



THE MARKETING UMBRELLA

3 WAYS YOU CAN
GENERATE
NEW CUSTOMERS TODAY

AI Chatbots

Are Your 24/7 Sales Rep &

Here's Why You Need One 

WHY YOUR BUSINESS

WILL FAIL

IN 2021 WITHOUT

SEO



Contents

3 Ways You Can Generate New Customers Today

03



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With that in mind, here are three proven ways to generate new customers today – without breaking the bank.

AI Chatbots are Your 24-7 Sales Rep Here's Why You Need One

07



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and they couldn't be expected to communicate in any meaningful way.

That's no longer the case. Artificial intelligence has improved vastly in recent years. The use of Natural Language Processing (NLP) means that chatbots and virtual assistants are increasingly common.

That means you should have one, too. Chatbots aren't as expensive to develop as you might think. Let's talk about why you need to stop delaying and incorporate an AI chatbot into your sales and marketing strategy.

Why Your Business Will Fail in 2021 Without SEO

12



Have you been getting by without paying serious attention to local SEO? Some businesses do. Maybe they're located in areas where competition is minimal. Perhaps they have a great

referral program that helps them attract new customers even with a website that's not optimized. Whatever the reason, they're doing fine without SEO.

If this sounds like you, there's good news and bad news. The good news is that you've survived. The bad news is that you've been lucky, and all luck runs out eventually. In 2021, SEO is more important than ever before. Here's what you need to know.

Welcome to the Marketing Umbrella Magazine



The best source to generate more sales for your business with online marketing.

Each month we break down the complexities of a few key digital marketing strategies.

We make it easy to understand so you can decide if they should be implemented in your business.

It doesn't matter if you're just starting out, or an established business owner, you will benefit from harnessing the power digital marketing.


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Umbrella Local is the leading digital marketing agency focusing on helping small businesses grow with digital marketing.

Umbrella Local, has local marketing experts in almost every market.

We provide dependable growth strategies that will increase your sales. Many of our services are result based, which means you only pay when we reach the agreed goal.

If you want experts to handle your marketing for affordable prices and dependable results, reach out to Umbrella Local.



3 Ways You Can **GENERATE** New Customers Today

Customer retention is essential but it's impossible for any business to grow without attracting new customers. Even if you do a great job of keeping your existing customers engaged and buying from you, you need new customers if you want to increase your profits.

You probably know the story when it comes to new customer acquisition – that it can cost anywhere from seven to 10 times as much to attract a new customer as it does to retain an existing one. That *can* be true, but it doesn't *need* to be.

With that in mind, here are three proven ways to generate new customers today – without breaking the bank.



#1: Start a Referral Program

One of the best ways to bring new customers into your business is to ask your existing customers for help. You've probably asked a friend for a referral at least once in your life. Most of us have. Your job, then, is to turn that instinct into a coherent program that helps you attract new customers. The statistics don't lie: a customer is four times as likely to make a purchase when they get a referral from someone they know.

The first step is to decide how you will track referrals. Don't skip this step. There's no point in investing your time and energy in a referral program if you're not going to track your results and see how your pro-

gram is performing. Your tracking method can be as simple as a spreadsheet. If you use a marketing automation program, it may have a built-in tracking system for referrals.

The next step is figuring out how you will reward people who provide you with referrals. For example, you might offer customers a free or discounted product. If you provide a service, the reward might be a free month of service or even a cash bonus. Whatever your reward is, make sure it's something that will incentivize people to participate in your referral program.

Next, you'll need to let people know about the referral pro-

gram. If you have an email or text list, then you can use it to give subscribers the details and let them know how they'll be rewarded for successful referrals. Make sure to specify when the rewards will kick in – for example, after a new customer makes their first purchase or signs on for a service.

Finally, track your results and adjust your program as needed. If you're not getting the results you want, you may need to revisit your rewards to incentivize your customers to make more referrals.



#2: Partner with Other Businesses in Your Area

There is no business that's so specialized that it doesn't share customers with other businesses. That means that you can partner with other businesses in your area to expand your customer base and grow your business.

It's important to note, here, that we're not talking about partnering with direct competitors. That doesn't make sense and it won't help you. Instead, look for businesses where there is some overlap with your target audience and theirs. For example, if you own a bakery, you might partner with a wedding planner or event venue. If you

run an insurance agency, you might form a partnership with a local real estate agent or car dealership.

Once you've identified potential partners, approach them to talk about doing some joint marketing. In some cases, your relationship may be a mutually beneficial referral program where you offer a discount if they refer people to you – and vice versa. Or you could package your products or services together to entice customers to patronize both of your businesses.

The key here is to choose your

marketing partners wisely. If there isn't a clear link between your audience and theirs, it won't be a good investment to partner with them. You should know going in that there's a reasonable likelihood that their customers are in the market for your products or services.

