THE ART OF

DIGITAL MARKETING

THE **DEFINITIVE GUIDE** TO CREATING STRATEGIC,
TARGETED AND MEASURABLE ONLINE CAMPAIGNS

IAN DODSON

Co-founder and Director of The Digital Marketing Institute

WILEY

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Preface

The Digital Marketing Institute is the global certification standard in digital education for learners, educators, and the industry. Ours is the world's most widely taught digital marketing certification program, and there are more graduates certified by us than by any other industry body. Our mission is to establish a series of global professional standards to which both employers and professionals can subscribe. That is why we founded the Digital Standards Authority, an industry-based working group that defines and validates Digital Marketing Institute courses. The DSA validates our development of internationally recognized and respected standards that support digital marketing education by ensuring consistency in our industry-certified training.

Digital technology has transformed the way we live and work and has impacted every industry from retail to health care. Now more than ever, organizations and their employees face the challenge of developing and maintaining their business operations and customer engagement in a constantly evolving digital space. In a recent survey, only 37 percent of American employers said that they thought that recent college graduates are prepared to stay current on new technologies.[1] The increasing digital skills gap and consequent need for training is unmistakable, and something that we are dedicated to addressing.

Our goal is to empower professionals with the digital skills and knowledge needed to take control of their careers and maximize their potential. We achieve this through our courses, which are designed and developed by industry experts. This means that all of our course content is informed by industry best practices, current trends, and innovative insights that help our students cultivate a competitive edge within an in-demand industry.

The professional diploma in digital marketing, with which this textbook aligns, is our keystone certification. Composed of 10 modules, it provides an introduction to the key digital specialties: everything from mobile and social media marketing to SEO and analytics. We believe in equipping individuals with essential skills that endure, and knowledge that they can easily implement, regardless of their roles, size of their companies, or scope of their industries. We specialize in transferable, flexible learning, which is reflected in the Digital Marketing Institute's online study options. Our course

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[1] Hart Research Associates, *Falling Short: College Learning and Career Success*, accessed December 17, 2015, https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/2015employerstudentsurvey.pdf.

Professional Diploma

Specialist Diploma

Postgraduate Diploma

Masters

Digital Marketing
Digital Selling

Search Marketing
Social Media Marketing
Mobile Marketing
Digital Strategy & Planning

Digital Marketing

Digital Marketing

Figure 0.1   The Digital Marketing Institute's Certification Roadmap

content is available online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and students can access it whether they're at home on their laptops or on mobile devices on their way to work.

We want to make learning simple, accessible, and convenient. That's why we developed this textbook. It's an all-inclusive introductory guide that will teach you everything you need to know to kick start your digital marketing career. You can read it chronologically or prioritize the chapters that interest you most; like our courses, this book was created to allow you to study during your own time and at your own pace, and you can always refer back to it whenever you need to!

The Art of Digital Marketing has been designed to integrate with the professional diploma in digital marketing to produce a comprehensive learning experience. Each chapter relates to a module in the course and the book provides complete coverage of the course syllabus and contains only the most essential points of learning that will best prepare you to pass your exam and gain an internationally recognized and respected digital marketing certification.

Both the professional diploma in digital marketing and *The Art of Digital Marketing* are given their structure from the Digital Marketing Institute's iterative process, which focuses on monitoring, analyzing, and enhancing your digital marketing activities based on their results. That means with the help of this textbook (and by the end of the course, if you are taking it), you will be able to design, develop, and execute a fully optimized digital marketing strategy that incorporates all of the key digital channels.

The professional diploma in digital marketing is at the core of the Digital Marketing Institute's certification road map, which is shown in Figure 0.1.

This provides a framework with which our students can map their personal and professional development. Whether you choose a professional diploma in digital selling, decide to cap your studies with our masters in digital marketing, or simply use this text as an introductory guide, we're there to help you build and expand your career.

