

How to create a successful digital sales and marketing strategy



Modern digital marketing – worth the faff?

Now, perhaps we're biased, but the fact of the matter is that without digital marketing, your business won't succeed.

Digital marketing allows businesses to grow and survive in our digital age. Word-of-mouth is important, but time and time again, we see businesses that aren't equipped to operate online fall behind the competition and lose market share.

We are Catalyst, a digital sales & marketing agency who specialise in lead generation and business growth. We know a thing or two about how you can get your brand in front of the right people. That's why we've put together this guide on how to create a digital sales and marketing strategy that delivers.

Naturally, methods that work for one business might not work as well for yours; success needs strategy, persistence and a dash of patience. Rome wasn't built in a day, after all.

Let's get into it, shall we?



Focus on the end result

What's the end goal?

Most businesses don't want marketing, they want the perceived output of marketing - they want sales and growth.

Yet so often, when asked what the objectives of their marketing strategy are they reply with:

- I want to increase visitors to my website
- I want more social followers
- I want to get coverage in the target vertical press
- Taking this approach to your marketing strategy is unlikely to get you what you really want.
- To derive real value from marketing, you need to start at the desired end result and work back.
- The renowned Simon Sinek created the Golden Circle - a way for brands to articulate their offering in order to engage with their audience.
- This simple model, which focuses on starting with the 'why, can be adapted and used as a framework to ensure your marketing strategy is geared to deliver the end result.

Take this example:

Why - what is your end goal?

- Grow my business

How - how will you achieve it?

- Increase sales
- Increase retention
- Introduce additional services

What - what do you need to achieve it?

- Hire additional sales people
- Implement a marketing strategy to attract new prospects and nurture customers.

Make time to study

Nobody enjoys doing their due diligence, but, unfortunately, it's essential.

You may have worked in the industry for years. You might know your customers inside and out. You might believe none of your competitors come close.

But when was the last time you challenged your perceptions?

It's easy to get stuck in our ways, but the businesses that succeed are the ones that consistently evaluate and renovate.

When developing your sales and marketing strategy, you should monitor:

The market

Has there been any shifts in the market lately (say, a global pandemic, or perhaps another large-scale event)?

Take the time to identify market trends, new influences, possible opportunities and inherent risks. Build as many perspectives on this as possible; external opinions are invaluable when researching your market.





The competition

There's no harm in copying someone's homework if you make it your own.

We're not reinventing the wheel here, and anyone claiming that they are is most likely lying.

You should ask:

What are the market leaders doing?

What are your peers doing (and is it working)?

Has your current marketing worked (compare your efforts to what others are doing)?

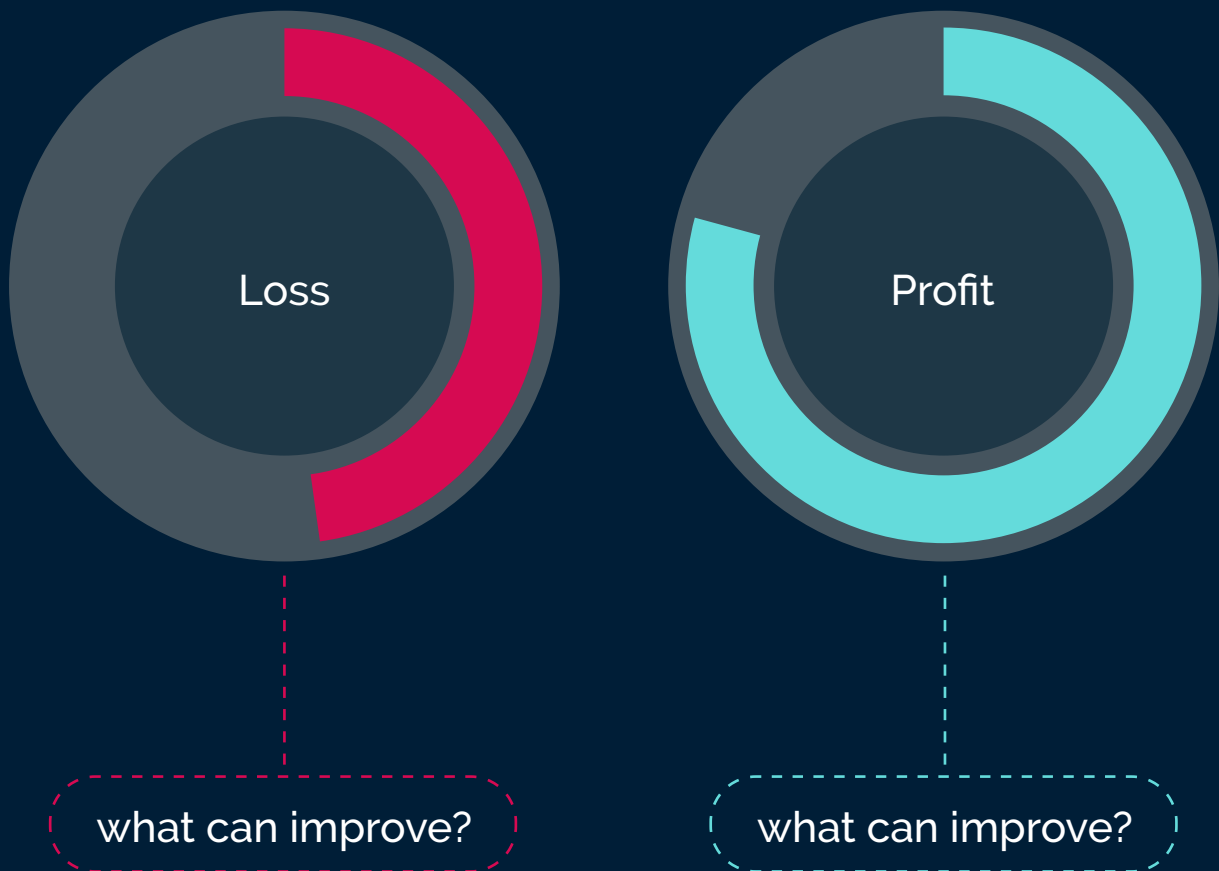
What can be improved?