Once you've decided on a partnership and figured out how to proceed, you'll need to advertise your packaged services or deals to the appropriate audience. Social media is a great place to do it and sending emails to your respective lists can be effective, as well.

#3: Focus on Social Proof

Even if you already understand the importance of online reviews, there's a possibility that you're not using social proof to its fullest extent to attract new customers. Here's what you need to do.

The first step is to claim your listing on every online review site where your business appears. To be sure you have them all, Google "Your Business Name reviews." Visit every relevant link and, if you haven't already done so, claim your listing.

Once you have claimed every listing, you should review your listings to ensure that the information about your business is accurate. Even if you have previously claimed the listing, double check information including:

- > Your business name
- > Your address
- > Your contact information (phone and email)
- > Your hours
- > Your prices

You should also review any uploaded images and replace them with updated pictures as needed. For example, if you have installed a new sign outside your business, you should include a picture of it, so people can find you.

If you have not responded to reviews in the past, it's time to start. Responses to positive reviews don't need to be long but you should post a quick thank you and a "Hope to see you again soon" to let reviewers know you appreciate their feedback.

For negative reviews, make sure to respond to new reviews within 24 hours. If the customer's problem has a quick fix, you can try to resolve it on the review site. More complex issues should be resolved offline, either on the phone or via email or chat.

Finally, consider putting a widget on your site that displays reviews from sites such as Yelp and Google on your website. That way, anybody who visits your site will see the social proof they need to overcome potential objections and convince them to choose you over your competitors.

As you can see, it doesn't need to be prohibitively expensive to attract new customers. If you're willing to invest a bit of time and effort, you can implement all three of these suggestions right away – and start reaping the rewards for your business.





AI Chatbots

Are Your 24/7 Sales Rep & Here's Why You Need One



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Chatbots Can Help You Make More Sales

Let's face it, the most important thing you want to know about chatbots is whether they can increase your profits. That makes sense. After all, if you're going to invest in a chatbot, it's reasonable to want some reassurance about what the results will be.

While chatbots are relatively new, there are some promising statistics you should know about.

- 41.3% of consumers report using a chatbot to make a purchase in 2020.
- Consumer willingness to use chatbots for purchases rose by about 150% from 2019 to 2020.

- Companies that incorporated a Facebook Messenger bot to interact with customers who abandoned their shopping carts saw an increase in revenue between 7% and 25%.

- 55% of companies that use chatbots in lead generation said they saw a significant increase in the number and quality of leads.

Overall, chatbot usage has seen a 92% increase since the beginning of 2019. As usage continues to grow, so will consumer adoption – and that means that companies who adopt now are likely to see significant ROI on their chatbot investment.



“ Chatbots for sales can be programmed to make product recommendations that can increase your sales at any time of day.”



Chatbots Are Always Available

When consumers were asked about the benefits of interacting with a chatbot, the most common response was the availability of 24-hour service and assistance.

While that survey focused on customer service chatbots, the same benefit applies to sales chatbots. We live in a world where everything is available all the time. If someone is up in the wee hours of the morning and wants to go on a shopping spree, they can do it, provided that they have access to the web.

Human sales representatives serve an undeniable purpose. They can provide personal attention in a way that bots can't. However, they can't work 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Only chatbots can do that.

A customer who needs help at a time when a human representative isn't available can get what they need from a well-programmed chatbot. Chatbots for sales can be programmed to make product recommendations that can increase your sales at any time of day.



A Sales Chatbot Can Help You Steal Customers from Your Competitors

While chatbot adoption overall is on the rise, [adoption varies by industry and company size](#). Perhaps surprisingly, companies with between one and 10 employees have the highest chatbot adoption rate at 40%.

Mid-size companies have the lowest adoption rate and B2B companies only have a 0.5% adoption rate. If your competitors have not incorporated chatbots into their marketing and customer service, you have an opportunity to step into the gap they've created and capitalize by offer-

ing the 24-hour service that they can't.

The key is to understand how and when your customers are most likely to use a chatbot and provide a seamless experience that makes adoption a matter of course. Some companies identify their bots as bots and others don't. If you're in an industry where you think it might take some work to get customers over the hurdle of dealing with a chatbot for the first time, you have the option of presenting it as a "live chat" option.



Chatbots Can Help You Grow Your Business

Attracting new customers is expensive. You need to retain your existing customers and spend as little as possible to attract new ones – and AI chatbots can help you do both.

Let's start with customer retention. It's easy for human sales reps to get caught up in chasing their next commission. They may not give the same attention to existing customers that they do to the elusive new customer. Over time, your existing customers may find what they need elsewhere.

A well-programmed chatbot can fulfill the need

for instant gratification by providing immediate responses to common questions, directing customers to self-help resources, and flagging more serious problems for human agents. These things can all help with customer retention.