Contents

Chapter 1
An Introduction to Digital Marketing

Have you experimented with digital marketing driven by guilt, pressure, or an overeager boss? Have you found your efforts disjointed—frustrating—hit-or-miss? Given the sheer volume of information available on digital marketing, just finding where to start can be challenging. And even when you get started, how do you proceed in a way that ensures you are not wasting your time, effort, or budget?

This book provides you with a framework for applying your digital marketing skills in a structured and iterative fashion. You have now taken the first step towards digital marketing mastery, and pretty soon you will be able to use these skills to produce measureable results and ultimately, a return on investment. What more could you ask for?

What Makes This Book Different?

Not only is this book a fountain of knowledge, jam-packed with all the information you need to start your digital marketing journey, but our practical approach to learning will help you to grasp the key concepts and provide you with the skills required to excel in the digital industry.

Furthermore, this book follows a structured methodology underpinned by DMI's 3i principles. These principles are the framework required for effective digital marketing and they illustrate the need for a totally different approach to traditional marketing.

This methodology is described throughout the 10 chapters of this book, each of which covers one specific channel in the digital marketing repertoire. At the end of each chapter you will be given a specific action plan, and by working through these plans you can create a comprehensive, structured, and successful digital marketing strategy.

Start with the Customer and Work Backward

Successful digital campaigns share a range of characteristics, but campaigns that fail all have one thing in common: They don't acknowledge the empowered and informed consumer.

People Power

It is tempting to describe the evolution of the Internet in terms of names such as Facebook, Lycos, Google, eBay, PayPal, Amazon, Apple, Samsung, Netflix, and Yahoo!, as if the whole story of the web is the story of brands, companies, and technologies. The true evolution of the Internet is chronicled by the story of the empowered individual. You and I own the Internet, and the evolution of the Internet is our story.

The shift from Yahoo! to Google 10 years ago was not a result of Google's marketing—as users we made the leap because we gained more control over how we searched for information. The e-commerce site eBay allowed us to sell anything to anyone for any price at any time. Facebook allowed us to stay in touch with people all over the world whenever and however we like. All the great leaps forward in digital technologies have been characterized by one thing—they have given you and me more control over our lives.

The Internet is fundamentally different from all other communication channels because we can learn so much about our customers. We can identify their habits, their technologies, and their preferences. The freedom that the web offers has fundamentally altered the company/customer relationship, upending it and putting the empowered customer in the driver's seat.

With these advances in communication and web technology, the walls have fallen not only between a company and its customer but between fellow customers, who can publicly share their experiences—the good, the bad, and the ugly!

Market Research versus Market Reality

The primary challenge for any business, no matter how large or small, is quite simple—how to get its product or service into the hands of the customer.

How the company will achieve this is informed by market research, gut instinct, polls, surveys, and research about existing habits and activities. However, when conducting market research, especially surveys, we need to take one key factor into account—people lie!

The Internet enables us to learn from market reality by looking at what people actually do online. We can use social listening tools to research customers' activities and
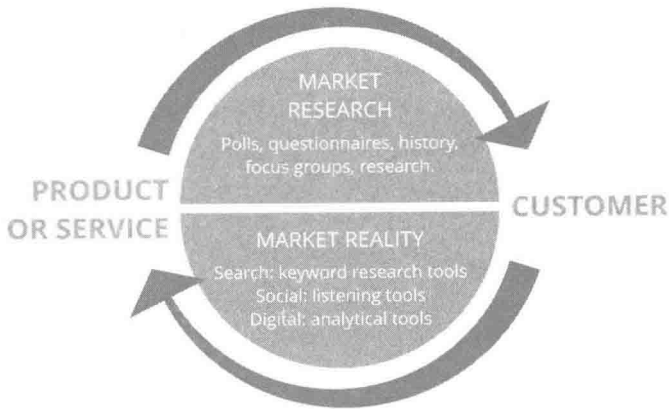
Figure 1.1 **Market Research versus Market Reality**

preferences based on their online habits and to complement our market research, as shown in Figure 1.1. By accessing this market reality, our product is better targeted and our chances of a successful go-to-market strategy are greater.

