexible and dynamic in a medium that shifts and changes as user behaviours do.

If we define strategy as “a plan of action designed to achieve a particular outcome”, then the desired outcome from a digital marketing strategy point of view would be aligned with your organisation's overall business objectives. For example, if one of the overall business objectives is acquisition of new clients, possible digital marketing objectives might be building brand awareness online.

A tactic differs from a strategy. It is a specific action or method that contributes to achieving a goal. For example, if the overall business objective is acquisition and the digital objective is to increase awareness, a paid search campaign would be a possible tactic towards achieving this.

1.6 the internet in the traditional marketing mix

Hundreds of books have been written on the theory of strategy and different tools and models strategists use to craft better plans. Sun Tzu, a famous warrior (and military strategist), wrote *The Art of War* in the 6th century BC, and copies are still selling by the thousand on Amazon.com.

The screenshot shows the Amazon.com search results for "The Art of War". The main product listing is for the hardcover edition, priced at \$13.60 (a 32% discount from the list price of \$20.00). It features a "LOOK INSIDE!" button and a "Click to LOOK INSIDE!" link. The book is by Sun Tzu (Author) and James Clavell (Editor, Foreword). It has 101 customer reviews and is available in Kindle Edition, Hardcover (Abridged), Hardcover (March 10, 1983), and Paperback formats. The shipping options include "FREE Super Saver Shipping" on orders over \$25 and "One-Day Shipping" for orders placed by Thursday, May 26.

Formats	Amazon Price	New from	Used from
Kindle Edition	\$8.59	--	--
Hardcover, Abridged	\$12.24	\$10.95	\$10.96
Hardcover, March 10, 1983	\$13.60	\$8.99	\$1.33
Paperback	\$6.95	\$2.89	\$0.59

Figure 1.1 *The Art of War*, written in the 6th century BC, is still an important reference for the importance of strategy development.

There are various elements that need to be evaluated when developing a strategy. These elements are also likely to change over time, again highlighting the importance of being dynamic and agile in terms of strategic adjustments.

note

A value proposition is the unique benefit that your business offers to its customers.

An effective strategy involves making choices, as the brand that attempts to be all things to all people risks becoming unfocused or losing the clarity of its value proposition. To make a strong choice, a strategist must first examine what the choices are: what are the factors that affect your business? These include market, competitor landscape, customers and core competencies.

For example, a new airline, before launching, would need to consider whether their product is a domestic or international service; whether its market would be budget travellers or international and business travellers; and whether their channel would be through primary airports or smaller, more cost-effective airports. Each of these choices will result in a vastly different strategic direction.

In order to assist strategists in the formulation of business strategies, models such as The Four Ps (product, price, placement and promotion) and the Porter Five Forces analysis have become widely adopted – both of these tools assist in evaluating the kind of value the business is offering and the competitiveness of the market. The Internet, however, impacts hugely on both of these aspects, prompting us to re-examine and adapt traditional models to the changing market environment and new consumer behaviours.

The Four Ps

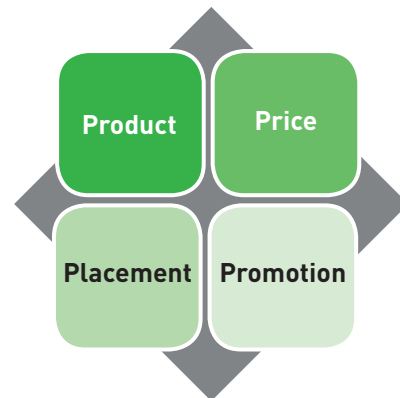


Figure 1.2 The Four Ps

The Four Ps are fundamentally changed by the Internet and need to be looked at in view of the context offered by digitally connected media and from the perspective of the consumer.

1. Products and Services

Products and services are what a company sells. From fast moving consumer goods to digital products such as software, to services such as consultancy, the Internet has allowed for a huge range of new products.

