

Mobile Marketing – Get Started Before It’s Too Late...

If it seems like technology and customers are changing faster than ever, it’s because they are. You may feel like you are just starting to hear about mobile marketing on the heels of the social media craze. After all, what’s the hurry to learn about a new marketing tool when you are still trying to figure out whether you need to be on Facebook, Twitter, Google Places, Yelp and now there is Google+.

If you are a local business relying on foot traffic to keep the bills paid, then adding mobile marketing to your existing marketing strategy is no longer optional. Yes, you will want to have a knowledgeable professional help you, but be assured that you will get a great return on your investment in this technology. Just as important, today’s consumers now expect to be able to interact with your business on their mobile devices and if they can’t, they will go elsewhere. It is a safe bet that your competitors are already considering or starting to use mobile marketing.

The first two aspects of mobile that you need to take action on are text (SMS) messaging and a mobile enabled website. There are other aspects of mobile technology such as QR codes, mobile apps and m-commerce, but these can come later after you are comfortable with the initial benefits that mobile marketing can provide for your business.

Mobile enabled websites

A mobile enabled website is important because consumers are using their mobile devices for local search when they are out and about and want to find the nearest place to buy a particular item. Though you may have a website which looks great on their laptop at home, it does not look so appealing when viewed on their much smaller mobile phone screen. A mobile enabled website showing only basic information such as location, hours, phone number and directions with large, easy to push buttons helps ensure that customers come to you rather than your competitors.

Text message marketing

A mobile marketing service provider can easily get you set-up for text message marketing. This involves using a 5 or 6 digit number called a short code to which customers send a message in order to receive communications from you directly to their mobile device. This can include information, alerts, promotions, branded content and much more. By law you can only send commercial text messages to those that have given you permission to do so by opting-in. Therefore, you have to let prospects and customers know that you are running SMS campaigns and provide incentives for them to opt-in to receive messages from you.

Text message marketing should be integrated into your other forms of marketing such as print, radio, TV, in store signage and online advertising. Offering text as a way to respond to an offer or survey can help increase the response rate which in turn boosts the effectiveness of your advertising.

Having text messaging capabilities allows you to reach your customers with news about special offers, promotions and other time sensitive events. Research shows that it takes 90 seconds for the average person to respond to a text message as compared to 90 minutes to respond to an email (CTIA.org). When you want to use one or two day promotions to get

people into the store, a text message campaign can be very effective.

For businesses working by appointment, using text messaging to remind customers about upcoming appointments can save time and money. Reminders can be set-up in advance to go out automatically at the appropriate time, saving your staff the time involved in making phone calls and leaving voice messages. The text messages can also offer the option to reschedule appointments sparing you the trouble of playing telephone tag for this simple task. In addition, the increased revenue from reducing the number of missed appointments can more than offset the cost of using an SMS service.

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