The Three Most Underrated Internet Marketing Strategies

In the online marketing world, we seem to be regularly gripped by a passion for the next big thing, the hip new marketing tactic that everyone is trying.

But some of the most effective methods are relatively unsung. They just chug along and deliver results.

Email Marketing

Email is the most underappreciated marketing channel. Everyone likes to talk about the sexiness and adventure of social media, but it’s email that truly has the most money-making potential. If Facebook was the email killer, it’d have killed email by now.

It wasn’t until early 2010 that ZAGG started dedicating time and resources to email marketing. From April 2010 to December 2010, we tripled the size of our email list. In 2011, we increased the size by about another 50%. In 2012 our list size continues to surge.

How has the increase in list size translated to revenue? After only seeing a 12% growth in web sales from 2008-2009, sales increased 66% in 2010 and 71% in 2011. Obviously, building our email list isn’t the only thing we’ve done in that time, but it has been at the center of our internet marketing strategy.

Organizations should focus on email before anything else. Once you have a decent email list built up, leverage that base to build a social media following.

If they subscribe to your emails, they’re literally waiting for you to send them something awesome. If you have a product or service that people are excited about, they will open your emails. If you’re decent at email, people will open their wallets.

YouTube Advertising: TrueView InStream

You know those YouTube videos that force you to watch five seconds of an ad before you get to the video you want? They’re called TrueView InStream ads. While they may be annoying for users, they present a huge opportunity for marketers.

The power of video is undeniable. When a visitor hits ZAGG.com and watches a product video, they’re 70% more likely to add that product to the cart. Video showcases a product or service in ways no display ad, Facebook post, or tweet ever will.

TrueView InStream has additional benefits. This method of advertising guarantees video views and increases the view count. Let’s be honest, a video with a double digit view count isn’t going to impress anyone.

Additionally, you aren’t just guaranteeing yourself views, you’re guaranteeing yourself relevant views. Much like AdWords, you have several ways of targeting potential customers. Target by demographic, interest, and video type.
The efficiency of InStream ads shouldn’t be ignored. In a recent TrueView campaign, our Cost Per View of InStream ads was 66% cheaper than views generated by YouTube search keywords.

YouTube gave TrueView its name for a reason. It means that you’re only paying for true views. Say you run an InStream ad, if the YouTube user clicks ‘Skip’ before he or she has watched at least 30 seconds of your video, you aren’t charged for the view. Additionally, any action the user takes with your video or channel, such as clicking on your links or watching more videos, is free. You’re truly only paying for a “true view.”

So how would TrueView work in a real life scenario? Let’s say your company has an NBA licensed iPhone skin (ZAGG does). You create a killer video around this product, with an epic opening to capture the viewer’s attention in the first five seconds, and upload it to your YouTube channel. Then you go to your AdWords account and build the campaign.

Let’s use the Miami Heat iPhone skin as an example. You’re going to geographically target Miami and the surrounding area. Then you’re going to target the basketball interest group. Now, when a person in Miami who is interested in the NBA watches a YouTube video, your video will play first.

Facebook Ads

It’s no secret that Facebook advertising has taken a lot of heat lately. This baffles me. At ZAGG, we run some fairly aggressive Facebook ad campaigns and we typically see greater than 100% ROI.

The beauty of Facebook ads is unmatched targeting. Have a product that is perfect for an 18-24 year-old male with an iPhone who lives in Denver and ‘Likes’ SportsCenter (by the way, there are just over 3,000 of them)? Facebook will find him and, with a decent ad, you’ll get the clicks from the ultimate potential customer.

The one aspect of Facebook ads to be aware of is ad fatigue. As you’re targeting a very specific group of people, it’s likely that they will see your ad repeatedly. Upload new ads frequently to keep the messaging fresh.

Back to our Miami Heat iPhone skin… With Facebook ads, I know I want to show my ads to iPhone users who ‘Like’ the Heat and its players.

So under the “Broad Categories” setting I’ll select Mobile and iPhone. Then using “Precise Interests,” I’ll build a group of people who ‘Like’ The Heat, LeBron James, Dwayne Wade, Chris Bosh, and so on until I have my perfect target market. If I wanted to narrow it down even more, I’d limit the ad so it only shows to people in or around Miami. When I’m done, I know my ad will only be shown to and clicked by people who are most likely to buy.

Facebook ads may be getting terrible press, and email may be super unsexy, but give these underrated marketing techniques a try all the same. If they work for you, it can be our little secret.