Technology allows for mass customisation of products, seen in a growing trend of letting customers customise goods online before they are created. For

example, NIKEiD (<http://nikeid.nike.com>) and Converse (www.converse.com) both allow customers to create their own trainers based on a number of preset options that will then be manufactured to the customer requirements. In a similar fashion, computer products can be built to specifications, as the costs of offering this type of service to customers is reduced by the Internet.

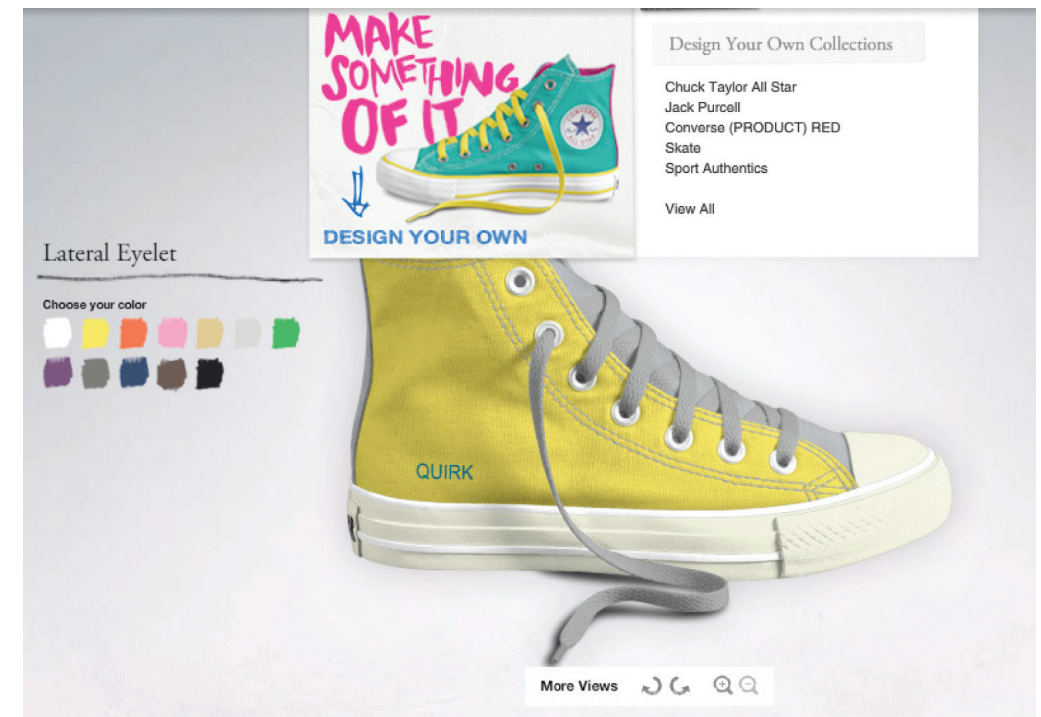


Figure 1.3 Converse.com allows for the personalisation of products. This involves customers and gives them a sense of ownership.

Digital products can exist because of the Internet. The very framework of the Internet allows for products such as software and digital music to be distributed. The Internet as a distribution medium is what makes these products possible.

2. Price

With customers able to access pricing information from a number of suppliers with relative ease, the Internet is growing a market of near perfect competition (Porter, 2001). The prevalence of search engines and of shopping comparison websites, such as www.pricerunner.co.uk and www.nextag.com, make it easy for customers to compare product prices across a number of retailers. The opportunity for companies to differentiate themselves on price has led to decreased prices for many commodities, from the regularly reduced pricing of books on Amazon.com to ticket prices on low cost airlines such as EasyJet (www.easyjet.com) in Europe.