In terms of attracting new clients, chatbots can interact at any time of day, providing basic information about your company and products and gathering information on leads. Prospective clients get the impression that you care about them and want their business because they get immediate attention and quick responses to their questions.



Chatbots Are Affordable

Most small businesses need to work within a budget, so let's start there. How much does it cost to develop a chatbot for your business?

There's a wide range of potential costs. For the simplest of chatbots, it's possible to use free software and do the designing yourself. This option will necessarily limit the chatbot's abilities, unless, of course, you happen to be an ace programmer in your spare time.

If you want a chatbot that does more than offer standard responses, you will need to invest some money to hire an experienced chatbot programmer. Some chatbot designers might charge about \$15,000. At the high end, it can cost \$50,000 or more. At Umbrella, we offer a far more affordable alternative, with chatbot development fees ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000, even for complex bots. We'll work with you to design a bot that does what you (and your customers) need it to do.

The bottom line is that chatbots are a worthwhile investment because they are less expensive than expanding your sales or customer service departments to provide around-the-clock service. Customers expect them – and by providing them, you can get more leads and grow your business.

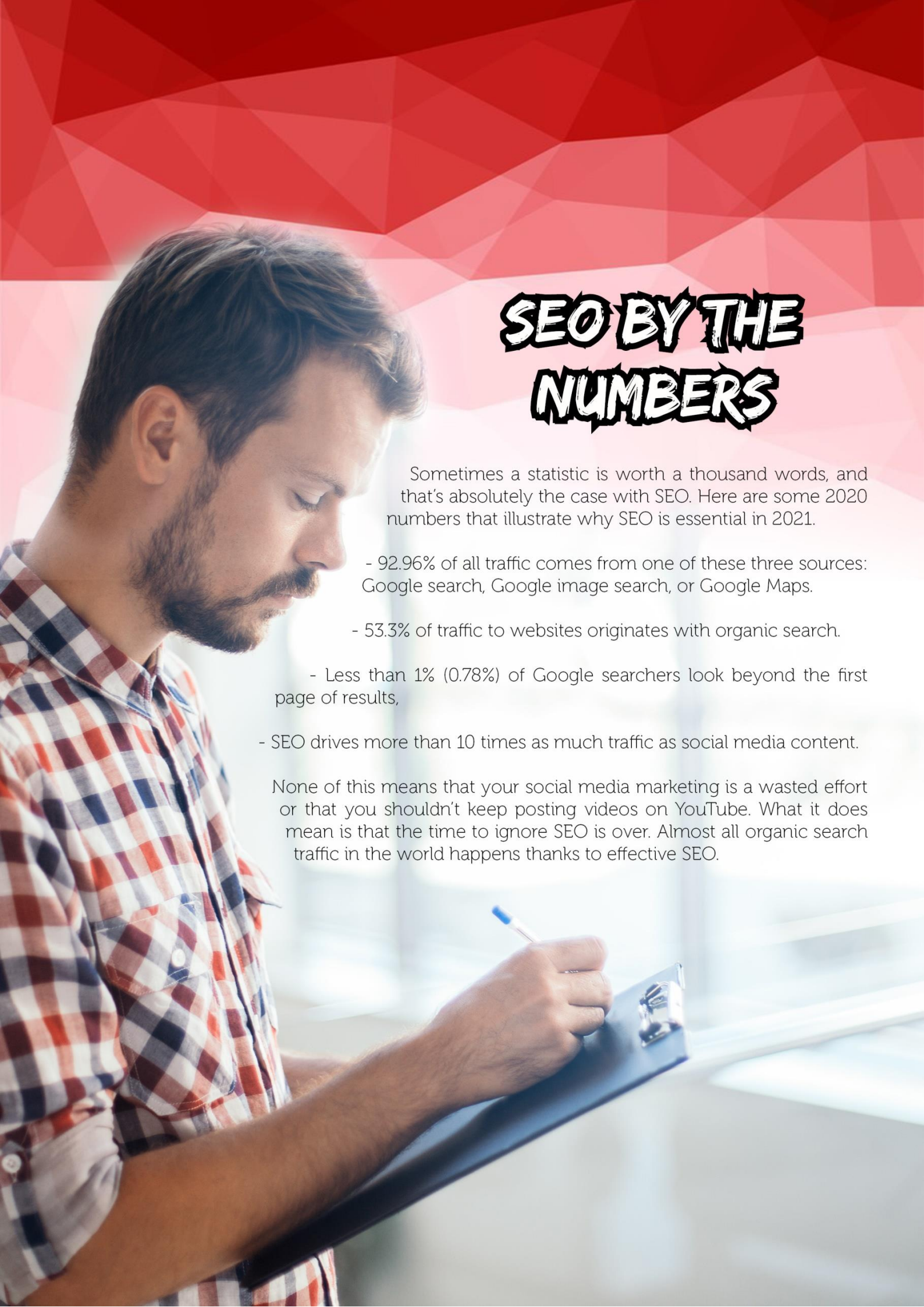
Why Your Business Will Fail in 2021 Without

SEO

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SEO BY THE NUMBERS

Sometimes a statistic is worth a thousand words, and that's absolutely the case with SEO. Here are some 2020 numbers that illustrate why SEO is essential in 2021.

