A Beginners Guide to Digital Marketing

Digital Marketing in 2019

Digital marketing has become one of the most commonly used phrase these days. Although it’s easily used in a sentence, but quite often it is not defined accurately. For some it’s a synonym for “Internet Marketing” while others describe it as marketing using electronic devices.

So let’s understand what exactly is Digital Marketing?

Digital Marketing is a term defined to achieve your business objectives and goals using the online channels that include but are not limited to search engines, social media platforms, content creation & advertising in order to educate, engage & market your product or service to potential buyers.

Just a decade ago, if a business wanted to reach out to target customers they would promote using traditional marketing mediums such as TV, radio, print. Simply because that’s where the potential customers’ used to spend their time. However as humans evolved our technology advanced giving rise to a digital revolution. To simply state, people started spending more time on online platforms such as Google, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube etc to stay acquainted with news, entertainment and commerce. Hence, today our lives run on a click.

But does that mean TV, print, radio don’t work any more? No, not at all! We cannot say that traditional marketing efforts do not have any impact. Rather, it goes hand in hand with digital marketing and the distribution has evened out.
Digital has become a part of our existence. From shopping apparel to groceries, furniture & getting laundry delivered everything is online. With this new shift, marketers did not waste anytime and quickly adapted to use social media & other digital tools to push & pull the consumer which gave birth to Digital marketing.

But how to achieve your business or individual objectives using Digital/Internet channels?

No matter the size of your business, digital marketing is the most effective way to grow and achieve your goals which could vary from any of the following:

- Increase revenue
- Build brand awareness
- Market your product or service
- Decrease cost
- Improve efficiency
- Increase productivity
- High return on investment
- Identify loyal customers

Apart from these business objectives, digital channels can be used effectively for:

- Educating & engaging with potential users
- Increase website traffic
- Providing valuable information
- Building trust
- Customer reviews
- Grow online community

Now let’s look at various Digital Marketing Tools:

**Website**

It is imperative in the digital age to own a website. If you are a business owner and don’t have a website you lose on the market opportunity. The information on a website helps in communicating to the customer about the product & overall business credibility. Think about it, any customer will do a basic research before making a purchase, hence having a user friendly and informative site is the first step in showcasing your authenticity.

Through digital marketing you can learn how to design a cost effective website, generate traffic, list your website on directories and search engines.

The basic rule is to design a website that is user friendly, mobile friendly and loads quickly. Here’s a link where you can check if your website is mobile friendly: [https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly](https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly) Apart from mobile friendly or responsive design websites, AMP is becoming more important. Now you can build a website by just using AMP powered by Google just like building a wordpress site. Free of cost with some amazing templates. [https://www.ampstart.com/](https://www.ampstart.com/)
All you need to do is install a plugin called AMP (this plug in allows your website to load faster in mobile: https://www.ampproject.org/)

Search:

A user uses the internet to look for various types of queries. Search result may vary as per the keywords used by the searcher. Search engines like Google have various ways and formats of showcasing results. As business owners, it is our responsibility to utilize the tools provided by search engines and present content to get the best possible outcome.

*But how do these results appear? What happens at the back end? To understand this, we need to understand SEO—Search Engine Optimization*

**SEO**

SEO is a system of generating traffic to your website through organic search. It is the result which appears when a website is optimized at the back end using the right keywords. This helps search engine to showcase the best possible result to a user. The most important factor to remember about SEO is that it is “organic” or “free”. When a user runs a query on Google, the results brought up on the page are a mix of website, blog, video, image, news depending to the keyword used.

There are 5 main types of SEO that we need to know:

1. **On Page SEO**: On page as the name suggests, is done for your own website pages. When you are creating a website, the data and technical aspects are completely in your control. For e.g: Blogs, personal website pages are optimized by following the right guidelines creating a user friendly website, rich content with relevant keywords. All this will help in ranking your website on top search results
2. **Off Page SEO**: Off-page or Off-site SEO is done through external link. This basically implies, your website will rank better in search page if the traffic is generated through other sources that your website. **For example—Social media links, features/mentions/links from a higher traffic website.** For ex—If Times of India gives a link to your website.

3. **Universal SEO**: Data is just not text. On SERP, we see information in the form of video, images, text & audio (VITA). **Universal or blended SEO is a practice to optimise VITA to get maximum weightage and higher ranking.** A few good practices are keyword rich content, quality title & description, crisp URL etc.