Current sales metrics

How do you quantify success?

This one's really important in order to understand what you consider to be a successful sales and marketing campaign.

Take the time to assess your current conversion metrics and identify areas where they can be improved.



Customer feedback

The people who invest in you often have extremely valuable opinions – who'd have thought?

Don't just focus on your current customers, try to elicit responses from lost customers, too. Finding out why someone stopped paying for your product/service is like striking gold. Use this information to create an ideal customer profile, or update your outdated one.



Is it worth the effort?

Without research, there is no sales and marketing, it's as simple as that.

By undergoing a thorough research & preparations stage, you'll:

- Identify the best opportunities

- Highlight your strengths and weaknesses

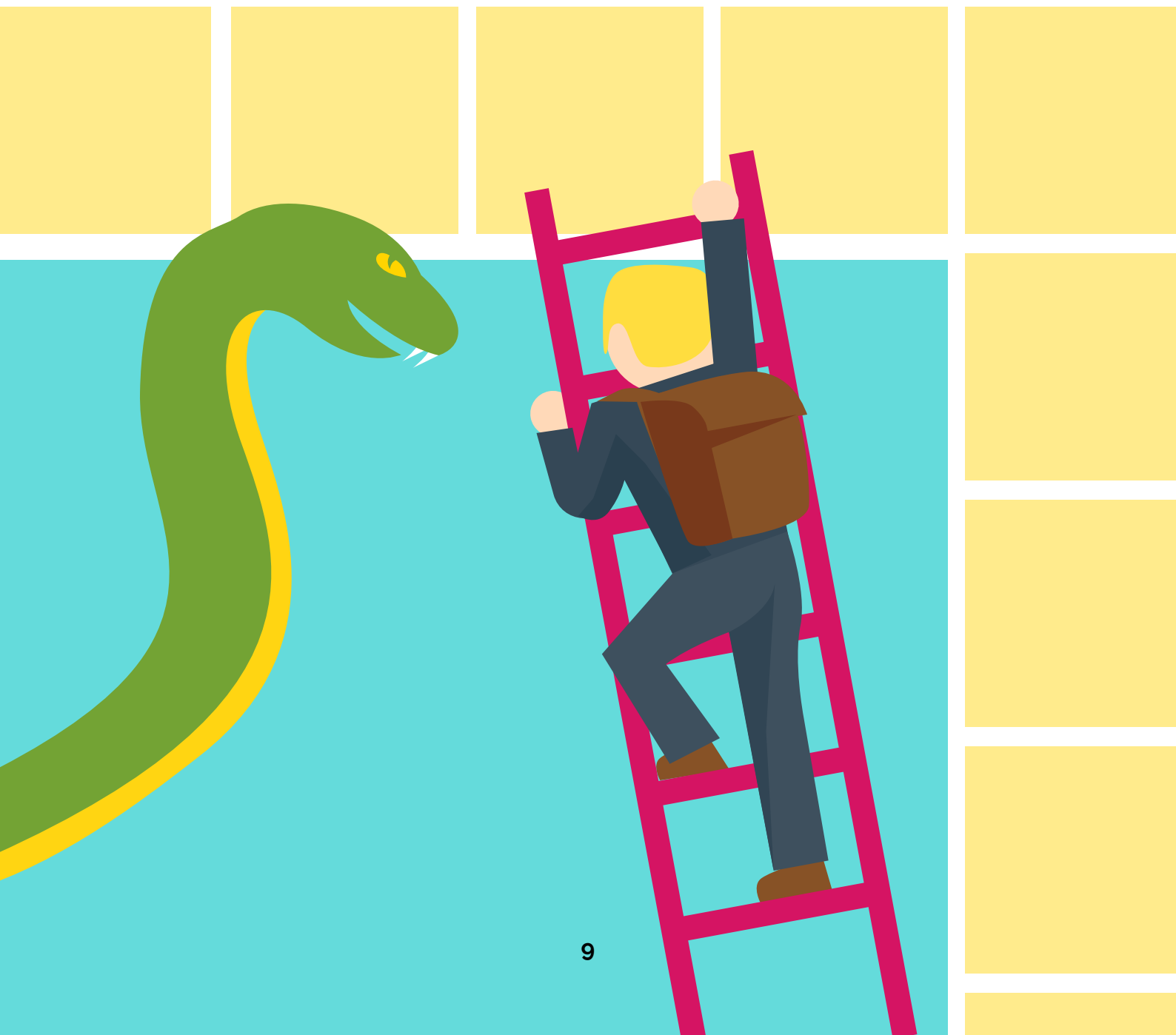
- Understand how to stand out in the market

