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Internet Marketing in 2011 - Something New or More of the Same?

So, what will be the Internet Marketing focus for 2011? Will it be something totally new that will explode on to the scene like Twitter, or will it be more of the same but with a layer of stronger understanding and appreciation?

History shows that it takes time for new concepts to be understood and accepted, thus for 2011 I believe that the Internet marketing focus will be to continue what a company has been doing. The mad rush to be a part of some new fad seems to be fading and it is being replaced by conscientious business practices.

After more than a year of driving home the need to create measurable metrics, to quantify your customer base, and to build a progressive [Internet Presence](#), it seems that 2011 will be the year that more quantifiable operations and marketing initiatives are enacted, and that individuals and organizations will be held accountable. In many ways, 2011 will be the year of execution, as it takes time for ideas to trickle down and to take hold within small businesses, and after a couple of years of reacting it is time to build a strategy and execute.

So, with this in mind, what can we expect for 2011?

The idea of developing a progressive [Internet Presence](#) translates into integrating a company's overall Internet strategy. This is especially important for small businesses; they will need to pay attention to customer interaction with respect to search and the online search impact to the in-store experience and vice-versa.

The concept of understanding your customer continues to lead the direction for any movement into more advanced channels of communications such as: mobile devices, local search positioning, and social media.

Will there be something totally new that comes about in 2011, probably. There are no reins on new ideas, but the idea of being the first into something new or reacting to join in on a new movement hopefully has subsided, and hopefully they have been replaced by a stronger understanding by a company with regards to the where the company's marketing strategy connects with the customer.

With regards to new ideas, I expect new ideas to come about, or existing ideas to be repackaged and presented in a different fashion, as that has always been the process. The best way to navigate through this is to use what you have learned from 2009 and 2010, including the tough times, failures, and successes. Many companies may not have heeded the warning with regards to jumping into Internet marketing without an overall marketing strategy, but maybe they will sit back and accept their past 2-year journey for what it was - on the job training across some rough roads.

In addition, Social Media Advertising will be a major area of focus for small businesses to assist in their access to more customers, and they will need to move beyond paid search. Developing relationships to expand a company's presence and tap into new customer segments will be an essential component to a successful marketing strategy, and this will trickle down into how a company engages their Internet marketing practices.

For some small business it may be time to excel in one area rather than trying to be all things to all customers, while for other business it may be time to take the ropes off and start branching out. The direction that you take will be driven not only by your budget, but also by your understanding of your customer base. Placing an emphasis on specific market segments and developing a complementary definitive source of information, products, and services may be the best direction for some companies.

Lastly, I am a firm believer in OPM (Other People's Marketing) and I continue to recommend co-marketing initiatives to promote a company's products and services. Not only can OPM help to advance your Internet Presence, it can reduce the cost associated with developing new customers.

So, 2011 will be about doing things smarter, with more of a focus, and measure, measure, measure your results, as nothing worthwhile is free.

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