4. **Local SEO/Google My Business**: Local SEO is done to promote your business in a local area. If your business has multiple branches or even if it’s a small business/service it is essential to provide your address/location, phone number, timings etc. The idea is to make the user connect with your business easily and effectively.
5. **Technical SEO**: This is the most important type in SEO. In general the above practices are done to generate rich content that will rank on SERP. But in technical, SEO is advanced. This means the data on your website should be interpreted easily by search engine crawlers. The goal here is to upgrade the framework of your site to improve ranking on SERP.
In 2018, search is not subjected to just web pages. We now also have more features like **voice search** & **visual search** that have simplified ways to look up information.

**Voice Search:**

Information can now be looked by the command of your voice. Siri, Google voice, Cortana are some of the common digital voice assistants

Action—Do it now: Search your business using voice search, see what shows up.

Example: [https://www.instagram.com/p/Bcm5LW2jqq_/?hl=en&taken-by=webmarketingacademy](https://www.instagram.com/p/Bcm5LW2jqq_/?hl=en&taken-by=webmarketingacademy)

**Visual Search:**

Earlier we mentioned about optimizing images. This is because search engines do not understand imagery. Hence renaming an image, adding description and alt text are pivotal.
Search engine crawlers understand text-based information given in the images and presents it in a visual form to the searcher. Now you can search using images with Google lens, Google Pixel. Open your Google Assistant, point at a logo and see if your company details are showing up.

Example: https://www.instagram.com/p/BcYir2vDncC/?hl=en&taken-by=webmarketingacademy

**Maps:** Maps have become a big deal! Listing your business on Google maps is essential as it cost effective and helps in drawing local traffic to your website. Searching directions, review, phone numbers, images etc have all become an integral part in everyday life as nobody today uses Yellow Pages. Google maps is one of the most dominant map service we have.
**Answer Box:** “Ask and you shall receive!” Yes, that’s right. When you ask a question by entering appropriate keywords, the SERP displays the answer on the page itself. There is no need to click and visit a website. Whether you want to know the weather or even get a calculator the answer box is right at your service to solve your queries!

**Knowledge Graph:** Have you ever observed the big block on the right hand side of SERP while looking up for specific information pertaining to locations, celebrities, brand etc. The format in which the information is displayed is called the knowledge graph. It’s a crisp way of displaying relevant information in the form of facts, images, social media etc.
Carousel: Try searching for movies or books and the results appear in the format of a carousel.
Local Business Listings: Local business listings is nothing but your business directory. Traditionally we could list our business on Yellow Pages. But remember the pain of searching to pages to find the right contact. We now no longer have use of Yellow Pages as the digital platform allows you to easily list your business with Just dial, Sulekha or Yelp. With just a click, the searcher can locate your address, number, e-mail ID. In the long run, this helps in your ranking and online reputation.

Action—Do it now:

1. Get started with with this free SEO Starter Kit by Google:

2. Get your local business listed for fee with Google My Business GMB:
   https://www.google.com/business/

3. Optimize your videos, images, social media channels:
   https://searchengineland.com/video-optimization-not-underestimate-power-youtube-234618

Search Advertisement:

Traditionally, as a business if you wanted to reach out to a wider audience you could place ads in newspapers, broadcast on TV/radio, use direct mailing or tele-marketing. All these options required huge budgets as they are expensive. It was difficult for startups or small business owners to use most of these mediums. But advertising in the digital age world has changed rapidly & has become cost efficient.

Online marketing consists of two main types of advertising:

1. Search Engine Advertising/Marketing: Search advertising aka PPC (pay per click) basically refer to text ads that are showcased on search engine pages. The results appear due to the keywords used by the searcher. Hence, it’s essential to use at least 12–15 important keywords in your ad. In order to advertise on search engine, you will need an Adwords account which is a very easy tool provided by Google.

2. Display Advertising: This is one of the most common type of ads you might have come across while browsing. It could be in a video or image format and is largely based upon user behaviour. For eg—You’re planning a holiday and want to book tickets on Make My Trip/website. However, for some reason you didn’t make the purchase and close the website. The next time you login to any website such as Facebook/Youtube the exact same product/service will be flashed on your screen.
Action—Do it now: You can get started with Google Adwords with as little as Rs 500: [https://www.google.co.in/adwords/express/](https://www.google.co.in/adwords/express/)

Advantages of Digital Marketing:

It is no surprise that more and more people are devoting their time online to transact or research. **According to a report by Forbes, about 82% consumers research online.** Marketers today are applying digital marketing tactics to reach to the consumers & here’s why you should use digital marketing for your business too:

1. **Cost Effective:** Digital marketing is **economical and most effective way to promote your business as compared to traditional marketing.** With limited budget you can create content & start your campaign. It is you who decides the budget which can even start from something as low as Rs.50/- depending on your business.

