

# Digital Marketing Strategies

FOR SMALL & MIDSIZE BUSINESSES

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# Position yourself as a thought leader.

Iconic Group may do big things, but we're a small business just like you are - so we get it. We understand your challenges and needs, and we know how to create websites and digital marketing strategies that work.

Your digital marketing strategy should position you as an industry and thought leader, enhance your brand, foster client engagement and referrals, and generate significant visitor traffic to your website.

Let's explore some of the services we offer, and some tips for helping your small business thrive and grow.



## Digital Marketing 101 - You need an amazing website.

A modern website is the storefront that first greets your customers. You have a very short time to create a strong first impression - so don't waste a second. The first challenge is getting visitors to your website - after that, it's all about keeping them there, and giving them a reason to return.

- **Simplify your Domain** - Make sure your URL is simple, easy to spell and memorable.
- **Think Function** - Ensure that your website is responsive (adapts to tablets and smartphones).
- **Be Searchable** - Utilize Search Engine Optimization (SEO) techniques to increase organic traffic to your website.
- **Be Visible** - Set up Google my Business to make your business easy to find in web searches. **TIP:** Ask your best clients to submit testimonials and reviews on Google.
- **Engage with Images** - Use appropriate visuals (professional imagery, head shots, web imagery targeting your key demographics).
- **Optimize Content** - Don't overdo it on text - get your point across with concise, impactful language. A 'wall of text' will turn visitors away.
- **Branding** - Make sure your website is consistent with your brand and coordinates with your business cards, brochures and collateral (we'll talk about branding later on).

# Define Your Digital Marketing Strategy

Social media is just the beginning – our strategic online marketing plans are personalized and highly effective.

Digital marketing is an umbrella term for the marketing of products or services using digital technologies, mainly on the Internet, but also including mobile phones, display advertising, and any other digital medium. You should create a yearly digital marketing strategy and review on a monthly basis. It is important to track successes and failures and edit your yearly plan along the way. Your digital marketing plan should include some of the following elements.



- ✓ Social Media Marketing
- ✓ Advertising (PPC)
- ✓ Google AdWords
- ✓ Google My Business
- ✓ Influence Marketing
- ✓ Email Marketing
- ✓ Blogging Strategies
- ✓ Search Engine Optimization
- ✓ Landing Pages
- ✓ Content Giveaways
- ✓ Online Contests

## Some stats to consider when developing your strategy:

- There are 3 billion Google searches every day, and 15% of those searches are unique.
- Approximately 80% of people aged 40 or older will use Google to search for product/service information. **TIP:** Utilize SEO and be searchable.
- Roughly 80% of people under 35 will search for the same product/service information on social media. **TIP:** This is why you should highlight favourable consumer reviews and engage in positive, public client interactions on social media - your prospects are watching!
- 88% of Canadians are internet users - and we spend a lot of time online.
- Over 50% of Canadians use social media - wow! This number is growing by an average of 500,000 users per year in Canada.

# Take Your Digital Strategy to the Next Level with Inbound Marketing.

**Want to sell?** Provide people with something they love in places where they already exist.

Inbound marketing is an approach focused on attracting customers through content and online interactions that are relevant and helpful — not interruptive. **With inbound marketing, potential customers find you through channels like blogs, search engines, and social media** — unlike outbound marketing, which is disruptive and fights for their attention. By creating content designed to address the problems and needs of your ideal customers, inbound marketing attracts qualified prospects and builds trust and credibility for your business.



**Not convinced? How about these stats:**

- 75% of users never scroll past the first page of search results - you need to be on top!
- 8 out of 10 people identify themselves as blog readers, and 23% of all time spent online is spent on social media sites.
- B2B companies that blog generate 67% more leads per month than those that don't.
- According to Search Engine Journal, inbound leads cost 60% less than outbound leads.
- 80% of business decision-makers prefer to get company information in a series of articles versus in an advertisement.

Inbound marketing is something you can do on your own, if your team has the time and the right skill set. If you'd rather have us handle your inbound marketing needs with a comprehensive, personalized program, simply let us know.

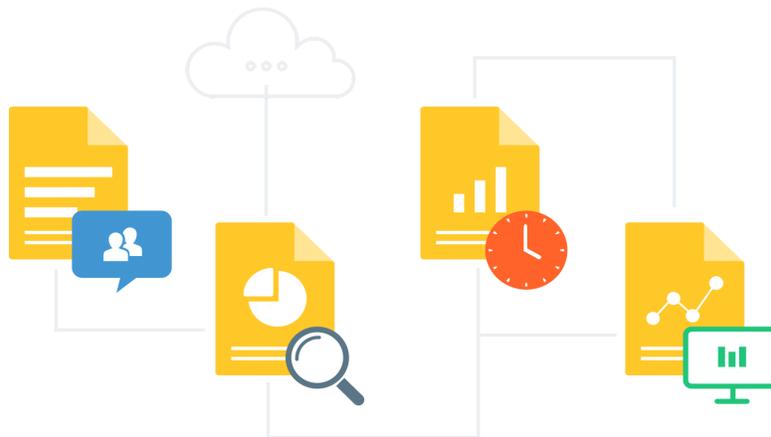
# A Guide to Marketing Your Business Online

## Step 1: Brand Development

A strong visual and conceptual brand positions your product or company above competitors. Make yourself memorable and create a polished, professional image that builds recognition and trust with clients. Here are some tips for branding your business:

- Define and implement a clear, strong brand that includes a logo, tagline, font and colour guidelines, and a consistent style of imagery. When creating these elements it is important to consider all of the mediums you will be marketing on. Logo's should be created with consideration for different sizes and use cases.
- Your brand should be “you”, and reflect your clients and your target market.
- Ensure that your brand is consistent across all print and digital mediums - use consistent header images on social media, and don't forget the finishing details, like email signatures!