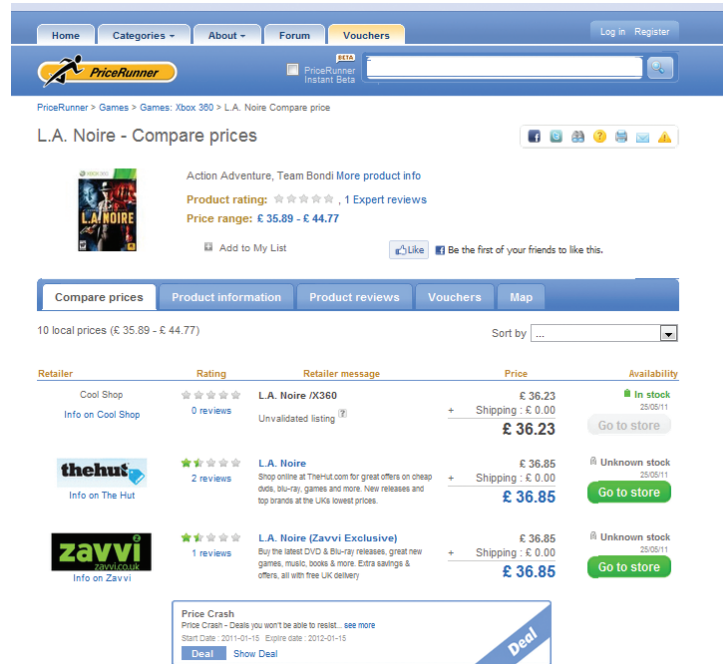


Figure 1.4 Websites such as PriceRunner allow for the comparing of prices.

With price differentiation, especially for smaller players in the market, becoming a challenge, businesses need to consider differentiating on value. Value is a combination of service and price, where a customer might be willing to pay a higher price for a better experience.

3. Placement or Distribution

Particularly for digital products and services, the Internet gives companies access to a global marketplace. Product distribution and markets no longer have to be dictated by location. With efficient delivery and shipping channels, products that are not digital can also benefit from a far wider market place. The Internet allows the basic foundations of mail order businesses to flourish online with a catalogue that is cheaper to produce and update and cheaper to distribute - a website. In the travel industry, travel agents stopped issuing paper tickets as of 31 May 2008 (Iata 2008). Nearly all aeroplane tickets are now e-tickets.

Technology such as APIs, SOAP services, RSS and XML allow information and services to be distributed throughout the world. For example, the API for a hotel reservations database, Starfish Luxury Travel Distribution (www.starfishinteractive.com), allows a diverse range of websites to offer instant online bookings for hotels in the inventory. Partners with booking engines include www.spaworld.tv and www.mrandmrsmith.com.

This is both a huge opportunity and a huge challenge for businesses. On the

one hand, it can allow niche products and markets to flourish in a global space. On the other hand, it can be tempting for a marketer to try to reach too many markets at once. A global marketplace is also not yet fully supported by national banking and tax legislation across the world.

4. Promotion

The Internet, as an information and entertainment medium, naturally lends itself to being used to promote products. The online promotional mix is an extension of the offline, but with some significant differences. Online promotion can be tracked, measured and targeted in a far more sophisticated way. Advertising, personal sales, promotions based marketing and public relations can all be conducted through the online medium. These tactics and applications are developed further, later-on in this textbook.

5. A New P: People

In addition to the existing Four Ps, the Internet prompts the consideration of a new P: **People**. This final element speaks to examining the powerful human element that the digitally connected world permits: personalisation, peer-to-peer sharing, communities and consumer-centric organisations which allow people to participate in the brand story.

Porter Five Forces Analysis

The Porter Five Forces analysis is another business tool that needs to be adapted for an online perspective. This model assists in determining the competitive intensity and therefore the attractiveness of a market. The Internet's low barrier to entry has allowed the proliferation of businesses in the online space, as well as providing infinite choices for customers in terms of products and services, making it important to consider new factors when devising a marketing strategy.