2. **Real time results**—The moment your ad is live, you can view the performance. Additionally edits can be done in real time. This way you can understand the situation and take necessary action

3. **PPC**—PPC stands for Pay Per Click. It is a model where the advertiser pays the publisher each time their ad is clicked. Google Ads is the best and easiest platform for PPC.

4. **Targeting**—In case of traditional marketing there is no way to determine the number and the type of people who saw your billboard. With digital marketing it is not easy to target
audience based on their interest, location, behaviour etc. You can create an audience based on your business model and push your ad to the right consumers.

5. **Measurable results**—Be rest assured about the analytics and reports through digital marketing. You will get the most accurate & realistic data that will help you in reaching your goals as well forecast your future sales.

6. **Conversion rates**—It’s much simpler to get conversion online as the customer views the ad & takes action.

7. **Easy Interface**—Setting up ad accounts, building a website, managing social media have become straightforward and clear-cut with easy user interface.

**Disadvantages:**

1. **Privacy/security**—Privacy is one of the biggest concern when it comes to Digital channels. When you click on a product on an ecommerce website, you see the same product following you in most of the website/social media channels (remarketing/retargeting) This is done through cookies. As an Internet user, being aware of how this is targeted will help a user.

2. **Ad blockers**—Ad blocking or ad filtering is a type of software that can remove or alter advertising content from a webpage, website, or a mobile app. More on Ad blocking here: [https://www.iab.com/insights/ad-blocking/](https://www.iab.com/insights/ad-blocking/)

**Social Media:**

Social media is the biggest aspect of Digital Marketing. Most of us have some footprint on social media platforms. It allows us connect with like minded individuals/groups, share ideas and build professional network.

On a business level websites like Facebook & Instagram help to engage with the real time customer, provide valuable information and reach out to a huge audience at minimal costs.

**Advantage of Social Media**

1. **Free Business page/channel**—Creating a business page on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter is not only easy but its absolutely “FREE”!

2. **Paid Ads**—To reach out to target audience all social media channels requires paid ads

3. **Social Media Advertisements**—SEA is a straightforward and effortless way to target a wide audience, increase profitability & reach business goals.

4. **Influencers Endorsement**—Influencer marketing has gained a huge momentum due to digital channels. It has become a career path for many through endorsements and reviews.

5. **Email**—Email marketing plays a key role too. It’s way to stay connected & updated about the latest buzz in the market, your favourite brands, closing transaction deals etc.
6. **Content Marketing**: Unique content is what works on social media. If you want to stand out and make an impression in the digital realm, then your content has to be top notch and versatile. Provide valuable information and educate the consumer through videos, images, text, audio, e-books, slide share etc

**Content Marketing:**

Useful/Valuable information in various formats Video, Audio, Image, PDF’s, ebooks, PPT’s, Reports, Research downloads

**Action—Do it now:**

1. Create visual content using [www.canva.com](http://www.canva.com)

2. Create easy video using free Quik app

7. **Dynamic**: Digital Marketing is dynamic and on-going. It keeps evolving day after day and as users & marketers we need to keep adapting to changes. Everyday there is a new app that’s launched or new update by Google to it’s existing feature. Keep this in mind we must understand that digital marketing is not the only practice. So while you might be an expert in using Instagram, you also need to know about Twitter or Snapchat and make use of it to grow your business. Do not restrict your business with just one platform

8. **Brand Building**—It is a known fact that brand building or brand reputation is a long-term process. While digital marketing gives you a push to create brand awareness, you must acknowledge that brand building with yield results with effort and continuation. So you might go viral in a day but how you sustain & use technology in the right way is the game changer for success.

**What is not digital marketing?**

1. **Multi Level Marketing**—Digital marketing is not multi level marketing. It certainly provides a medium to build brand reputation through social media but it is not a good practice to indulge into MLM.

2. **Quick rich schemes**—Most often people think they can can quick money online with the help of affiliate marketing. However, the challenge is building traffic takes time & only happens with your creativity to provide valuable content.