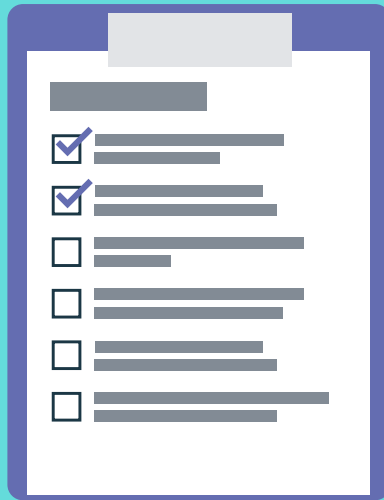
- Clearly articulate what needs to change



Creating your digital sales and marketing strategy

Now that you're armed with enough information to fill a library, it's time to put together a strategy that accelerates your growth and prevents you from falling behind your competition.





Set your objectives

We're going to say it again – Rome wasn't built in a day.

By setting objectives, you're establishing a roadmap that clearly delineates the route to success. It takes time to execute a strategy, so don't expect instant returns all the time.

We like to make our objectives SMART.

Specific

– obscure objectives help nobody; a good objective might be: 'generate X more leads from prospects with £20m turnover'.

Relevant

– link your objectives to your end goal, do they match up to the 'why' you established before?

Measurable

– it's important that you can quantify your objectives, e.g.: 'increase conversion rate by 20%'.

Timely

– set a realistic timeframe for your objectives. Too tight and you can demoralise your team; too long and things won't get done.

Achievable

– assess whether your objectives are realistic, and what needs to happen to achieve them.

