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BLUEPRINT FOR DIGITAL MARKETING SERIES:
Using measurement to never lose a retainer

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Getting the measurements right can help your agency prove marketing ROI on everything it does - meaning you need never lose a retainer again.

It's more than 100 years since John Wanamaker - department store magnate, founding father of modern advertising and pioneer of marketing - said:

" *I know half my advertising dollars are wasted. I just don't know which half.* "

Now while businesses in the last millennium may have accepted that state of affairs, you can guarantee they definitely won't today. If your agency can't prove the value and ROI of the campaigns it runs, you can guarantee it will be one of the first expenses to get cut at budget review time.

Proving You're Worth It

With the amount of marketing data and tools around today that measure everything from the time it took the first contact to click through to where they went and what they did after that (yes, it is a bit scary if you really stop to think about it), then there really is no excuse not to be providing the evidence that justifies your retainer. In fact, marketing professionals who ignore the advances in analytics software that can prove ROI on marketing campaigns will probably find a large number of their long-standing clients hotfooting it out the door to the agencies that are keeping up with digital advances.

By not tracking what audiences like and what they don't your campaigns are not going to be getting the results they should. So how can you ensure they do?

You need to measure the right things then use the right techniques to improve the results you get.

The Metrics that Matter

There's no getting away from the fact that the 'Big Data' world can feel a little mind-blowing for marketers. With so much information out there, what exactly should you be measuring to prove marketing ROI? And once you've measured it, how can you use what you find to improve your results?

Let's break it down into the different aspects of digital marketing:

Email Campaigns   **Social Media**   **Website**

Email Campaigns

In its 2012 Email Marketing Metrics Benchmark Study, Silverpop included the following traditional and lesser-known measurements:

1 Open Rates

Both Unique Open Rates (UOR) and Gross Open Rates (GOR) by country and industry. This can be adapted to suit the audience you target – for example, by county or London Borough and industry. Improvements come through the use of alternative subject lines and continual tweaking, so eventually you see patterns of what works and what doesn't work so well.

2 Opens Per Opener

Breaks it down to another level by detailing the number of times each person opened a mail. This is because people often read first on a mobile device then read again later on a PC.

3 Click Through Rate (CTR)

This is the number of unique clicks on links in the email message divided by the number of email messages that were delivered in the campaign. Adapt your 'Call To Action' (CTA) copy to drive these higher and use your ongoing analysis to inform development in future.

4 Click to Open Rate (COTR)

Also known as the effective rate, this measurement is the ratio of unique clicks as a percentage of unique opens. It measures click-through rates as a percentage of messages opened, instead of messages delivered.

5 Clicks Per Clicker

Like Opens Per Opener, this metric shows how often a recipient clicks links in the same message. It includes recipients who either click a specific link more than once or who click two or more links in the email.

6 Message Size

This is a new one that has been introduced to take mobile viewing into account. Optimising the size of your message to ensure it can download quickly onto smartphones is a consideration that can't be ignored as

In just two short years, mobile access will surpass PC as the most popular way to go online.
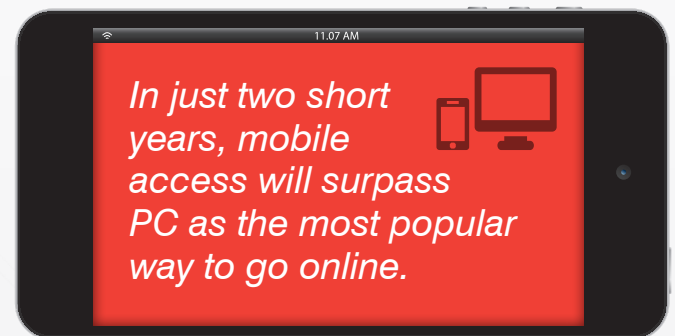
7 Hard Bounce Rate (HBR)

It's very important to make sure your marketing data is clean, segmented and up-to-date. If this is repeatedly high then you need to take some drastic data cleaning action or your campaigns will never get the results you need to keep that retainer in place.

8 Unsubscribe Rate

If this is high, you've got to look at what you're delivering against what the audience expects.

Social Media

According to socialmediatoday, some of the social media metrics that matter are below. Some of them are obvious - others not so:

Comments

If you're doing content marketing right, you should get people talking. So the number of comments is an excellent metric. It's also important to track who's doing the commenting so you can engage them in other ways too.

Mentions & Retweets

If people are taking the time to talk about you and retweet you, it's a sure sign they like you and they will most probably be endorsing you.

Shares

Good content will get forwarded on to your followers' connections, so this is important as it reveals which content resonates and which falls a bit flat.

User Engagement

Measuring all of the above will give you a metric to show how you are growing user engagement over time, or not as the case may be!

Sent Messages

Getting social media right is about talking to people, not just blasting out messages to them. So how often you respond should be a metric you include in judging its success.

Website

According to Mashable, web metrics you need to concentrate on include:

Bounce rate

Seeing which pages work with the ads and keywords that bring visitors to your site is vitally important. The bounce rate can reveal that. **You can use A/B testing to try out different versions of the same page** to see which ones get visitors to convert the best.

Average Page Views Per Visit

It's great to get people to your site, but to really measure how engaged they are you need to know how deep into your site they go.

Average Time on Site

This is another indicator of engagement levels. If you've got a case study that takes around 3 minutes to read, you want your analytics to reveal the average time on that page is enough for visitors to have read it.

Rate of Return Visitors

Too often marketers focus on the number of new visitors to the site; but the ones you really want to concentrate on are the ones that keep coming back. Linking your web analytics with a marketing automation system can show you when your contacts are on your site.

Use a combination of all the marketing data above to reveal your digital marketing ROI and prove to all your existing customers that you really are worth that retainer they are paying you; and to prospective ones that you can deliver what you say you can.

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to manipulating the sales team**
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