

Digital marketing trendsetting, in 2017 and beyond



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If you want to stay ahead of the pack, there are six top trends to keep an eye on in the digital and social marketing realm as 2017 sets off from the starting blocks...



Trend awareness can help you stay ahead of the pack. Image: levgen Onyshchenko © – [123RF.com](#)

There is considerable movement online with the following activities at the forefront:

- **The evolution of Instagram marketing:** Currently, Instagram Ads are pretty straight forward – sponsored post amidst your timeline. We are going to see an evolution of this. Brands taking paid advertising on Instagram to new heights. Expect to see much more of the bigger brands that you love present on the platform.
- **Video content continued growth:** We have seen a lot of great video content in 2016, inclusive of all the grand 360 stuff brands have been playing with. My hunch is that video content is far from reaching its sell-by date.
- **AR lenses and filters:** Pokémon Go and Snapchat selfie lenses brought augmented reality (AR) to the forefront of global attention last year, and in 2017, we'll likely see Facebook becoming a major player and leader in the AR space.
- **The rise of search:** Facebook's Q2 earnings revealed that Facebook now gets up to 2 billion searches per day. Search could also prove to become a key part of increasing your reach on Facebook and driving attention to the content you post on the platform.
- **Data and analytics at the forefront of all marketing strategies:** Web and social analytics will become a lot more integrated across all channels and departments as brands look to gather feedback on their respective products and marketing efforts.
- **The death of organic content on Facebook:** It sounds like a bit of a dramatic statement to make, but with Facebook announcing the change in news feed algorithms that looks at prioritising a user's friend or family's content over that of publishers and brands, it is easy to see where this is headed. Despite a user liking your brand's page, they will not automatically see new posts that you publish. The only way to be seen is to put your money where your mouth is.

Jumping aboard these trends will ensure that brands have the luxury of time to test the theories that these trends bring. It also offers the opportunity of being trendsetters in the industry and leading by example. Most often than not, we remember brands that are the first to do something in the industry. It also allows marketers to explore new and fresh ways to target their audiences.

Tips for your 2017 digital strategy

Advertising content has seen a massive shift since previous years with brands now opting for a more story-telling approach that looks at building relationships first and selling secondary to that. And the channels? Facebook and Instagram to infinity and beyond. Twitter seems to be fading, with dark posts the future! They allows marketers to target a very specific audience group that also eliminates the tedious high numbers of admin posts that would otherwise spam their audience. Imagine a world of no spam timelines... blissful, isn't it?

Consider the current digital landscape as it stands AND consider all massive trends when planning your digital strategy. Ensure that these trends fit with your current audience base and ensure that your brand is where it needs to be (ie the relevant channels such as websites, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.) If you don't, you stand the risk of alienating an audience base worthy of converting, or worse – marketing to them in the wrong way.

Understanding HOW customers wish to be marketed to in present day is vital to the success of any campaign. You don't have to be everywhere... you have to be at the right place at the right time.

ABOUT SERENA SEUNARAIN

Picture loud, proud and completely opinionated... After what seemed like years of exploring, it dawned on me seven years ago that my passion lay within the realm of all things digital. Be it copywriting, strategy or analytics, my passion for the digital world became an ongoing interest and is now a dream I find myself living at Artifact Advertising...
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