Gear your business

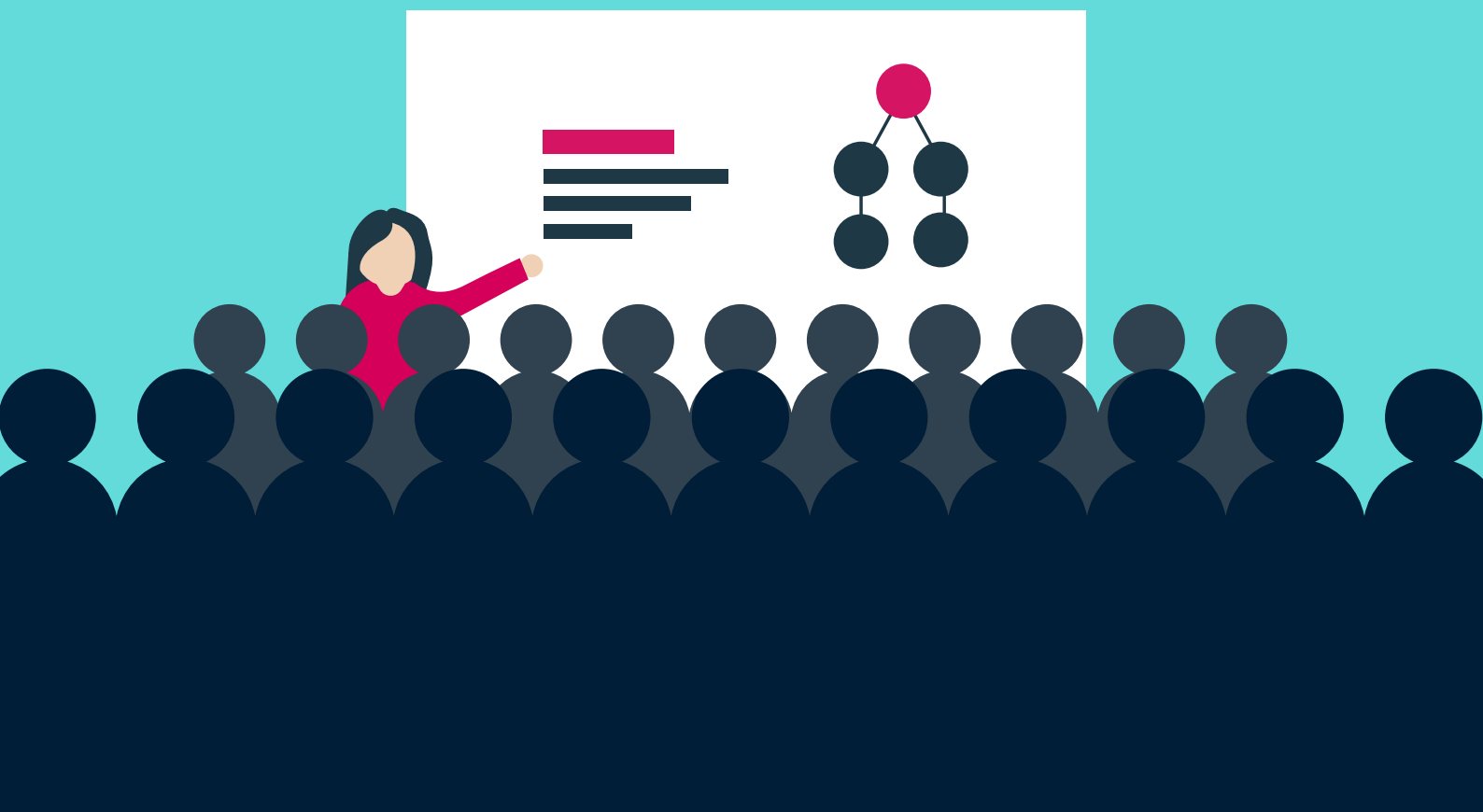
Your strategy involves your entire business, not just sales and marketing staff.

Sales and marketing gets people through the door, the rest of your operations is what keeps them invested. Make sure that everyone's on the same page before you start your efforts. Assess your user journey – are there any issues?

Iron out your messaging to ensure that everyone's saying the right things at the right time.

Get everyone up to speed on your marketing tools – as many people as possible should be familiar with your CRM, for example.

Train your sales team to make sure that your conversion rate is as high as possible. It's all well and good bringing in tonnes of warm leads, but they're no good to you if they're not converting. Your sales staff need to strike the right balance between what you can deliver and what the prospect wants





Minimise waste

We're assuming that you're not a global brand with a seven-figure marketing budget.

It's incredibly easy to overspend on marketing efforts that don't deliver. You need to keep focused on what's working, constantly assessing and tinkering, pursuing the avenues that are objectively delivering the best results.

- Every tactic in your plan needs to be supported with a rationale that outlines how it will help your business get closer to hitting its objective - if it doesn't, it needs to be scrapped.
- Keep your plan centred around your customers and prospects – targeted ads are your friends!
- Consider all target personas – what do people react to, what's their typical decision-making journey?
- Right place, right time – make sure that you're timing your messaging. Reaching the correct demographic at the perfect time is very powerful.
- Bring in relevant leads – there's no point wasting your sales team's time with poor leads. Fewer, better leads are far more useful than lots of disinterested leads.

Keep going!

With sales and marketing, it's easy to take your foot off the gas.

When the going's good, it's the time to accelerate. Keep reviewing what's going well and push it harder. Set metrics and KPIs that relate back to your SMART objectives and end goal in order to benchmark your activity.

Once you've done this, re-evaluate your objectives, reset your methods (if required) and go again! Sales and marketing should never slow down, it should only ever speed up.