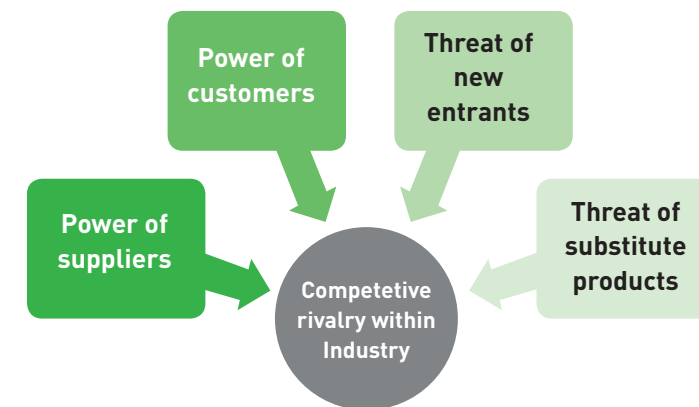


Figure 1.5 Porter's Five Forces. The Internet has allowed for an incredibly competitive market place.

note
An API is an Application Programming Interface. Essentially, an API gives instructions and rules for communicating with another programme or database. This allows, for example, different companies and developers to build different front-end systems that all communicate with the same database.

World-renowned marketer and bestselling author on the subject of business and marketing, Seth Godin, recommends five elements for consideration:

Data: The raw facts about your product or service. Online advertisers use data to understand which copy on their pay per click (PPC) advertising is converting the highest number of customers and grocery stores use purchase habit data to layout their stores (which is why the ready-made sandwiches and cool drinks are nearly always in the furthest corner away from the entrance!). Online, data is richer than ever before.

Stories: The Cluetrain Manifesto describes markets as “conversations”. Humans are intrinsic storytellers; everything we say is some kind of story. Brands create stories, myths and legends around their products and services. Ultimately, what people say about your product or service is a story and now, more than ever, consumers are helping to craft the stories that define organisations.

Products: Products are physical manifestations of your story. If your story is that your products are simpler, faster and better, your products need to deliver on that promise, or your story will be dismissed as untrue.

Interactions: Interactions are the tactics used to connect with the consumer and comprise any touchpoints of the brand: from television advertising, to email, SMS and the way your point of sale staff greet customers. There are many opportunities to interact with consumers, most of them cost-effective; making this point a potential hero of Godin’s marketing mix.

Connection: This point speaks to the unofficial “fifth P” of The Four Ps. Connection is the nirvana of marketing strategy. It is the point where successful application of the first four elements results in people falling in love with your brand. Once an organisation has effectively connected with its customers, the real magic happens - customers connect with each other through their mutual belief in the brand story. Communities of people who want to be part of their stories follow truly great brands. Apple is a good example of a dedicated tribal following. People want their products, want others to see them with Apple products and want the world to know that they have an iPhone or a Macbook Pro. This kind of tribal following spells success for any brand.

1.7 crafting a digital marketing strategy

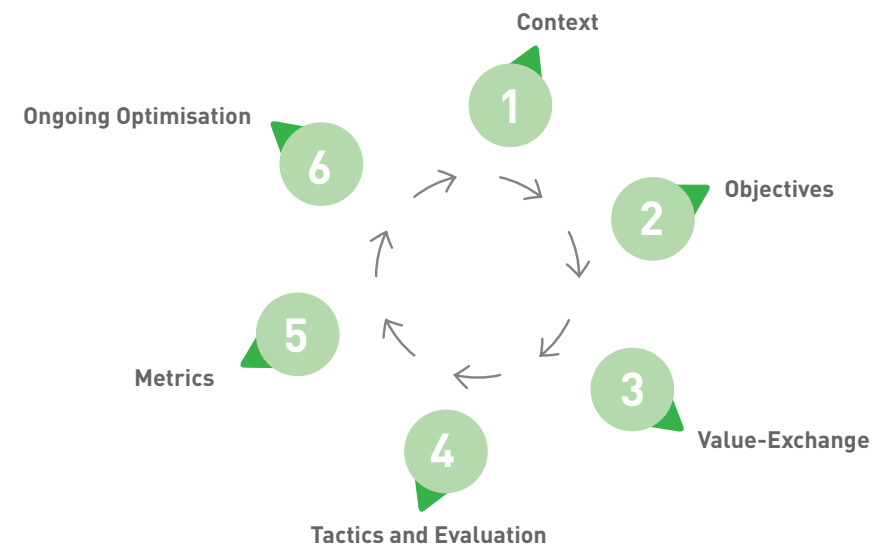


Figure 1.6 Six steps in crafting a successful digital marketing strategy

Any activity with an end goal (whether it’s winning a war, building a city or selling a product) should have a blueprint or map in place for every person in the organisation to follow in the process of achieving it.

