PULSE
MARKETING

THE FUTURE OF MARKETING.

WHAT WILL YOUR MARKETING LOOK LIKE IN 2017?

by Pulse Marketing

Source: Erik Devaney, Content Strategist -HubSpot

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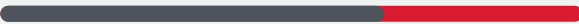
THE FUTURE OF MARKETING
INTRODUCTION

If we could see the future, marketing would be a heck of a lot easier.

Imagine knowing which online channels your prospective customers would be hanging out on a year or two from now; or knowing what types of content those prospective customers would be consuming.

Armed with these future insights, you could spend less time trying to understand your target audience and more time engaging that audience.

Or imagine knowing ahead of time which emerging technologies would end up having the biggest impact on your bottom line. You wouldn't have to worry about figuring out which tools you should be investing your time and energy into. If you could see the future, you'd just know.

Unfortunately—and I know this may come as a shock—engineers have yet to master the whole time travel thing.

So for now, we'll need to continue to analyze past performance in order to inform the marketing we do in the present. That doesn't mean, however, that we can't make some informed predictions as to the way things are headed.

Inbound marketing, after all, is "future proof," in the sense that it sits beneath all of the changes that can (and do) occur. As new networks and technologies emerge— and existing networks and technologies evolve—we can incorporate those changes into the inbound methodology of attracting, converting, closing, and delighting.

In this guide, we'll explore some of the biggest marketing trends that you'll be likely to encounter in the next few years, along with some tips for how you can capitalize on them.

DATA
DRIVEN

According to a study from the Leapfrog Marketing Institute, 93% of CMOs agree that they are under more pressure to deliver measurable ROI (return on investment) today than ever before.

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What's more, a recent State of Inbound survey shows that "proving the ROI of marketing activities" is the number one challenge marketers are facing.

Well hardly a novel concept, data-driven marketing is becoming less and less of a "nice-to-have" and more and more of a necessity. Marketing isn't something that you can haphazardly throw money at any more; all investments need to be accounted for and tied back to the bottom line.

In the past, marketers often relied on gut instincts and personal preferences in order to make decisions. When faced with questions like, "Which color should we use for this?" or "Which bit of text should we use for that?" the answer was usually something along the lines of, "Whichever one we feel like using."

In the future, data--not opinion--will inform marketers every step of the way.

So, when faced with questions like, "Which color should we use for this?" or "Which bit of text should we use for that?" the answer will be something along the lines of, "We'll use the one that performed better in the A/B test."

Today, businesses around the globe are embracing a more scientific, quantifiable approach to marketing. And this approach requires collecting and analyzing data. Lots of data.

Historically, marketing has been heavy on the theories and short on the facts. But since the advent of marketing analytics software, which can measure website visits and CTA clicks and conversion rates and more, the art of marketing has been gradually transforming into a science.

In order to maximize engagement and, ultimately, drive more business, marketers need to scientifically analyze what's working and what isn't.
The first step: Make some observations. Monitor the metrics that are important to your business and report on those metrics regularly.

Some of the metrics we like to report on include:

Digital Ad Definitions:
    Impressions: The number of times an ad has been viewed, regardless of whether the user has actually interacted with the ad in any way.
    Conversions: A conversion happens when someone clicks your ad and then takes an action, such as an online purchase or a call to your business.
    CPC (cost-per-click): This would be the amount paid every time someone clicks on an advertisement.
    CTR (click through rate): Expressed as a percentage of total impressions, this statistic shows how often people who view an ad, actually click on it.

Once you've developed some benchmarks, or a baseline of how your marketing machine is operating, you can start asking questions, such as: "Why is this metric always so low on this day?" or, "What caused this huge increase in this metric? (And how can we repeat it?)". From there, you can start forming—and testing--some hypotheses.

Ultimately, the more you can learn about who your customers are, and how your marketing/sales funnel is performing, the better you'll be at predicting which of your new leads will have a high likelihood of becoming customers.

The tricky part, of course, is bringing together all of the relevant data and crunching the numbers.

PERSONALIZED
CONTENT

74%

Of online consumers get frustrated with websites when the content they see on the page has nothing to do with their interests.