Let's Make This Real!

Let's imagine that you run a crèche—a nursery school—in New York and you wish to create an online presence for your customers to locate you and engage with you—and with each other. It may be tempting to call this website Crecheworld.com.

However, a simple check using Google's Keyword Planner tool would show that in the past six months the number of unique searches for *crèche* in New York City was dwarfed by searches for *childcare* by a factor of 10! So you may think of your business as a crèche, but your customers call it childcare.

Even this early in the website planning process we have gone to the customers, looked at what they are actually doing, and changed our product appropriately. Market reality provides a sounder basis than market research for making crucial business decisions such as website naming.

Similar listening tools exist for all digital channels, and in each section of this book you will be introduced to the most effective tools for understanding your customers' actual online activities.

You may ask—does that mean that market research is redundant? Of course not. We have differentiated between these two activities in order to highlight the extent of the shift to consumer control. A smart approach is to combine the best of both of these activities into a single cohesive strategy, using one to validate and support the other.

What Are the 3i Principles?

The 3i Principles—Initiate, Iterate, and Integrate—form the foundation for all DMI Methodologies and are key to any successful marketing strategy.

Principle 1: Initiate

Our greatest challenge as marketers is shutting up! Digital truly is for dummies, in the sense that every question you may have about budget, resources, strategy, and channels is answered by the consumer—if only we would listen!

The initiate principle of digital marketing states that the customer is the starting and finishing point for all digital activities. The answer to all questions is "let the customer decide."

Many people are too quick to jump into managing digital channels. They set up blogs, websites, and social media profiles and start publishing nonspecific content about themselves, their companies, and their products. They fail to realize that digital channels are not broadcast channels in the traditional sense of the term.

In fact, they are interaction channels that facilitate a two-way conversation. By taking the time to find out what your customers are doing online, your digital activities will become radically more effective.

Your customers are speaking online. Are you listening?

Principle 2: Iterate

Within minutes of publishing an ad, we can see what the click-through rates, response rates, and conversion rates are. More importantly, the content or design of the ad can be changed a limitless number of times in response to user actions. This ability to publish, track response, and tweak accordingly is the greatest strength of the Internet and produces the second of our 3i principles—*iterate*.

This principle emphasizes the importance of tweaking a digital marketing campaign in response to user interaction. Each digital marketing channel is most effective when you apply an iterative process, and the more iterations of the campaign you apply, the more effective each becomes.

There are some key implications of this iterative process.

To begin with, the first published idea is not necessarily the best. The mythical advertising mogul who devises a killer campaign is a thing of the past. Why? Because

your customers are better at describing what they want than any advertiser is. Remain open to what your customers are doing in their interactions with your campaign and be prepared to change it. Your campaign can, and will, improve over its lifetime.

Next, the length of the iteration depends on the channel. For example, if you send a weekly email newsletter you will review open rates and click-through rates within a day or two of sending your newsletter. You will then apply those insights to your next campaign in terms of what did and did not resonate with customers. So your iterative loop for your specific email marketing campaign will typically be a week long.

Principle 3: Integrate

Integration as a principle is crucial to effective digital marketing. It works at three levels:

1 *Integrate your efforts across digital channels*. Integration across digital channels is about using information gleaned through one channel to improve the effectiveness of another digital channel. It can be as simple as sharing information learned through search engine optimization with your email marketing team. Take our *crèche* versus *childcare* example: When including New York parents in an email marketing campaign for a crèche, using keywords like childcare will help to improve your open rates. Thus, sharing insights learned through one channel can drastically improve the effectiveness of another.

2 *Integrate your digital and traditional marketing efforts*. Integration of digital and traditional marketing involves using information gathered from your digital marketing efforts and integrating it into your traditional marketing strategy. For example, when writing the script for a radio ad you should use the same keywords that resonate with customers using search engines. Any opportunity to learn from your customers can be shared across all channels to improve the effectiveness of all of your communications and marketing campaigns.