3. **Junk mail/Spam**—Never indulge in purchasing data and more so never send junk email to hundreds of unknown database. That’s spamming and invasion of privacy. Eventually you will lose business and reputation.

**Who can do Digital Marketing?**—You can! No matter what industry you belong to you can do digital marketing!

- If you are planning to start a business
- If you are an individual looking to share your hobby, your experience
- A start up enterprise
- Students
Consultant or freelancer
Non-profit organization seeking to raise funds

Anyone and all of the above can learn and grow with digital marketing.

Digital Marketing in 2018:

Digital marketing is dynamic and updated every day. The future of digital marketing has a lot to do with Artificial Intelligence, automation and technical expertise. Should you be worried?

Yes and No—digital marketing has evolved and changed quite a bit, however all the big players including Google, Facebook, Instagram are good in simplifying these techniques for a common users. A basic understanding of all the channels and keeping up by reading latest updates through each of the platforms official blog can help:

Action—Do it now:

1. Subscribe to Google Official Blog
2. Bookmark these official blogs
3. Industry update: search engine land, content marketing institute, social media examiner

The state of Digital Marketing in India:

Here’s some interesting facts about India’s Digital Impact

https://www.w3trainingschool.com/top-10-digital-marketing-case-study-indian-brands


1. Digital India: is a campaign launched by the Government of India to ensure that Government services are made available to citizens electronically by improved online infrastructure and by increasing Internet connectivity or by making the country digitally empowered in the field of technology. It was launched on 01 July 2015 by our honorable Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The initiative includes plans to connect rural areas with high-speed internet networks. Source: Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_India

Digital India initiatives—http://digitalindia.gov.in/di-initiatives

2. Internet: Digital transformation will take India’s internet users from 373 million (28 percent of population) in 2016 to 829 million (59 percent of the Indian population) in 2021. Source: https://yourstory.com/2017/06/india-internet-users-report/

3. Fundings: In Q3 2017, $3.6 Bn has been invested across 277 Indian tech startups, a 28% growth in startup funding and 25% growth in the number of deals with respect to Q2 2017. Source: https://inc42.com/datalab/indian-tech-startup-funding-startups-q3-17/
4. **Faster data:** The monthly data consumption on every smartphone in India is estimated to grow nearly five times from 3.9 GB in 2017 to 18 GB by 2023, Swedish telecom gear maker Ericsson said in its mobility report today. Source: https://brandequity.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/digital/data-usage-per-smartphone-in-india-to-quintuple-by-2023-ericsson/61844566

5. **Cheaper mobiles:** With less than 3000 Rs you get a smart phone in India: https://www.gadgetsnow.com/tech-news/Indias-cheapest-Android-phone-now-costs-Rs-888/articleshow/52010825.cms

6. **Rural Internet penetration:** 50% of India’s internet users will be rural & 40% will be women by 2020: BCG. Read more at: //economictimes.indiatimes.com/articleshow/59802340.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst


**Digital Marketing spend in India:**

Advertising expenditure in India is expected to grow at 10% to reach **Rs 61,204 crore in 2017** over 2016, according to a forecast by WPP-owned media agency GroupM in its report This Year :http://www.livemint.com/Consumer/ZMMO64fyHGq0VT0Lbb8qJJ/Ad-spending-in-India-to-grow-at-10-in-2017-GroupM-report.html

http://www.pcquest.com/indias-digital-marketing-has-grown-at-33-annually-in-last-6-years/


What does this mean? Opportunity for everyone, including businesses, individual and brands

**Future of Digital Marketing in India**

1. **JIO & recent ISP**—In the past few months, we saw the rise and Indian ISP’s competing against each other. With 40% connections, Reliance Jio becomes India’s largest broadband provider in just 6 months : http://www.businesstoday.in/sectors/telecom/with-40-per-cent-connections-reliance-jio-becomes-indias-largest-broadband-provider-in-just-6-months/story/251294.html

What does this mean ? We will be seeing more competition, reduction the price which will help entrepreneurs, small businesses use it to its advantages.