- 92.96% of all traffic comes from one of these three sources: Google search, Google image search, or Google Maps.
- 53.3% of traffic to websites originates with organic search.
- Less than 1% (0.78%) of Google searchers look beyond the first page of results,
- SEO drives more than 10 times as much traffic as social media content.

None of this means that your social media marketing is a wasted effort or that you shouldn't keep posting videos on YouTube. What it does mean is that the time to ignore SEO is over. Almost all organic search traffic in the world happens thanks to effective SEO.

WITHOUT SEO, POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS WON'T BE ABLE TO FIND YOU

Online marketing requires good SEO, both on your website and any place your business appears on the web. It increases your company's visibility and brand recognition, and without it, potential customers may not even know your company exists.

It's also worth noting that your SEO must account for the searcher's intent. If someone is looking to buy your product now, you need to make sure they know they can do that on your site. That means optimizing for words that indicate intent such as "buy" and "compare." Optimizing for keyword intent is an essential element of SEO.

The numbers from Google tell the story. In desktop searches, the top organic search result gets 32% of all clicks; in mobile search, the number drops a bit – but only to 26.9%. That means that if you're not prioritizing SEO on an ongoing basis, you are likely to miss out on the organic traffic that could bring new customers to your business.

For example, if you run a home remodeling service in Atlanta Georgia you'll want to rank locally for keywords with intent like: "kitchen remodeling Atlanta" because optimizing for keyword intent and listed on the first page of Google, your website could be seen (depending on the search volume for your chosen keywords) by 400-500 searchers who intend to buy. Other "intent" oth-

er examples include:

"__near me"
"__reviews"
"best__"
"__quote" and
"__deals".



Good on page SEO will ensure that your company website appears on the first page of Google search results. However, off-page SEO has just as much to do with your visibility online.

Effective SEO helps your company build a strong and consistent brand presence across the web. You'll have greater brand recognition and more authority if your company information is consistent, whether it appears on your website, in an industry publication, in an online directory, or on your social media pages. Consistency builds trust and consumers are more likely to buy from companies they trust than from companies they don't.





SEO CREATES A SEAMLESS CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE ACROSS CHANNELS

Creating a seamless omnichannel experience for both potential customers and existing customers is a must for every business in 2021. People who are in search of products or services like yours may find information about you in a variety of places other than your website.

- Your social media pages and posts
- Your online directory listings
- Your review listings
- Your YouTube videos
- Your emails and tweets
- Your app

When someone encounters your brand for the first time somewhere other than your website, they are likely to look for your website. You need to be sure that your optimization – both on your site and in your online listings and content – is cohesive and seamless. That means using the same keywords in a way that allows people to find you wherever you are online.

Your cross-channel experience relates directly to both on-page and off-page SEO. Your customers should feel confident that they understand your business and its products or services wherever they find it.



SEO IS CONSTANTLY CHANGING

One of the biggest mistakes that businesses make with their SEO is thinking that they can optimize once and forget about it for years at a time. SEO is not a “set it and forget it” endeavor. There are many reasons that SEO can change.

Back in 2014, the Mobilegeddon update to Google’s algorithm made mobile search a priority. Companies that weren’t agile in responding had their search rank destroyed when it was released. As of 2020, more searches are done using voice than by typing keywords. We already mentioned that in the section about outdated SEO, but you must constantly be aware of how people are finding you.

The most recent example has to do with how current events can change search intention virtually overnight. The COVID-19 pandemic went from feeling like a distant problem in February of 2020 to something that affected every person in the United States (and the world) by the middle of March.

Local businesses took the biggest hit with COVID-19 lockdowns. Owners and managers

had to adapt to offer things like home delivery, curbside pickup, and virtual consultations. People who didn’t have an agile SEO strategy already were at a disadvantage because they had to scramble to update their web content and help customers find their new COVID-related services and products.

As vaccines roll out, it is reasonable to expect that the businesses that had to adapt to quarantines and lockdowns in 2020 will have to adapt yet again to whatever the future brings. We may see a true return to business as usual or new concerns about public health may lead to an as-yet-understood hybrid situation where businesses continue to offer both in-person and contact-free services.

The bottom line is that without an agile, well-thought-out SEO strategy in 2021, many small businesses will fail. Your best bet is to research keywords and SEO strategies now and plan to revisit your strategy as the year progresses. Building in agility to your strategy will enable you to stay on top of whatever 2021 brings.

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