A strategy needs to cover the questions of who you are, what you are offering and to whom, as well as why and how you are doing so. The steps and questions below cover what an organisation should be aware of when creating and implementing a strategy that will meet its objectives.

The first step in crafting a successful strategy is to examine the context of the organisation and the various stakeholders.

1. Context:

- Who are you and what is it about your identity that makes you useful?
- Who are your customers and what needs and wants do they have?
- Who are your competitors? These might extend beyond organisations that compete with you on the basis of price and product and could also be competition in the form of abstracts such as time and mindshare.
- What is the context in which you are operating (social, political and economic factors) and how is this likely to change in the future?

A SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) is an ideal way to understand your business and your market.

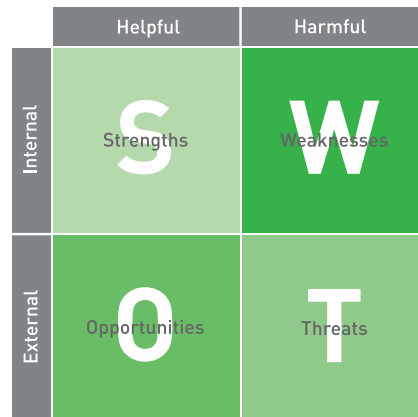


Figure 1.7 SWOT analysis

Once you have examined the market situation, the second step is an examination of your value proposition, in other words, what value your organisation can add to that market.

2. Objectives:

Digital marketing has technology at its heart. It is therefore crucial to involve both technical and aesthetic minds in the initial stages of strategy formulation. The objectives should speak to both system and story and the tools afforded by technology should be a starting point in the process of developing strategic objectives.

The second factor to consider when setting objectives is that all channels of a brand operate as part of a greater whole. Digital marketing objectives should be aligned with the brand’s greater strategic objectives.

3. Value-Exchange:

- What value are you adding to the market, what are you trying to achieve and how will you know if you are successful?

Digital can achieve many things in terms of users and value creation. Once you have defined what constitutes success and have delineated your prime objective, you can examine other goals that support this objective. For example, if your prime objective is for people to view the full range of products that your organisation has to offer, supporting goals could be “we want people to share their comments to support our range development” or “we want to identify the most enthusiastic users and recruit them as brand ambassadors”. Exploring all the options before defining the most specific and focused direction will result in the most successful direction.

4. Tactics and Evaluation:

A diverse variety of digital tools and tactics are available once you have defined your digital marketing objectives. The strength of the tools is dependent on the type of objectives set for the brand – for example, acquisition (or gaining new customers) may be best driven by paid search, while email is one of the most effective tools for selling more products to existing customers.

The table below expands on some of the most popular tactics available to digital marketers and their possible outcomes. These will be covered in far more detail in the **Engage** section of this book.

Tactic	Outcome
Email Marketing	Customer Retention
Online Advertising	Branding and Acquisition
Affiliate Marketing	Sales and Branding
SEO	Customer Retention and Acquisition
PPC	Customer Retention and Acquisition
Social Media	Branding and Participation
ORM	Customer Retention, Branding and Participation
WebPR	Acquisition and Branding

Figure 1.8 Tactics and their outcomes.

Tactic	Outcome
<p>Email Marketing</p> <p>A form of direct marketing that uses electronic means to deliver commercial messages to an audience. It is extremely cost-effective, highly targeted, customisable on a mass scale and completely measurable – all of which make it one of the most powerful digital marketing tactics.</p>	<p>Email marketing is a tool for building relationships with both potential and existing customers.</p> <p>It should maximise the retention and value of these customers, ultimately leading to greater profitability for the organisation as a whole.</p> <p>A targeted, segmented email database means that a brand can direct messages at certain sectors of their customer base in order to achieve the best results.</p>

