



Win Today and Cultivate The Future eBook

As a retail marketer you have a unique problem - generating foot traffic at your offline stores while keeping your brand relevant in the ever-changing digital landscape. With sales as the main goal, most marketers can focus on either brand awareness or performance based objectives to achieve this. Retail marketers have to fulfill both objectives at the same time. This guide will help you build a digital marketing strategy that allows you to win customers today while simultaneously preparing your brand for the future.

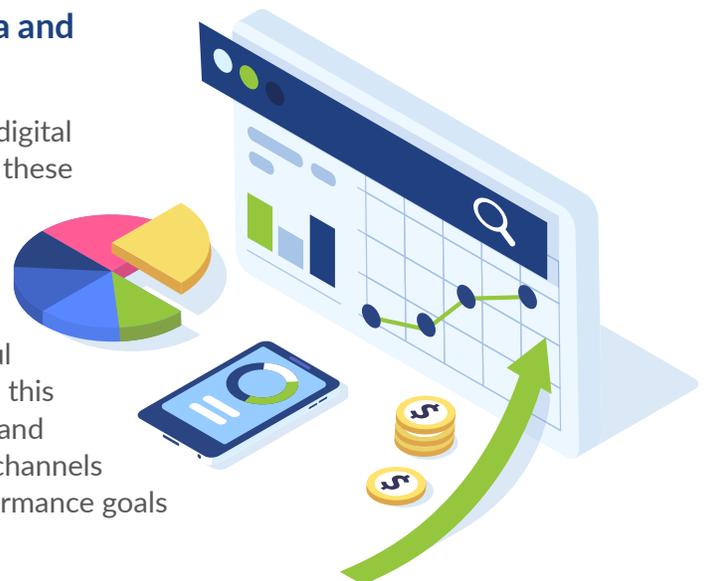
Winning Today

Using a data-first marketing approach to drive sales

Marketers are overwhelmed with the amount of data they are generating today. Yet, according to a survey of CMOs, marketers rank access to advanced analytics as the top barrier to achieving their objectives (1). Your data comes from disparate sources and it isn't easy to understand which channels and initiatives are making an impact on the overall business. There are ways to use marketing data to understand how you are winning new customers today. Here are a couple of examples:

Custom dashboards with real time sales data and campaign metrics

If you have a point of sale system and you also have digital marketing campaigns running, it's important to bring these data sources together and analyze them to make sense of what is going on today, yesterday, last week, last month, and last year. Using a dashboard software like [Tableau](#) or [Google Data Studio](#) will allow you and your team to see your most meaningful marketing and sales metrics in near real time. Having this information at your fingertips will allow you to pivot and adjust easily. In addition, you will understand which channels are working towards achieving your short term performance goals and which are not.



Predictive modeling

It's imperative to use the historical data that you have to predict outcomes in the future. While this isn't a crystal ball, it can help to inform your future marketing campaigns. For example, if your business is dependent on weather forecasts, you can build in historical and predictive weather models to understand its impact on sales (2). This way you are ready to gear up for that seasonal campaign in the Fall once the weather starts to turn and vice versa.

Competitive insights

It's valuable to understand your competitors' marketing strategy and how they are executing it. From a digital marketing standpoint, there are a myriad of tools available for gathering and dissecting this information. Once you have it all in place, it will take a detective-like approach to piece together all of the interconnected parts. For example, you can analyze what your competition is doing on paid search. There are tools like [SpyFu](#), that can directionally tell you how much they are spending, what keywords they are bidding on, and what they are saying in their ad copy. Spending insights are critical too. Knowing how much your competition is spending in your market(s) will let you understand if your budget is making an impact or not.

Customer journey mapping

Customer journeys are a zig zagging maze of devices, website visits, searches, and behaviors. Marketers would love to quantify user behavior. Good luck with that. Instead, use the troves of 1st party data at your fingertips, like website analytics and CRM data, to understand:

- Where people are spending time on your site
- Where are they entering and where are they dropping off
- What are the most effective ways to capture someone deep within your site
- How can you get them to visit your store or make a purchase

Using strategy to determine tactics

Your "win today" strategy should be rooted in business metrics. Improving metrics like foot traffic, comparable store sales, average sales per transaction, average revenue per sale, and customer conversion rates should be at the forefront of any digital marketing strategy. Your strategy will align key stakeholders and your marketing team to accomplish these objectives. You should also incorporate audience data into your marketing strategy. For example, if you have in-house CRM data with thousands, perhaps millions, of contacts, this is invaluable information that can be used to formulate your marketing plan moving forward.

