

How to develop an effective online presence

 By [Lucinda Boddy](#)

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You can enlist as many different digital tools as you like but without a comprehensive understanding of how digital platforms work as part of an integrated online strategy, they will do little for your overall business performance.

To truly be successful in today's world of business, it is essential to develop a considerable online presence. A company website is the primary foundation to accomplish this and as such this must be a valuable content platform that is professionally developed with the user in mind. The purpose of all other online tools is to attract users back to your website.

This can be done in a number of different ways, one of which is to develop content for other websites which are directly related to your area of business and that the target market is likely to frequent. Articles produced should be interesting and at the same time full of strategic key words and phrases for search engine optimisation (SEO). The inclusion of backlinks to the website is another important factor to bear in mind.

Additional ways to build online content include the use of online tools such as Google Alert, Tweet Deck, Social Mention and Trackur to name a few.

Online profiles

Position yourself as an industry expert by creating online profiles on sites such as LinkedIn, ensuring that when people Google a particular industry or profession, your profile will appear. In order to further develop online standing, establish a presence on Twitter as well; regularly tweet interesting information that relates to your field of expertise.

Social media is one of the more complicated platforms to operate because it requires a comprehensive understanding of the target market and how those individuals interact with social media.

Investigate sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Google, YouTube and Pinterest. While it's a good idea to start familiarising yourself with these platforms, keep in mind that for a social media campaign to be truly effective, it requires a well-devised strategy based on the behavioural trends of the target market.

Develop highly targeted promotional messaging through the implementation of email marketing to ensure an audience of potential clients rather than broadcasting promotional messaging to a large segment of the population which may or may not be interested in your business.

Online advertising is another way to make sure that promotional material is viewed by individuals who have already taken an

interest in the service you provide.

Mobile marketing

Mobile marketing strategy is fast gaining traction within the industry. However, this too is a platform which requires in-depth research into the market in question as promotional messaging is sent out to targeted LSM's. In order to launch a mobile marketing campaign, start investigating the acquisition of location-based profiles such as Foursquare and Yelp. Then make sure that the ad content is well suited to the mobile format.

Lastly, it's important to develop some way of measuring the success of any online initiatives. Online tools such as Google Analytics and Spring Metrics help to ascertain whether or not marketing efforts are paying off.

No matter your area of business, online strategy is vital to success and all online messaging must be consistent. Remember that anything you post online has the potential to affect your business either positively or negatively, so it's important to monitor each platform closely and respond accordingly.

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