
Usage Of Digital Marketing for Business

Digital marketing budget has been identified as one of the main challenges for businesses in the hospitality industry. Investing in the right digital marketing platforms is essential for all businesses to help reach their target audience. According to the tour company and hotel managers, budget allocation and management for digital marketing is a must and different scales of business have different limits on their budget. The bigger the business the more money they have. How much money should they use to bring customers to their products and services? It is what all businesses have to define, to plan out their budget strategies. It is not needed to invest in all digital marketing channels. Nevertheless, for most small businesses such as cafés and restaurants that were interviewed, the digital marketing budget is not one of their major challenges compared to bigger organizations as they required less budget to do their marketing on digital platforms. Therefore, identifying the channels that are most relevant for the business is crucial. Digging into customer insight can help them to determine their budget to spend on each platform because once they know their customer behaviours they can tailor their digital marketing strategies to meet the needs of varying customer groups on different platforms. Which platforms have more target audiences they might spend more on that? Moreover, when they pay up to a certain level to acquire new customers and communicate to retain their existing customers even though they spend more money, it doesn't mean that the number of customers will increase accordingly to the price they pay. If they pay an inadequate amount, there is also a chance to lose to their customer and revenue. Another relevant factor, creating a strong brand awareness helps generate direct traffic to the sites which lead to fewer funds to boost their visibility as it is already ranked on the top when customers search with all the possible keywords relating to the business. Once their business is recognizable, they will be able to create organic traffic to their digital platform sites and that can help reduce the cost of digital marketing and that means that businesses are making more profits, and all they have to do is to maintain the brand consistency as any inconsistency and weak presence will undermine its value and trust of customers.

One of the key challenges in using digital marketing for businesses that are related to the hospitality industry is digital readiness. Digital readiness is a significant factor in building the business's competitiveness to keep up with the changes. According to most of the interviewees, they said that keeping up with the constantly-changing technology trends to stay current and relevant is vital for the businesses regardless of the level or size of the businesses. Due to the rapid development of today's technology, perhaps it can cause some belatedness in catching up with the trends which can lead to a lack of digital readiness and lack of understanding of technology implementation and that is an obstacle that blocks the use of digital technology at full efficiency. As said by businesses that were established before the digital age era or owners that are not tech-savvy, they tend to have slower progress in catching up with trends. However, they are currently adjusting and adapting themselves to survive in these circumstances. Otherwise, they may have faced an extinction of their businesses. The changes in technologies have affected and forces all sizes of businesses to re-examine their skills to overcome digital disruption regarding the preparation of digital readiness, analyzing and understanding the digital readiness of individuals is crucial so that employers can help their employees with the process of supporting and building digital readiness and reducing talent gaps within workforces. Some stubborn businesses or employees may resist any change in the first place until they are aware

of the real impact of what the change will bring them. The quicker businesses can adapt themselves to a digital environment, the more it will benefit. Being able to work in a digital environment efficiently will truly help their productivity. Digitally ready businesses will be able to carry the change forward and deliver success. It helps businesses with customer retention, prevent business from being irrelevant to customers, stay competitive and have greater opportunities.

As said by most of the interviewees that changes in consumer behaviour are another challenge to their businesses. Consumer behaviour has changed over time. It cannot be denied that technology trends play a big role in changing their behaviour and taste. Thus, knowing customers and understanding their needs and expectations has become essential to the growth and success of the businesses and all businesses have to formulate and implement their marketing strategies that meet the demands of customers regarding social trends. As stated by managers and owners, consumer purchasing decisions are more complex than before as customers will use all kinds of media they have to help them make decisions whether or not to use the products or services by comparing product information, price and worthiness and also looking for user-generated content such as review on the blog. These days, customers, especially millennials, enjoy experimenting with products and services as they are more likely to be open to new concepts of innovation. They tend to be more curious about unusual or interesting things seen online or on social media. As well as, less loyal to a particular brand, they tend to switch from brand to brand to find experiences that meet their expectations and more easily to convince by influences on social media or peer pressure. As mentioned by the four companies that interviewed, customers are more likely to travel by themselves and less travel with a tour company and that results in additional services to the companies such as selling theme park tickets that are cheaper than buying directly from the ticket box. Also, one GM and café co-owner said that one of the reasons why customers are not returning, is not only because of the quality of the products or services but because they like to try new things and new experiences and that makes them hop around to try different brands. In addition, accessing online sites that take a long time to load may cause insufficient patience for customers. Therefore, all sites must be in mobile-friendly formats in line with the smartphone usage habits of customers in this era. Moreover, customers expect consistency in experiences on digital platforms. Immediacy has become necessary in connectivity as customers are being more familiar with conversational interactions with brands. They expect businesses to respond and interact with them in real-time.