The tactics and channels chosen will be dictated by your strategy. They should align to your objectives and be closely monitored throughout the lifetime of each campaign.

Using a test and learn approach

Testing and learning should be embedded into your team's culture. The only way to understand if something works or doesn't is to test it. Testing starts with a hypothesis. For example, if you want to understand where people are dropping off in an appointment process, you will need to understand where it's happening and formulate a theory as to why. Say you believe, anecdotally, that people are not filling out a form because there are too many required fields. This will be your hypothesis. You will then set up a test on the website to understand if this is true or false. You shouldn't firmly be in one camp or the other, since you have no data to back up this assumption. You can use a number of free tools, our choice being [Google Optimize](#) to conduct the test on your web property.

Cultivating The Future

Continuous brand advertising

Social media and video advertising will help keep your brand relevant now and in the future. It's important to maintain a consistent presence with your target audience. The strategy is to keep your brand front and center, so that when the need arises for your product or service, you will be the first company that comes to mind. Geico does an outstanding job of this, maintaining a consistent presence even though people are only in the market for car insurance every 1-3 years.

There are many ways to measure the success of these campaigns

- Take advantage of platform supplied brand surveys; these will provide insight into how your advertising and creative are working to lift awareness and preference
- Use reach and frequency reports to determine if your ads are generating enough exposure with the target audience to be impactful for awareness and/or preference
- Test multiple creative formats and messages to help you understand what is resonating with your audience and what is not

Modernizing the brand experience

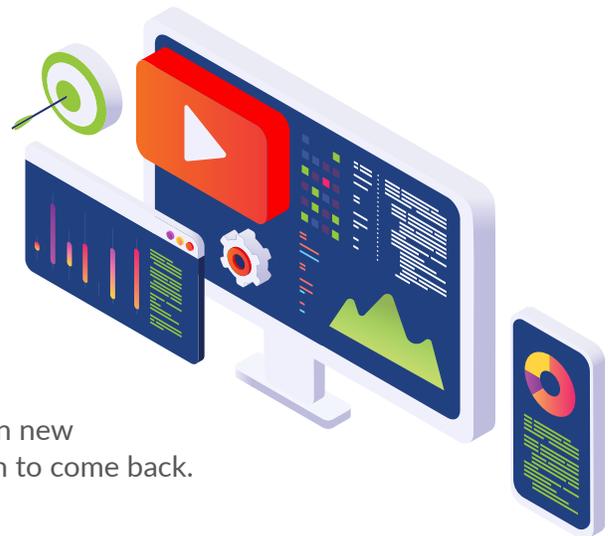
Let's face it, the era of people getting out of their house to buy something is becoming less and less common. The reason? People want to compare prices and products easily. They also love the convenience of being able to shop from the comfort of their own home. E-commerce sales are expected to be 20% of all retail sales by 2022 (3). This will only continue to grow over time. If you are not in a position to become an e-commerce business in the near future, you will need to adapt how you conduct business with the online world. There are many things you can do to make your brand digitally friendly yet draw people to your offline stores:

The first touchpoint with your brand is most likely digital

- You can expect almost all of your new customers to check your website out first - make sure this is a great experience for them
 - Set up heat mapping and user behavior analytics software that allow for individual user tracking so you can better understand how visitors are interacting with the overall site as well as with specific pages
- Make it as easy as possible to transact with you digitally - whether this is through setting appointments online, digital rewards programs, buying online and picking up in store, mobile apps, or even chatbots

Help your customers learn with relevant content

- With content marketing, it's proven that the more you give, the more you'll receive
 - Giving up your company knowledge in the form of relevant content (blogs, ebooks, whitepapers, videos) will simultaneously help your prospective customers learn more on their own while demonstrating that your brand is a trusted authority. For example, Lowe's has a DIY section of their [website](#) that teaches customers how to do almost any home improvement project. While Lowe's sells installation services, they also know that being a trusted resource within the home improvement category will, in the long run, gain new customers and give current customers a reason to come back.



Conclusion

Retail marketing continues to evolve as consumers change their shopping and media habits. With the proliferation of new digital channels, it's critical to understand how to be agile and pivot quickly to meet these changing needs. Mason Digital knows that in order to be relevant, retail marketers need to win new customers today, while planning your own future.

If you'd like to learn more about how we can be your strategic partner, [contact us!](#)

1. [MarTech's Yin and Yang: C-level Marketers' Survey Cites Access to Analytics as their No 1 Barrier](#)
2. [IBM Weather Signals Uses AI to Enable Predictive Weather-based Business Forecasting](#)
3. [Ecommerce takes share but growth cools](#)