According to a study from Janrain, nearly three-fourths (74%) of online consumers get frustrated with websites when the content they see on the page has nothing to do with their interests.

This is just one indication that the traditional, one-size-fits-all approach to serving content is on the decline.

In a world where music streaming services like Spotify and Pandora allow listeners to create personalized playlists and radio stations, and commerce websites like Etsy and Amazon provide shoppers with personalized purchase suggestions, it's becoming more and more imperative for marketers to incorporate personalization into their strategies.

And no, we're not just talking about adding first names to the beginnings of emails (although that can potentially help you increase your click-through rates).

The goal of personalization isn't to creep people out by showing how much of their personal information you can spit back at them; the goal is to provide people with an experience that reflects their past preferences and behaviors, and that anticipates what they are going to want or need next.

For example, if someone downloads your ebook on "X", and then downloads your ebook on "Y", you can send them a personalized email containing your ebook on "Z".

Keep reading... You're almost done. It would be a shame to give up now...

INTEGRATED
MARKETING

Back in the day, your marketing channels and tactics existed in silos.

You did your search engine optimization (SEO) over here, and your social media marketing over there, and then you did your blogging someplace entirely different.

> **If you want your marketing to be great, you must optimize, socialize, and integrate. It's that simple.**

The problem with this setup, of course, is that it's nearly impossible to get all of the different technologies being utilized to communicate with one another. When you're working with a "Frankensystem," i.e., a system that's hobbled together from bits and pieces of different technologies, there's no easy way to get a holistic view of your marketing.

Since the advent of integrated marketing platforms, the headaches surrounding Frankensystems have started to disappear. Using an all-in-one system, you can manage your SEO, social media, blogging, landing pages, CTAs, email, marketing automation, and analytics all in one place.

Instead of logging into eight different software tools, you can log into one.

What's more, with an integrated marketing platform, there's no risk of getting confused by disparate naming conventions or different ways of calculating certain metrics. Instead, everything is streamlined.

One of the pieces that's been largely missing from the marketing integration puzzle? Paid advertising. But of course, that's going to change.

Now, for you inbound marketing purists out there, you might be thinking to yourselves, "Paid advertising? That's against the rules!"

The reality, however, is that businesses looking to jumpstart their growth can benefit from paid advertising … provided they use it correctly. That means developing a comprehensive list of keywords you're trying to target, doing research to figure out how competitive those keywords are, and—of course—tracking your conversions so you know what's working and what isn't.

Keep in mind, however, that with paid advertising, you're really only renting your audience: Once you stop putting money in, the ads disappear and so does the audience.

To be clear, you don't need to invest in paid advertising. However, if you do want to supplement your inbound activities with some paid ads, keeping a tight integration with the rest of your marketing software will make life a heck of a lot easier.

Of course, this isn't just true for paid advertising. In the future, your sales and services technology will also be integrated into an all-in-one solution.
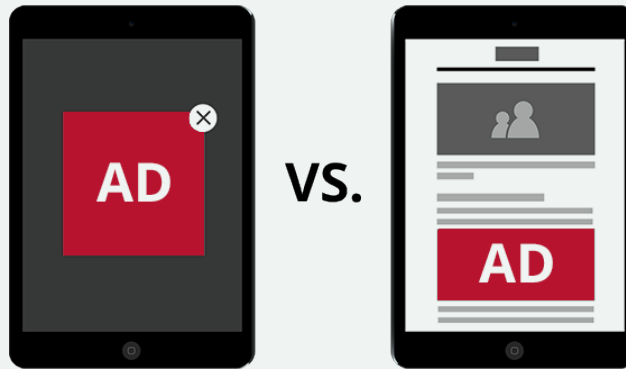
NATIVE
ADVERTISING

Despite all the hype, native advertising remains a fuzzy concept for most marketers.

So, given the lack of awareness (and people mistaking it for other things, like sponsorship), we thought it would be a good idea to give you a few examples:

Ever notice one of those "sponsored by" or "brand publisher" or "paid post" tags on an article you're reading? That's an example of native advertising in action.