2. **Voice Search & Voice Assistance**—With the launch of Amazon Alexa in India, Google Home, Siri and other voice assistants, Voice is becoming one of the latest in the way we
search: 20% of queries on its mobile app and on Android devices are voice searches by Sundhar Pichai, Google IO [https://marketingland.com/google-io-177651](https://marketingland.com/google-io-177651)

3. AI—Major search engines, social media channels are betting big on AI, we are already using AI, from Google search to Google Ads to Facebook messenger to Algorithm, AI is part of the core algorithm, Sundar Pichai says the future of Google is AI [https://www.theverge.com/2017/10/4/16405174/ceo-sundar-pichai-interview-google-ai-artificial-intelligence-interface](https://www.theverge.com/2017/10/4/16405174/ceo-sundar-pichai-interview-google-ai-artificial-intelligence-interface) As digital marketers, keeping an eye and knowing how AI will have an impact on how Digital Marketing is done in India and abroad

4. Other things to keep an eye on: Bitcoin, VR, AR, Wearables, IOT

**Myths Vs Reality of Digital Marketing:**

1. **Build and it will come**—We wish, but that’s not how it works now, you have to get the attention, distribute, market, measure

2. **Digital marketing fast results**—Effective and instant but to see results, it does take time just like any other activities

3. **Digital marketing is easy**—Easy, but being creative is touch and to get good at it you have to work your way up

4. **Tools can automate and I don’t have to work**—Not so soon :)

5. **Social media is free**—Pages and accounts are free but to reach to the right audience you have to spend

6. **I can start my own business**—Yes, but just like any other business it takes time to build your business online too.

7. **Can work from home**—Sure, you have to hustle to get to where you want to be.

8. **Can get rich fast**—There is no such thing as get rich fast. It was easier like 10–15 years ago not anymore

**How Digital marketing is done?**

**Who does Digital Marketing?**

1. **Outsource**: There are specialized agencies whom you can outsource it to

2. **In house**: Hire digital marketers to work for your company or clients

3. **Consulting**: You can become a consultant if you are well versed in Digital Marketing

4. **Freelancing**: Resources: Upwork, Fiverr

If you are new you might have to learn/upgrade your skills in:
My 10 important New Skills for Digital Marketers

Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning is transforming the way business run today

Resources to learn: Google’s Machine Learning Course (Free) Voice Search, Voice Assistance like Amazon Alexa, Google Home is growing at a rapid phase

Resources to learn: Alexa skills kit Google Actions

Voice shopping is changing the way we shop: Imagine ordering a product without seeing it. It’s unbelievable. That’s possible now! Your #alexa does all the shopping without you seeing it. Take a look at this video:

Resources to learn: Google Answers How to Optimize Content for Voice Search—Search Engine Journal

Technical skills are one of the most wanted skills for Digital marketing

Resources to learn: Code Academy

Google New Ads: Recently Google announced major changes to its advertising platform. Google Ads now adds AI artificial intelligence to its ad platform

Resources to learn: Watch the keynote to learn about Google’s latest ads. We are living in a mobile first to mobile only world, where people expect your websites to load faster and they want information whenever and wherever they are.

AMP (Accelerated Mobile Pages) project from Google designed to make really fast mobile pages

Resources to learn: AMP on Google | Google Developers Voice assistants like Alexa, Google Home, Cortana.

Customer Centric Approach, Customer-centric marketing backed with Data/Insights will help understand the customers better

Resources to learn: Understanding user behaviour—Think with Google

User experience, design is something every marketer should know

Resources to learn: 6 Free UX Design Courses From Top Universities Worldwide

Personalised Searches will dominate as our mobile, assistance are all integrated with our personal devices. Every experience to be tailored just for them.

Mobile searches for “———-for me” has grown over 60 % in the last 2 years: Source: Think with Google
Content is the core of digital marketer in 2018, and moving forward Customized Personalized Content will dominate

- Free certifications
- Or find a Mentor. Resources to How to find a mentor

Careers in Digital Marketing

Mobile has changed everything. We live in a world with a lot of choices, brands, and a hundred other career choice.

When we’re deciding on our own career it is an important decision—like which career to pursue, or training institute to choose—it’s natural that we’d not only consult friends and family, but also do an in depth research online. These are big decisions, after all.

How do go about finding the right Digital Marketing Institute?

You can find it yourself with these handy tips

Case Studies:

4. Individuals: 106-Year-Old Cook Is World’s Oldest YouTuber—YouTube

Hope you find this useful if you think it was useful please do share

If you like to get started in Digital Marketing, please give us a call 8792299538 or email Suresh at web marketing academy dot in

About: Suresh babu, Founder, CEO, Web Marketing Academy | Digital Marketing/Corporate Social Media Trainer | B-School Visiting Faculty