October 2023 Newsletter

In This Issue:

Optimize Your Social Media through Trial and Error

Hiring a full-time social media guru isn't in the cards for most small businesses, and chances are, you're among these businesses that just can't swing a dedicated hire for social media management purposes. What you can do, however, is improve your own skills with social media to help make it as effective for your business as possible.

After all, who better to share about your business and its services than you, the one with a unique perspective and familiarity with what you have to offer? By using social media, you can directly communicate with your audience to share your message in the most effective way.

However, determining what the most effective way is will require...

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How to Devise a Winning Content Marketing Strategy for Your MSP

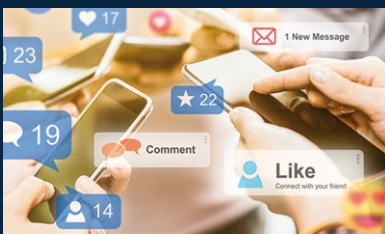Any successful marketing effort that a managed service provider—or any business, for that matter—puts out will need to be designed with a few key questions in mind, regarding the content it includes. Who is your content meant to assist? Why is it that this content is important for your intended audience to see? What is it about your content that makes it uniquely helpful?

These questions are a critical element to what is known as a content marketing strategy. Let's go over what one of these strategies is made up of, and how to use it to its fullest potential.

What's Involved in a Content Marketing Strategy?
There are many elements that, when combined into a core process, form a business' content strategy. They are as follows:

Brand Guidelines
This is effectively the bedrock of your content marketing strategy. In order to establish a recognizable voice for your company's content, you need to first establish guidelines that clarify what tone it takes and what its focus should be. What message is your MSP's brand built around, what promise do you make to all of your clients? What are your clientele's priorities? What tone of voice does your brand and business use when speaking to your audience?

Tips for Marketing Your Cybersecurity Services

As a managed service provider (MSP), one of the most important services you can provide to your clients is in regards to their cybersecurity, which also makes it an invaluable asset to utilize in your marketing efforts. Let's go over some tips to help you draw in potential clients by effectively marketing your cybersecurity services—something that's often easier said than done.

It can be so challenging to market your cybersecurity services for three fundamental reasons:

Cybersecurity Marketing's Challenges: Competition, Ignorance, and Neglect
Overall, these three factors are what will ultimately make it a challenge for you to market your cybersecurity services.

1. **Competition:** There will be plenty of competition for you to face, also offering their own cybersecurity services, distracting your prospects away from your messaging and making it all the more critical that you differentiate yourself from the crowd.
2. **Ignorance:** The cybersecurity landscape is a complicated one, and it's hardly fair to expect the business owners you're trying to communicate with to be familiar with the minutiae without your help. Your marketing efforts should bridge this knowledge gap and educate potential clients on the importance of cybersecurity.

How to Devise a Winning Content Marketing Strategy for Your MSP

The overlap between the answers to these questions is what your content should be built around, given a single voice that will ultimately help you keep your content consistent in message and identity.

SMART Marketing Objectives
We've discussed SMART goals at length before, but in a nutshell, you need to shape your marketing goals to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound… clearly establishing a realistic and trackable benchmark for your marketing to reach in a reasonable timeframe. In terms of your content marketing, you should focus on creating these types of goals so they are designed to help you engage with your audience and help convert them over time.

Customer Personas
It's also important that you have some level of understanding about who your ideal target audience is so you can most effectively communicate with them through your content. What role do they

have in their organization? What challenges do they deal with that you could help resolve? Any insights you can glean from this data can help you shape your content to more successfully touch on their priorities.

Research, Data, and Analytics
Speaking of data, understanding your target audience is just the tip of the metaphorical iceberg. You also need to have the data that helps you gain greater insight into the state of your given market and its current trajectory, as well as data that helps you understand how your competition is reaching out to the same prospects you are. Your own business' reputation is another important data point to collect, so you can understand the general consensus regarding your business amongst your targets. On top of that, you can use your research to emulate what others have done to find success, allowing you to optimize your content to speak in just the right way to your audience.

As you put your content to use, you can continue refining it and improving upon your strategy by taking advantage of your analytics. Maybe content that touches on certain pain points and topics outperforms content that only outlines the benefits of a given service. This insight allows you to move forward with more data guiding your content strategy, along with all the other metrics that your analytics provide.

Customer Journey
By utilizing your customer personas, you should have an idea of who it is that would be your ideal customer. With this information at the ready, you can then sculpt a customer journey for them to follow with content created with the prospect's mindset as the foundation. With just about every conceivable twist and turn accounted for, your content can be made to address the emotions and issues that your prospect is dealing with…

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Tips for Marketing Your Cybersecurity Services

3. **Neglect:** Many businesses underestimate the importance of their cybersecurity precautions, putting them off or otherwise undervaluing them until the reality of a cyberattack is upon them. Your marketing strategy should emphasize the proactive approach to cybersecurity to prevent such situations.

These three obstacles are what your cybersecurity marketing needs to address.

Fortunately, there are a variety of marketing strategies that can assist you in doing so.

Essential Practices for Marketing Your Cybersecurity Services

Understanding Who You're Talking To
Who is it that makes up your target audience? You need to have an awareness of their priorities and pain points so that

you can more effectively speak to their fears and concerns. Talking about password standards and the like will only get you so far if that isn't one of your prospects' shared concerns. Talking about these concerns will help you build trust amongst your audience… trust that will lead to them turning to you when they need your assistance.