In addition to "sponsored stories" appearing in publications both new (e.g., BuzzFeed) and old (e.g., The New York Times), examples of native advertising include:

- Paid video ads on popular YouTube channels
- Paid content or sponsored online articles
- Sponsored products on Amazon

Instead of interrupting people, native ads are designed to fit naturally into the publications (or other media) people are enjoying. The ad is the content, and vice versa.

Back in 2013, the total amount spent on native advertising, according to BI Intelligence, was $4.7 billion.

In 2015, it was estimated that native ad spends reached around $11 billion.

And in 2017, that figure is projected to reach about $17.5 billion.

"Traditional" online advertising, on the other hand, will have several hurdles to contend with in the next few years.

Google, for example, has already started blocking video ads (made with Adobe Flash) in its Chrome browser. (Or, more accurately, the updated browser pauses Flash ads from loading automatically, so users can decide whether or not they want to engage.

Apple, meanwhile, now lets you download apps that block ads in its Safari browser--a move that's causing quite a stir.

A $70 billion mobile-marketing industry hangs in the balance, according to The Wall Street Journal. If fewer and fewer iPhone and iPad users are seeing ads, publishers will be making less and less money. The stage will be set for a new model to take over.

When used correctly, native advertising offers marketers an opportunity to expand their reach without interrupting anybody.

MOBILE
FRIENDLY

Since the release of its "Mobile Friendly" update in 2015, Google doesn't just consider mobile optimization an important factor for user experience, it uses mobile optimization as a ranking factor.

When it comes to optimizing your website for search, and to providing a consistent experience to visitors who are accessing your site from a variety of different devices, Google recommends using responsive design.

With responsive design, content automatically adapts to different screen sizes and orientations. The technology also employs the same HTML and uses the same URLs across all devices, which makes it easier for search engines to crawl and index your website's pages.

Best of all, responsive design can adapt to new, internet-enabled devices as they appear on the market.

While once confined to clunky computers, the internet is now available across countless devices; from phones, tablets, and wearables, to smart TVs, refrigerators, and cars. According to The Internet of Things report from the MIT Technology Review, in 2017 we can expect there to be more than 20 billion internet-connected devices in the world.

Are you ready for the future?

High Five! You did it...

Even if you skimmed through the entire eBook, technically it still counts.

AWARD-WINNING CREATIVE

Because you shouldn't accept anything less.

Our team has won multiple national and international awards for our creative work. We don't settle for mediocre and neither should you. Quality design and creative is what separates most companies from their competitors and adds value to your product or service.

ABOUT US

Pulse Marketing is a full-service Marketing and Advertising Agency at the Heart of Creative. Blending strategic marketing plans with the art of creative services, we redefine marketing by looking beyond conventional ideas. Our mission is to accelerate your company's presence and transform you into an industry leader through strategy and creativity; giving you the competitive edge in print, advertising, digital, video, and web design.

"We are a collaborative team of expert story-tellers who know how to best engage consumers. Our quality of work separates us from most as we believe that excellence comes standard. We are empowered by the innovative opportunities that we bring to the ever-growing business community." - Serena Mastin

SERENA MASTIN, PRESIDENT
PULSE MARKETING INC.

WE SERVE OTHERS

Our mission is to serve others before ourselves, by exceeding expectations and supporting their journey to become industry leaders.

WE ARE RELENTLESS

Our purpose is to accelerate the success of others by our relentless pursuit of excellence.

WE INVEST IN PEOPLE

We invest in people. We believe that relationships are the foundation of success and when you invest in people, you naturally see results.

CREATIVITY & COLLABORATION
Make each day your masterpiece.

SOLUTION DRIVEN
If all else fails, Google it. We will find a solution.

GROWTH & LEARNING
Always pursue growth and learning.

RELATIONSHIPS & TEAMWORK
Alone we are smart, together we are brilliant.

PASSION & PERSEVERANCE
Passion is the foundation of excellence.

TRANSPARENCY & FEEDBACK
We do what we say we're going to do. We embrace feedback.

PULSE MARKETING SERVICES

STRATEGY

ADVERTISING

CREATIVE

"Creativity is intelligence having fun."

- ALBERT EINSTEIN

WEB DESIGN

DESIGN

VIDEO

THANKS FOR CHECKING OUT OUR eBOOK… WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU.

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