Elements of a great lead generative marketing strategy

Now that we've talked about the theory, it's time to get into the meaty main course – how exactly do you get your brand out there?

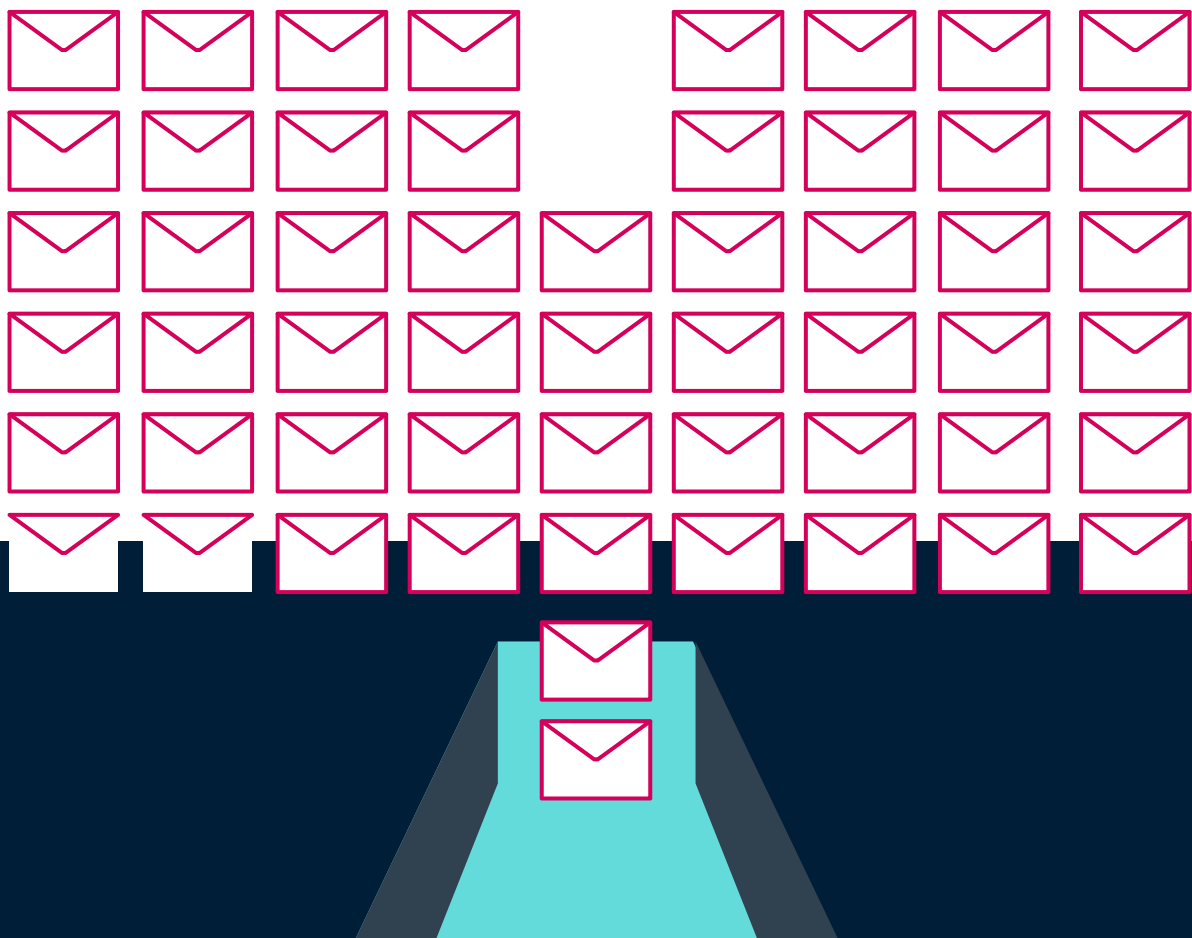
Business isn't just won through word of mouth or over the phone anymore. Businesses need a comprehensive lead generation strategy in order to succeed.



Email automation

Everyone checks their email, it's a cornerstone of business and it's likely not going anywhere anytime soon.