<p>Online Advertising</p> <p>Online advertising encompasses advertising in all areas of the Internet - search engine results pages, adverts placed in emails, adverts placed on social networks and adverts on the Google display network.</p>	<p>The main objective of advertising is to increase sales by raising brand awareness online. It can also be more interactive and therefore less disruptive than traditional advertising or non-interactive online advertising, as users can choose to engage with the advert or not. Online advertising can be optimised by targeting it to certain geographies and specific markets and contextualising it.</p>
<p>Affiliate Marketing</p> <p>Affiliate marketing is a system of reward whereby referrers are given a "finder's fee" for every referral they give.</p>	<p>Online, affiliate marketing is widely used to promote websites, with the referrers being rewarded for every visitor, subscriber or customer provided through their efforts. It is thus a useful tactic for branding and acquisition.</p>
<p>SEO</p> <p>This is the practice of optimising a website in order to rank higher on the search engine results pages. SEO involves working with the parameters set by search engines to ensure that search engines index it when people enter a search term that is relevant for a product or service.</p>	<p>SEO has a key role to play in acquisition, as it ensures your organisation's offering will appear in the search results, allowing you to reach potential customers. A site that is optimised for the search engines is also a site that is clear, relevant and well designed. These elements ensure a great user experience, meaning that SEO plays a role in retention too.</p>
<p>PPC</p> <p>In a pay per click or PPC system of advertising, the advertiser only pays for each click on their advert. It is most often used for the advertising on search engine results pages; it is also used in banner advertising (where the advertiser pays per click on their banner).</p>	<p>For the advertiser, the beauty of PPC adverts lie in the fact that they are keyword based. This means an advert will come up in response to the search terms entered by the consumer. PPC therefore plays a role in acquisition and retention. It allows the advertiser to reach people who are already in the buying cycle or are expressing interest in what they have to offer.</p>
<p>Social Media</p> <p>Social media, also known as consumer-generated media or Web 2.0 are media (in the form of text, visuals and audio) created to be shared. It has changed the face of marketing by allowing collaboration and connection in a way that no other channel has been able to offer.</p>	<p>From a strategic perspective, social media is useful for branding, raising awareness of the brand story and allowing the consumer to become involved in the story through collaboration. Social media platforms also play a role in building awareness, due to their shareable, viral nature. They can also provide crowdsourced feedback via open graphs and social analytics systems.</p>

<p>ORM</p> <p>Online reputation management (ORM) is the process by which a brand monitors, measures and manages the conversations that are happening around it online.</p>	<p>ORM can have a huge impact on a brand's reputation and its bottom line. It is only through listening to conversations being carried out by its customers and potential customers that an organisation can adequately respond and manage its situation in the market. ORM speaks to acquisition, engagement and participation. An effective ORM tool can assist a company in engaging with its customers where relevant and providing better service by responding to queries and complaints. The insights gained from ORM should be considered when evaluating and optimising strategic direction.</p>
<p>WebPR</p> <p>Public relations are a set of functions that foster an organisation's ability to listen to, appreciate and respond to those people with whom it is exchanging value. While traditional PR focuses on carefully crafted press releases and a controlled release of information, the Internet means that information is freely available to a wider audience, as opposed to a select group of journalists.</p>	<p>WebPR allows companies to engage in a more immediate form of communication. Unlike the traditional press release, WebPR is about connecting with customers.</p> <p>It is used to connect with customers and enhance brand awareness, exposure and SEO efforts.</p>

Once the objectives and tactics have been set, these should be cross-checked and re-evaluated against the needs and resources of your organisation to make sure your strategy is on the right track and no opportunities are being overlooked.

5. Metrics:

Metrics are important in defining what successful value-exchange is worth to an organisation and how this worth will be measured. This step needs to be considered in conjunction with value-exchange. As previously discussed, digital is an empirical medium and digital marketing should start with ROI in mind. Setting up the analysis and measurement tools early on in the online strategising phase will enable you to measure returns from inception. The metrics that matter to your business objectives are referred to as key performance indicators (KPIs).

