

MAXIMISE AGENCY

ONLINE MARKETING & GROWTH • PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO • WEB DEVELOPMENT • SOCIAL MEDIA

5 Steps to Small Business Growth in ~~2019~~ **2020**



1. Knowing & Understanding Your Customer

The resources available to us as business owners in 2020 means there is no excuse for not having a strong understanding of who your target audience is, or at least working towards an understanding.

Knowing what your customer looks like plays a major role in developing suitable advertisement media.

Every consumer including yourself has particular pain points and problems that need solving

Here are some questions to answer to help you understand who your customer is:

Where are your customers from? Male, female? Age? What do they do for a living? What are some major brands in your industry that they likely follow? What are their pain points, how can I solve these?

You must begin to ask yourself "what makes my customer stop and look at my business?" - and then develop your strategy surrounding this. It's no use creating and investing in content that gets the attention of a 20 year old male, when your ideal customer is a 40 year old female. You get the gist?

The platforms where your customers hang out will be the next point that you must understand.

Instagram is most popular among 18 - 35 year olds, Facebook comes in slightly older at 25 - 45 and LinkedIn is older again at 30 - 50 year olds. This helps give you an understanding of where your ideal customers might be, and the content they might be expecting.

If your business can natively fit in on each platform and steal your customers' attention even for a second, you have a foot in the door.

2. Get Online, Get Found!

If you have a business that is still relying on old fashion methods of advertising and remain hesitant to get online, you will get left behind. Apologies for the bluntness, but it is no longer a question, businesses that are not moving with the times and utilising modern tactics will be forgotten, you simply cannot compete without incorporating some form of online awareness/marketing into your regime.

"But my customers aren't on Facebook!"

"I don't need to be online, I'm busy as it is!"

Firstly, if your customers are not on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn or searching Google, then they are most likely on another planet.

The beauty of online advertising is that it gives you so many avenues to market and develop brand awareness among your customers. They may not need your services or want to buy your product right this instance, but in three months' time when they want to make a purchase and they've seen your logo and brand online every day, you come to mind first. The significance of branding and creating awareness around your business should not be underestimated.

Being found on social media adds an enormous amount of social validation and instils trust within your customers that your business is legitimate and active. This is only increasing as we advance and so is the importance. Many consumers actually base their buying decision around a business's social media presence.

If you knew your customer was browsing one platform every day, and you could own a piece of real estate on that platform, why would you ignore that opportunity? The key here is creating value driven content to drive customer interaction and offering strong incentives to get them over the line.

Consider this: There are over 60 million businesses currently leveraging Facebook, and over 2 billion people able to be reached through Facebook ads, and that's just one platform.

Is your business on Facebook and Instagram? Aim to post 3-4 times a week to begin with and you will begin to get a grasp on your audience and how they react.

The mass communication and marketing opportunities are absolutely unprecedented, and social media isn't going anywhere.

3. Building a Brand and Interacting With Your Customers on a Personal Level

This point loops back to being online and active on social media.

Opportunities for communicating your businesses mission, voice, colour, logo, differences and content are enormous. Social media platforms serve as a powerful tool to express and build a brand around your business.

Why do consumers consistently pay more for a t-shirt with a Nike tick than a plain one? Branding!

Consumers genuinely pay more for brand and story.

Think about your point of difference and the voice that you want to communicate with your customers as your brand will begin to take shape. Capitalise on your differences and your strongpoints and show them off.

One of the large trends we're seeing is businesses showing more and more of the 'behind the scenes' and the day to day efforts of the team. Customers don't just want to see the shiny finished product, they love the nitty gritty, behind the curtain stuff that most businesses won't share.

If you are at the point where you are discussing branding, I assume you are online and active and interacting with your customers.

A marketing plan and content schedule goes a long way in staying in front of your customers, regular social media posting, replying to comments, engaging with their posts and sharing testimonials are some ways you can stay in touch with your customers and develop that personal relationship and trust that goes much deeper than just business.

4. Recognising Your Strengths & Knowing When to Get Help

As a small business owner, it is so easy to attempt to take everything on yourself, primarily because of cost cutting, but this can actually become detrimental to the long term success of your business and is not a sustainable method.

No one is excellent at everything, that's just a fact. Think about why you started your business in the first place and what your strong points are. You may be exceptional at landscaping but hopeless at accounting, this is likely where you need help.

Knowing when to ask for help is a powerful skill to have and sometimes it can be hard to develop, but will actually help your business grow and prosper in the long run.

Recognise what your strengths are and focus on doing them better than anyone else, but make sure you allocate time to review all avenues of your business and explore where you might need help.

You are better off putting your time and energy into getting better at your skills and focusing on the high pay off activities and outsourcing labour for the other requirements of business.

If you are getting 10 hours of work done a day, your competitor has 3 employees and is getting 30 hours done - that's hard to beat.

This may be hard as a small business with minimal working capital, but as soon as it makes practical sense, find people to help fuel your mission.

5. Double Down on Your Niche

Have no doubt about your business and where it stands, and put everything you can into your specific niche.

If your landscaping business does fences and retaining walls better than anyone else, create content around this, find customers for this and focus on this as your niche.

You might be a web developer that builds the best websites for cafes and restaurants, this is your niche.

Your niche is your businesses strong point within your industry and also gives you an easily identifiable point of difference. Knowing what your businesses niche is an important factor and helps you create engaging content and understand your audience more.

This may take some time to figure out after you've started your business, but realising what your niche is and what makes your business different is a valuable asset.

If you are having doubts about your business or your industry, double down on your niche with complete confidence