From your brand, all other marketing materials are created.



## Step 2: It's all in the details

Once you've defined and developed your brand, all other things should follow. Print elements should reflect your digital presence, and be complementary from a text and visual perspective. All content, photography and multimedia elements within your digital marketing strategy should all be optimized to create maximum impact. Here are some tips to remember:

**Content:** Our team of writers creates engaging, persuasive content that is made memorable by being meaningful. Some tips for preparing your own content:

- **Be concise** - readers will skip a "wall of text".
- **Be clear** - don't use boring or complicated industry jargon.
- **Be useful** - make your content informative, whether it's your web copy, a blog post or a Facebook ad.
- **Be engaging** - dynamic content draws people in and creates a connection between clients and your business.

**Photography:** Professional photography reflects your company's legitimacy, value and appeal. Our best practices:

- Don't use amateur photography in place of a professional headshot. There is usually room to add fun, casual images of your team on a website, but your bio photo should be professional and reflect a high quality of work.
- Don't be too stuffy. You can have fun with professional photos! It's not a mugshot, after all. Show your style and personality while remaining polished and trustworthy.
- Use professional imagery on your LinkedIn page (profile and header images) as well as your website and other materials.

**Multimedia:** Multimedia elements can engage, inform and entertain your clients – what do you want to create?

- Video is king right now and offers a wow factor, but can be expensive and may not be a recommended first step for your website. If you can't create a custom video, share one from within your industry! **TIP:** Host it on your blog is possible, so traffic is directed to your website instead of a third party.
- Images, infographics and even memes are great for getting attention on your blog and social media. **TIP:** Articles posted with images get 94% more views.

## Step 3: Create Your Digital Marketing Arsenal

Now that you've developed your brand and fine-tuned many of the visual and content-related elements of your digital marketing plan, it's time to get your business out there and start generating leads. Here's what you should have:

### **A killer website:**

- See our tips on [page one](#).

### **Social Media Profiles:**

- LinkedIn and Twitter are a great place to start, in most cases. Most businesses will benefit from Facebook, Instagram or other platforms. The right social media accounts depends on your industry, services or products. Ask us what we recommend!
- These profiles should be branded, networked with current and prospective clients in your ideal demographic, and consistently maintained by a team member. A poorly maintained social media account is potentially worse for your business than none at all!

**TIP:** Proofread your posts! Grammar matters, even on Facebook. Watch out for typos or other easy mistakes - otherwise, someone may end up reading (and judging) "your" brand.

### **Print Materials:**

- It may be a digital world, but brochures and business cards are still an important component of marketing. Make sure your brand is represented and your quality is high.

## Step 4: Use Modern Technology

Integrating modern technology with a strategic, custom process that is optimized over time will reduce capital expenditures year-over-year. If the initial cost gives you pause, do the math: would you spend 20k to reduce your expenses by 30k annually? **That's net savings of 130k after 5 years!**



Here's where to start:

- **Automate when possible** - When a day-to-day process is redundant, it creates an opportunity for error due to the repetitive nature of the task. This is where automations can help. They reduce errors, save time, and eventually reduce overhead expenses.
- **Improve communications** - A common issue in any high-functioning business is optimizing communications between clients, as well as internally between staff. Countless discrepancies can be avoided if communications between parties are accurate and quickly recalled at a moment's notice. Reliable communication channels can drastically improve growth in an organized and controlled manner.
- **Update to cloud based technologies** - Many businesses are pinned to yesterday's technology, which is expensive to maintain and hard to break away from. Over time, these services begin to "rust" as wear and tear without proper maintenance puts these cornerstones of infrastructure in a very fragile state. As with the stock market, or any investments, you should not place all your eggs in one basket such as Microsoft for everything. Implementing modern cloud based technology can transformation company by making it more agile and compatible with the fast changing landscape of modern business technology. You can also save money by moving to new technologies that are based on a SaaS model.
- **Combine when possible** - The key to integrating modern business technology is to keep it simple. A single platform on which a user interacts daily will always have a higher adaptation rate than spinning up several new programs at once to manage various parts of the operation. The key to modern technology is utilizing how data is shared amongst programs, allowing users to run a dashboard instead of managing many moving parts.
- **Optimizing the process** - When introducing new technology to your business, you must also have a process for maintaining it in order to stay efficient. As your business grows, so do your daily operations - keep notes on what could be improved along the way. We utilize the 10-10-10 rule. Adapt the new process in 10 days and make sure everyone is on board. During the next 10 weeks, record any difficulties or bottlenecks discovered. Tweak

the process and analyze results over the next 10 months. After 10 months, a more significant change to the process will be introduced. You can then cycle the 10-10-10 process until an optimal level is reached.

A growing business that utilizes technology to streamline operations will save time and money, year over year. You can optimize cost and employee efficiency simply by implementing automated processes. Your team will love you, and your accountant will wholeheartedly approve.