Diversifying Your Communications
We talk about the benefits of content marketing quite a bit, simply because it serves as an effective way to demonstrate the value that your services can offer. While this applies to any service your MSP offers, it is particularly effective and important to diversify the means you have of getting your cybersecurity-related content out into the community and in front of your audience.

Post blogs, write emails, host events and webinars, share case studies, and use pay-per-click and social media advertisements all to share your message—in this case,

the importance of cybersecurity protections and how you can help businesses manage them—to your prospects. The more means you have to get your very important message in front of your audience, the more likely it'll sink in.

Lean on Data
Let's say you were considering a new product or service… you'd probably want to know as much about it as possible, wouldn't you, with quantifiable information to lean on as support, right? Your prospects are going to feel the same way, so give them the quantifiable information that shows them the benefits you're using to market your services.

Don't Exaggerate
On a related note, be honest with the claims you make concerning your…

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Should I Consider Instagram as Part of My Social Media Marketing?

With over 2 billion monthly active users on the platform, chances are pretty good that a non-insignificant portion of your target audience is at least somewhat active on Instagram. If you aren't making use of it to your business' advantage, you should very much reconsider your approach.

Let's explore some of the reasons that Instagram is a good choice for your business' social media marketing efforts, and how you can maximize these efforts.

Instagram is a Viable Platform for B2B Marketing

Regardless of the generation, more people are using social media than ever—with over two thirds using it more than they have previously. In order for your marketing to be effective, it needs to have eyes on it. A lot of these eyes just so happen to be looking at Instagram nowadays.

This, mind you, is regardless of generation. While the majority of users are in the 24-35 age demographic, there is still a healthy segment of other age groups active on the platform. Furthermore, 90% of people follow business accounts, 200 million visiting a business' profile every

day and 150 million using Instagram to reach out to a business each month.

In addition to the reach it can help you achieve, there are plenty of other reasons that a business should embrace the use of Instagram as a B2B marketing tool.

For instance, social media advertising as a whole has reached a year-over-year growth rate of 25%, actually exceeding the $135 billion invested in paid search efforts with over $137 billion put towards social efforts. Instagram stands as the second-most-used social media platform for marketers around the world, behind only Facebook, with consistently high returns on any investment made. 52% of

social media marketers planned to increase their investment into Instagram this year, 29% citing it as their largest investment.

While this may make it sound like there's a lot of competition, there is, but that's primarily because it works. Plus, it is important to remember that these statistics are industry-agnostic, covering all business sectors.

How Can I Use Instagram to Market My MSP?

There are a variety of strategies and tactics that a managed service provider can and should use to promote their services via Instagram. We'll run through some of them here, but we encourage you to reach out to us for more personalized guidance concerning your social media marketing strategy, or any of your MSP marketing needs.

Optimize Your Business' Instagram Profile

It pays to take some time to craft a quality profile that represents your business. Make sure you're using a high-quality...

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14 Terms You Should Know for Email Marketing Success

Email marketing is widely regarded as a modern business necessity in order to keep your position in your prospects' and clients' minds. The world of email marketing is rich with terms and definitions that are important for markets of all levels of experience to understand.

We've created a glossary of these terms for your reference—but if you want more context into any of these terms, you can always reach out to us.

Essential Email Marketing Terms You'll Encounter

A/B Testing
This is effectively a means of determining your most effective approach to a given process… in this context, which tone and message will make your email marketing efforts optimally effective. Let's say you wanted to send an email promoting your backup and disaster recovery services. You could run an A/B test—sending similar audiences different emails to see which gets the most response—to determine which message is the most effective tactic to use.

Acceptance Rate
This refers to the total number of emails that you send that don't bounce back. Keep in mind, this doesn't mean it reached an inbox, it just wasn't rejected.

Bounce Rate
So, what do we mean by "bounce?" Simple—some emails simply aren't accepted by the email servers that deliver your messages to your recipients. The percentage of emails that are rejected—bounced back—is known as your bounce rate. Naturally, you want this percentage to be as small as possible.

A hard bounce refers to an email that is sent back due to a permanent error, such as an invalid recipient address, causing it to be rejected by the receiving server. Alternatively, a soft bounce refers to those emails that did reach the server, but were rejected due to a more temporary, technical problem.

CAN-SPAM
Enforced by the Federal Trade Commission, the Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing Act of 2003 outlines the boundaries that businesses need to abide by as they send out emails. This includes accurate and transparent means to unsubscribe from ongoing messages.

Click-Through Rate
One of your metrics for success, your CTR is the percentage of email recipients that used a link shared in your email to navigate somewhere online. This is one percentage that you want to be as high as possible.

Conversion Rate
Whatever the purpose of your email, be it to have someone download something, navigate to your website, or make a purchase, your conversion rate is the number of people who follow your call to action and do so.

Customer Acquisition Cost
Speaking of your conversion rate, how much did you need to invest in order to generate that conversion? This is your customer acquisition...
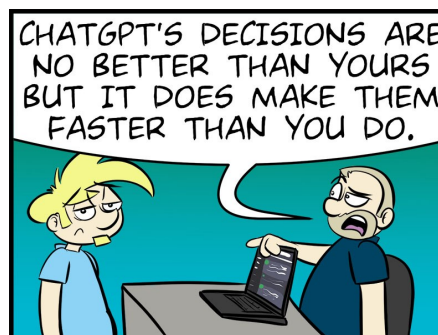
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