6. Ongoing Optimisation:

The growing necessity for an organisation to remain dynamic and agile ties in with metrics and should be considered in the early stages of strategy formulation, as well as being a continuous process in refining and optimising tactics.

The user experience and journey is vital to building successful brands. Budget should be set aside upfront to be dedicated to the analysis of user data and the optimisation of conversion paths.

Social thinking and socially informed innovation are also valuable and uniquely suited to the online space. Socially powered insight can be used to inform strategic decisions and execute on various areas of the organisation, from product roadmaps to service plans. Brands are beginning to shift from being present in social media to actively using it, aligning it with actionable objectives and their corresponding metrics. This is critical in demonstrating ROI and the repeated impact of social channels on the bottom line.

Managing the learning loop (the knowledge gained from reviewing the performance of your tactics, which can then be fed back into the strategy) can be difficult. This is because brand cycles often move more slowly than the real-time results you will see online. It is therefore important to find a way to work agility into the strategy, allowing you to be quick and proactive, as opposed to slow and reactive. It may be necessary, for example, to incorporate constant monitoring into any strategy, which will be discussed further in the *Online Reputation Management (ORM)* chapter.

Strong basic principles and the establishment of a set programme or system to experiment, optimise and learn will make effective innovation and the implementation of learnings easier.

It goes without saying that checking the websites and social networking platforms of competitors, as well as utilising the analytics systems that are built into the platforms you are using, are first steps in measuring data. YouTube, Facebook and Flickr are all platforms that offer details on how your users are interacting with your content.

Some further useful tools for gathering market intelligence are detailed in the *Online Reputation Management* chapter. These same tools can prove invaluable for market research, especially when the keywords monitored are chosen to reflect industry trends.

Data Type	Tools
Search data (for both SEO and PPC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spyfu www.spyfu.com • Quirk SearchStatus www.quirk.biz/searchstatus • SEO Book's Rank Checker www.tools.seobook.com/firefox/rank-checker/

Competitor activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change Detection www.changedetection.com • Google Alerts www.google.com/alerts • BrandsEye www.brandseye.com • Google Patent Search www.google.com/patents
Trend and market research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Insights www.google.com/insights/search • Flickr www.flickr.com • Delicious www.delicious.com • Google Adwords External Keywords Tool www.adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal • Google Trends http://www.google.com/trends • YouTube Selection Tool https://ads.youtube.com/keyword_tool

Figure 1.9 Data Collection Tools.

1.8 summary

Strategy is an imperative first step in establishing the positioning of your brand within the market context and providing a roadmap in order for you to achieve your end goals.

There may be many different paths to reach these goals, but an effective strategy weighs the available options and makes a choice, based on the internal and external brand situation. Digital marketing has technology at its heart and understanding the value that technology can add to people's experiences of your brand. The variety of new tools and tactics offered by the digital medium should inform your strategic choices.

Digital marketing strategy is highly empirical and your strategic thinking should start by being mindful of ROI and the ways in which this can be measured. This measurement-focused thinking will allow you to optimise your tactics and performance in order to create the most valuable, deliverable brand story, the most optimised conversion funnels and the highest ROI.

1.9 case study: The Best Job in the World

Tourist destinations have been marketed in a variety of interesting ways. In 2009 Tourism Queensland, an Australian state government agency responsible for marketing the north-eastern part of the continent, promoted the idea of the "Best Job in the World".

This unusual campaign pushed an idea that seemed too good to be true: an opportunity to "housesit the famously beautiful islands of the Great Barrier Reef" for half a year, with a home base on Hamilton Island.

The campaign, developed by the Brisbane-based agency SapientNitro, began with worldwide classified advertising, seeking applicants for an “island caretaker position” with a salary of £73 000.