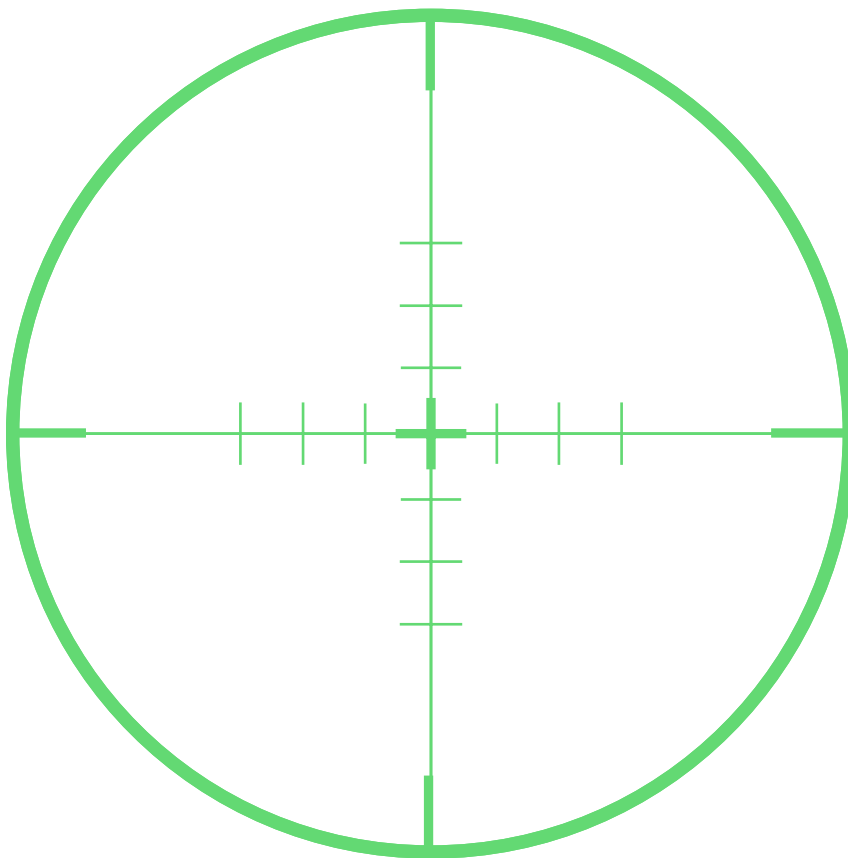
So as long as future-mail isn't imminently invented, it's likely that email automation campaigns could be a boon for your business for years to come. Email marketing is an excellent way to either warm up cold data, or nurture existing warm leads. Automation takes out the manual, time-consuming labour required when sending out emails. By using automation functionality in your CRM (HubSpot, for example), you can ensure that contacts receive relevant, specific content at a logical timing.



Account Based Marketing (ABM)

ABM is perfect for when you know exactly the accounts that you want to target.

Many ABM campaigns are designed to be striking, and often a little cheeky. Messaging is sent directly to your ideal clients, with tailored content aimed specifically at the key decision makers you need to influence. The content should be customised based on each individual decision maker's pain points and challenges.



SEO

It's impossible to escape from the grasp of SEO; it's here to stay, so learning to embrace it is the best way forward.

Implementing good search engine optimisation is a fine balance between keywords, quality content and backlinks, which work together to improve your authority in search engines. Right now, people are searching online for solutions to the problems that your business solves. SEO will help to ensure that they find you over a competitor.