3 *Integrate your reporting sources*. Companies who engage with digital marketing obtain an abundance of data about their customers. However, it is important to gather data in a way that allows you to make good business decisions. An integrated view of your customers is a good place to start. Luckily, a lot of the work can be done for you by using a tool such as Google Analytics. For example, this tool can provide you with detailed information on the source of the traffic coming to your website. What percentage of your site visitors come from email versus paid search advertising? Which visitors convert more quickly? Where should you be increasing your digital budget and where should you be reducing it? Making business decisions based on the true value of your digital marketing is a crucial step in implementing and justifying your digital marketing strategy.

So let's take the leap together! Let's discover what digital channels can do for us, and— more importantly—for our customers.

Chapter 2
Search Engine Optimization

An Introduction

Whoever controls the door to the Internet, controls the Internet. And now search engines have become the default entry point to the Internet. We start with a simple search by typing a few words into a search engine, often oblivious to exactly what happens behind the scenes. When we search in Google, for example, we are not actually searching the Internet; we are searching Google's index of the Internet, that is, the list of the sites that it has found online. So the challenge for effective search engine optimization (SEO) involves understanding how search engines work and how to play by their rules.

> Formal definition of SEO: The process of refining your website using both on-page and off-page practices so that it will be indexed and ranked successfully by search engines.
>
> Informal definition of SEO: Smell nice for Google!

Google is not a cheap date. You have to make some effort: take a shower, wash your hair, shave, and put on a spritz of aftershave and some deodorant. Optimizing a website so that it is found and indexed by search engines requires a considerable amount of grooming and this chapter will show you what to do and how to do it.

The Process

In this chapter you will explore the four key stages of the SEO process, as shown in Figure 2.1.

1 *Goals.* From the outset, it's important to be aware of the benefits of SEO. They will serve as key drivers as you navigate the development of your SEO strategy. You must decide upon and set up clear, realistic goals and targets for your SEO campaign. The benefits of

Figure 2.1   Four-Stage SEO Process

spending time developing goals far outweigh the risks of walking the plank blindfolded into the competitive world of search marketing. Just one error could result in a six-month search engine penalization—with SEO, ignorance certainly is not bliss!

2 *On-page optimization.* This deals with the granular, technical optimization of the various elements on your website. It involves ensuring search engines can easily read, understand, crawl through, and navigate the pages of your site to index it correctly.

3 *Off-page optimization.* This refers to techniques used to influence website position in organic search results that cannot be managed by on-page optimization of your site. It's a long-term, iterative process focused on gaining website authority, as determined by what other websites say about you. To put it simply, it's about building a digital footprint and earning online credibility.

4 *Analyze.* This stage is very much a cyclical process. You're now looking at the data coming back, analyzing it, and deciding upon the adjustments needed going forward. This will help you tweak your goals accordingly as you implement additional goals and changes.

Key Terms and Concepts

This chapter covers the key concepts and terminology used within the field of SEO that will equip you with the technical know-how, understanding, and insight to build and maintain an effective SEO strategy. Upon completion of this chapter you will:

- Understand the meaning of SEO.
- Understand organic search listings.
- Understand pay-per-click (PPC) listings.
- Understand the mechanics of SEO.
- Recognize and utilize the three main drivers of SEO.
- Understand on-page and off-page optimization.

Search engine optimization is the process of refining your website, using both on-page and off-page practices, so that it will be indexed and ranked successfully by search engines. With SEO, the best and most cost-effective way to increase your website traffic is to have a high position in organic search listings. Organic search listings refer to the websites that appear in search results based on their relevance to the search term the user has typed.