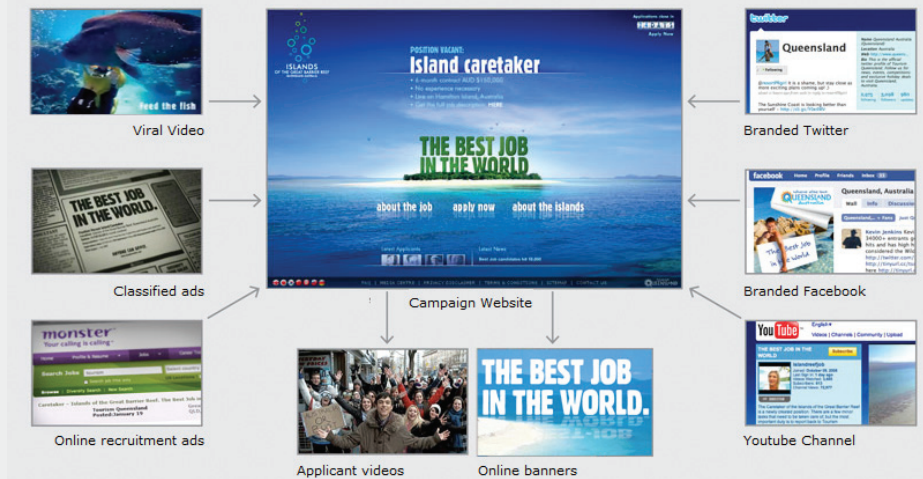


Figure 1.10 A strategic approach meant utilising a number of tactics.

Source: ourawardentry.com.au

In return, the winner would need to blog about his or her experience, record videos and commit to various PR activities.

Anyone could apply by simply submitting a video application for public consideration.

From a strategic perspective, SapientNitro and Tourism Queensland needed to launch the campaign to experience seekers across eight international markets.

Traffic was initially driven to the website through recruitment via online job sites and small display ads, and supported with scores of mainstream press and blog articles, directing further traffic to islandreefjob.com.

There, the website showcased the various beautiful attractions found on the island, as well as information on sustainability. This platform allowed the brand to push Australia as a tourist destination, both for international travellers and locals.

The interest was overwhelming, with the submission website crashing only two days after the launch of the campaign due to excessive visits and video uploading.

Tourism Queensland and SapientNitro also had a strong presence across social media spaces, including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and MySpace. Through these platforms they engaged with interested parties around the world, while applicants and general browsers were able to use these spaces to interact further.

After months of searching, the prize went to “ostrich-riding, bungee-jumping” charity worker Ben Southall from Hampshire, who beat out 35 000 other entries. He had a whale of a time until his last month, when he was stung by an Irukandji jellyfish (O’Loughlin, Pidd 2009). Don’t worry, he made a full recovery!

Besides being lauded as the “greatest PR stunt of all time”, the campaign also returned some impressive figures (Tourism Queensland):

Estimated media coverage of over AUD\$400 million. This included global news coverage from CNN stories, BBC documentaries, Time magazine articles and everything in between.

The campaign reached an audience of approximately three billion people through media coverage.

34 684, one minute video job applications we submitted from 197 countries. It’s safe to say that at least one person from every country in the world applied.

Over 475 000 votes for Wild Card applicants were received.

Web stats showed 8 465 280 unique visits, 55 002 415 page views with an average of 8.25 minutes spent per visit.

Overall, it’s safe to say that the campaign was a success (except for that one little sting) and it even went on to win numerous awards at the Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival.

case study questions

1. Why do you think this campaign garnered such impressive media coverage?
2. How did Tourism Queensland and SapientNitro approach the challenge of marketing across eight international markets?
3. What role did flexibility play in this campaign?
4. How did the strategy leverage social media as a tool for engagement?

chapter questions

1. Why is it important to consider the context of any marketing activities which you would like to implement?
2. How has the Internet affected marketing and the models we use to understand it?
3. Do you agree with the idea that customers are more empowered than they were before digital communications were so prevalent?

1.10 references

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further reading

- www.sethgodin.typepad.com - Seth Godin's popular blog provides regular insight and food for thought.
- www.gigaom.com - GigaOM's community of writers covers all things technology.
- www.baekdal.com - Thomas Baekdal's thought pieces provide perspectives and models of how the Internet is changing transactional models.