Search

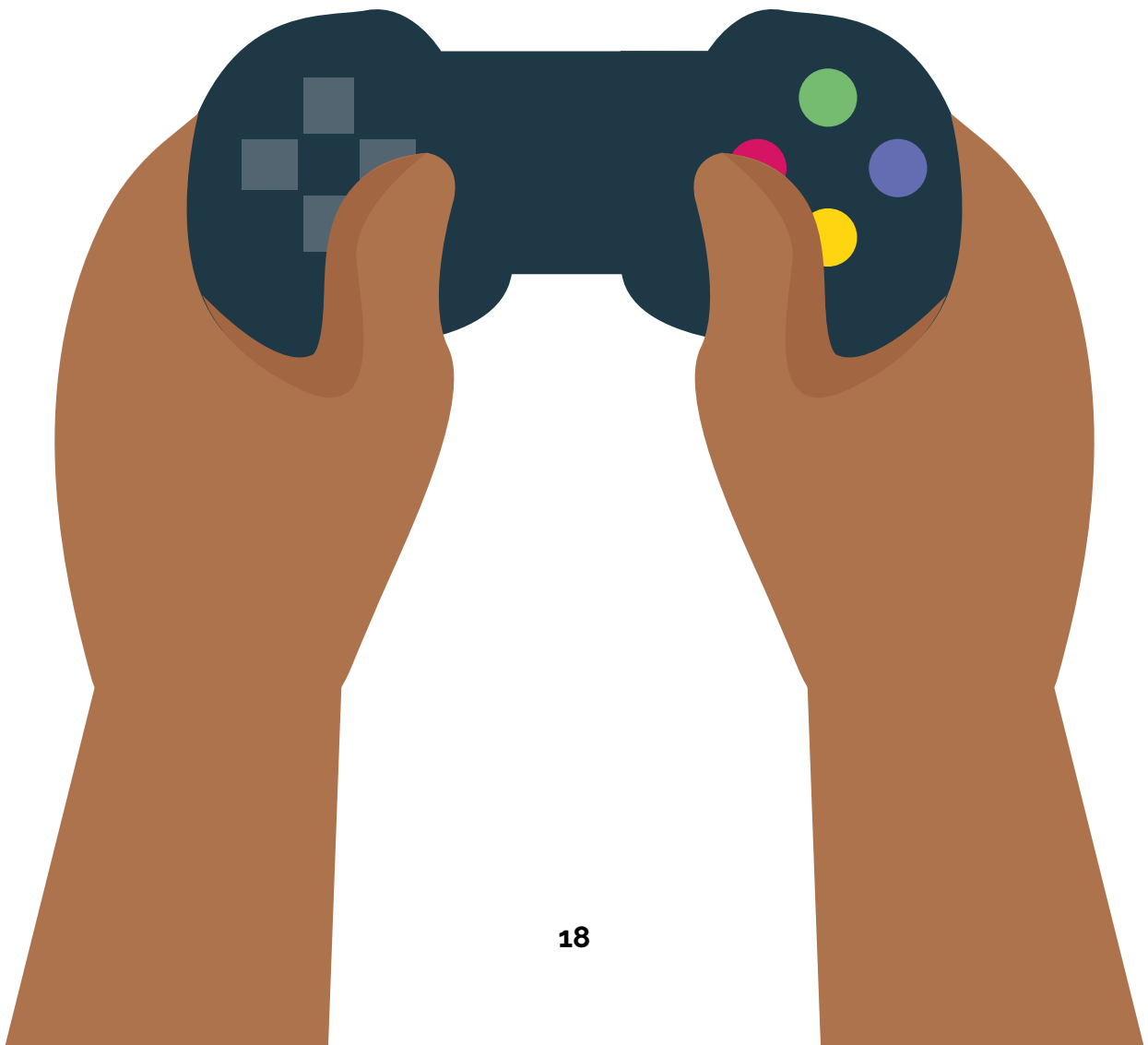


Pay-per-click (PPC)

PPC is like a cheat code in a video game – it lets you skip the queues and get your business seen on search engines straight away.

PPC is a great way to get your content in front of interested parties. It's highly likely that the person searching is close to making an investment in the services that you offer, as they're already searching for specific keywords that are relevant to your business.

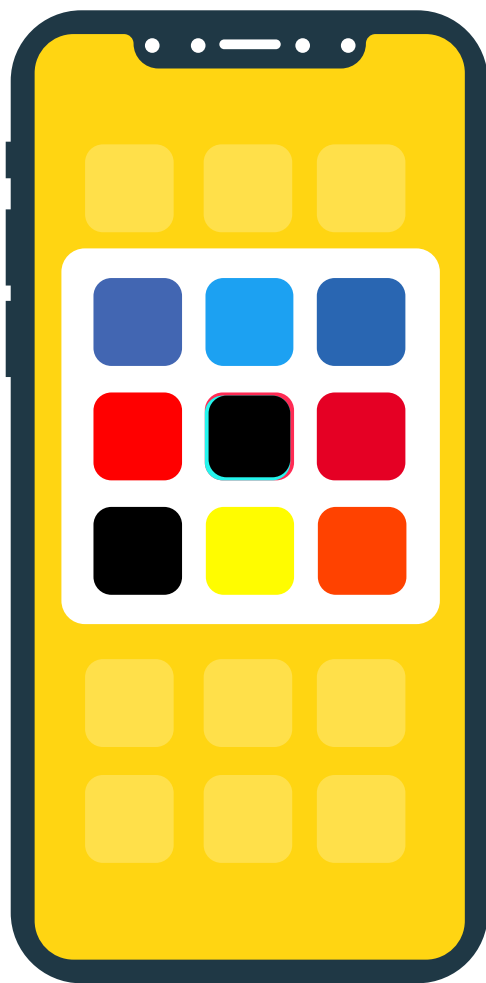
By directing the user to excellent, insightful content, you establish yourself as a knowledgeable player in your sector, all while generating a warm lead - nice.



Social media

Like it or loathe it, social media is fast becoming a business' best friend.