Search Engine Result Pages: Positioning

Have you ever tried searching for your fantastic new website, only to find it has been lost in the depths of cyberspace and is trailing behind hundreds of other sites? This all comes down to search engine results page (SERP) positioning! After reading this section you will know how to save your site from social Siberia by:

- Identifying and understanding the features of a SERP.
- Appreciating the importance of a SERP.
- Implementing your knowledge to achieve a high SERP listing.

A SERP is the web page that a search engine, such as Google or Yahoo!, returns that lists the results of a user's search. A SERP is divided into core sections. At the top you'll always find paid listings. As you can see in Figure 2.2, these are marked with yellow flags that clearly highlight these entries as ads.

But what about the listings that lie beneath the advertising? These are organic search results, or the listings that are featured on a SERP because of their relevance to the search terms that a user has entered into a search engine.
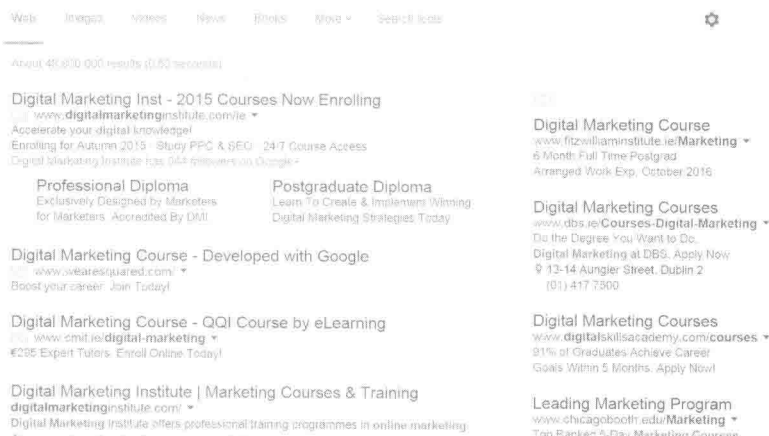
Figure 2.2   Google Search Engine Results Page
Source: Google and the Google logo are registered trademarks of Google Inc.; used with permission.

It's often said that the best place to hide a dead body is on the second page of search engine results, which is why it is essential to ensure your listing is as high as possible on the first SERP. Ninety-one percent of searchers will not click past the first results page, so it's time to adopt a competitive mind-set and strive to achieve a top-three organic listing. Your overall goal is to reach the number-one position!

Organic versus Paid Listings

Listings that are displayed on the first page of search engine results yield the highest search traffic—the higher the listing, the more clicks it will receive. Generally, paid listings will garner a 30 percent click-through rate (CTR), with organic listings making up the remaining 70 percent. While these statistics can vary depending on the market, generally this rule of thumb is widely applicable. It is important to note that as listing positions get lower, click-throughs drastically decrease. Approximately 67 percent of click-throughs on page one of a SERP occur in the first five results. A low listing will ultimately affect your overall conversion rate, so once again, it's important to strive for the top three positions.

Customers can seek information using a variety of different search practices, which is why focusing solely on text-based searches can hinder your SERP positioning and customer reach. Let's build on what we've just learned and take a look at the different ways you can optimize your SERP listings.

Location-Based Search

Search engines take into account the location of the person searching to deliver the most applicable search results. For example, with Google's My Business you can submit your business for display on a location-based search, so when John Smith searches for Italian restaurants in Tokyo, your chances of appearing in his SERP are increased. Be sure to complete all elements of the form by providing a category, description, pictures, videos, and so on to catch user attention. Google operates a five-star rating scheme, so customers should be encouraged to review and rate your business.

While listings with higher review scores and additional material, like those in Figure 2.3, won't necessarily increase SERP positioning, they most certainly will yield a higher CTR than those without these characteristics.

Knowledge Graph Listing

Google's Knowledge Graph tries to understand searchers' intent while anticipating their end goals. It tries to help people discover key information about a particular business that they may not have been able to discover through an organic listing.

For example, if a user searches for information on restaurants in New York City, Knowledge Graph will display both a variety of images at the top of the SERP and a