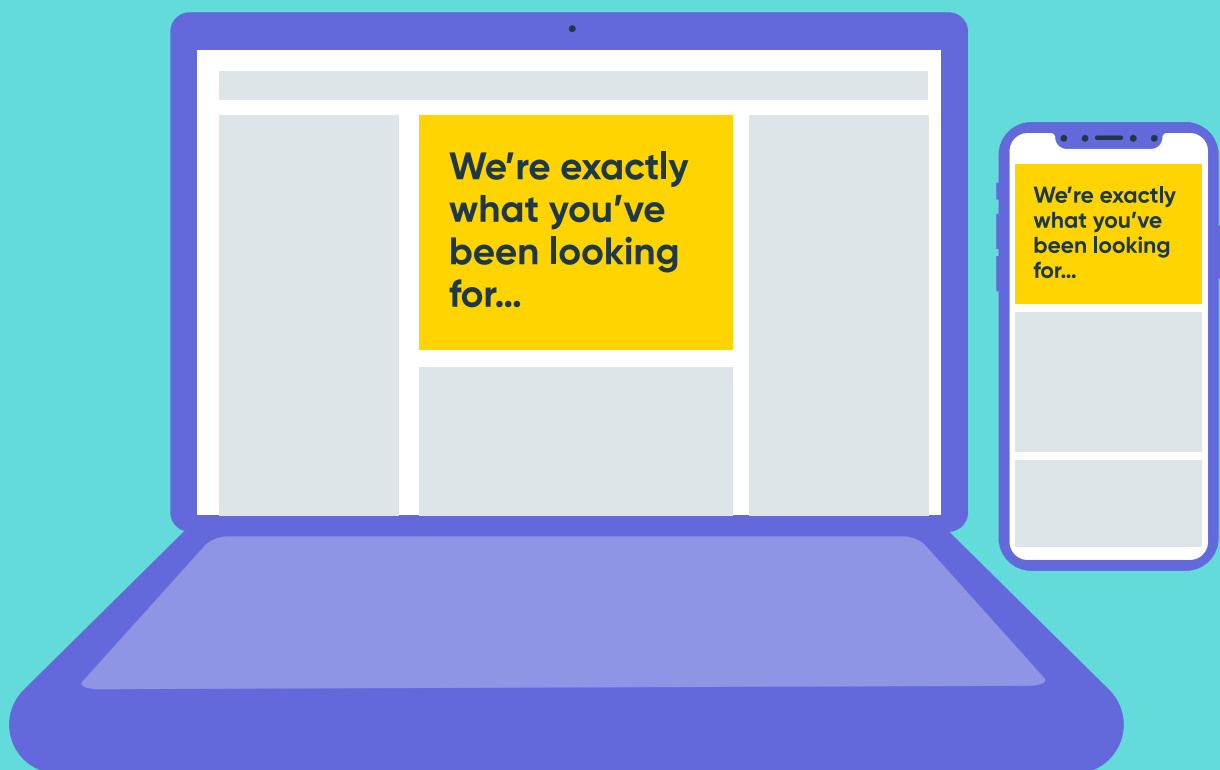
Building a strong social following is paramount when looking to grow in our digital age. People who are invested in, or interested in, your business are likely to use your social pages to keep up to date with your latest offerings, and to communicate directly with you. A strong social presence is a direct line to the pulse of your sector. Maintaining an insightful page is a wonderful way to nurture leads and rapidly address any issues.



Social advertising

Social media is one of the easiest places to reach out to your audience (depending on your demographic), it would be silly not to.

Social media platforms store a lot of data from people's profiles. When we say a lot, we really mean it. Social media ad campaigns are laser focused, advertising to people based on their geography, interests, industries, previous purchases, publications they've read or even their relationship status. This means that you can show your ads to exactly the right people. Scary, but powerful.



Revolutionise your marketing strategy with Catalyst

Modern marketing isn't the stiff, formulaic process of the past. Good marketing needs to be agile, specific and, most importantly, human. Think of your online presence as a shop window. You want the people looking in to like what they see, otherwise they'll shop elsewhere.

We're talking to people at the end of the day – people who are savvy to marketing strategies and are tired of being sold things. Forming a connection with prospective customers is essential; people want to buy from brands who they identify with.

At Catalyst, we specialise in digital marketing for lead generation. We understand the pitfalls of modern marketing, and are positioned perfectly to help you navigate them to build a comprehensive sales and marketing strategy.

If you'd like to find out more, or if you've got any questions, please don't hesitate to give us a shout.

If you're interested in finding out more

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