

# M LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

*The Marketing Guide for Local Business Owners*

March 2017

*9 Classic Email  
Marketing Mistakes  
to Avoid*

*10 Steps to Building  
a Rock Solid Personal  
Brand*

**SEO Best  
Practices  
for 2017 and  
Beyond**

*Why Keyword  
Stuffing Is a  
Bad Strategy  
- and What to  
Do Instead*



**Top  
Marketing  
Trends  
for 2017**

**How to  
Quickly Gain  
Visitor Trust  
from Your  
Business  
Website**

**Infographic:  
B2B  
Marketing  
Trends**

**FREE!**

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Welcome!

Thank you for taking the time to read this month's magazine. We hope you find it full of interesting articles, and more importantly, that you'll be able to learn at least one thing that you can immediately apply to your business.

This month, as usual, we address several ways to help you grow your business. You'll find tips that will help you get the most from your networking efforts, your social media marketing, and your business blog.

You'll also find new versions of our popular Marketing Calendar and Infographic.

If you're not already receiving this magazine regularly, we suggest you add your email to our subscriber list. We have some exciting articles already in the works for the upcoming issues. Don't miss out!

If you like the magazine, and know other local business owners that could benefit from receiving our magazine each month, please do us (and them) a favor by forwarding a copy to them.

If you have any comments about this issue or would like us to help you with your marketing please do not hesitate to contact us.

David Akers  
President / CEO  
LMS Solutions, Inc.

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LMS Solutions was developed to give businesses of all sizes the ability to leverage the same cutting-edge marketing platforms that the Fortune 500 organizations use, at extremely affordable rates.

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# Marketing Calendar

Plan your marketing messages around these upcoming holidays and proclamations.

## March

Irish American Heritage Month  
Women's History Month  
Employee Spirit Month  
National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Month  
National Endometriosis Awareness Month  
Multiple Sclerosis Education and Awareness Month  
Red Cross Month

March 1 - Ash Wednesday  
March 12 - Daylight Savings Begins  
March 17 - St. Patrick's Day  
March 20 - 1st Day of Spring

1st - National Peanut Butter Lover's Day  
2nd - Dr. Seuss Day  
3rd - National Anthem Day  
3rd - National Salesperson Day  
3rd - Day of Unplugging



4th - National Hug a G.I. Day  
6th - National Dentist's Day  
6th - National Oreo Cookie Day  
8th - National Pancake Day – IHOP  
10th - National Pack Your Lunch Day  
12th - National Girl Scout Day  
13th - National Good Samaritan Day  
13th - National Napping Day  
14th - National Potato Chip Day  
17th - Corned Beef and Cabbage Day  
19th - National Certified Nurses Day  
19th - National Corn Dog Day  
21st - National Common Courtesy Day  
22nd - National Goof Off Day  
23rd - National Puppy Day  
26th - National Spinach Day  
29th - Mom and Pop Business Owner's Day  
30th - National Take a Walk in the Park Day  
30th - National Doctor's Day  
31st - National Tater Day

## April

National Autism Awareness Month  
National Humor Month  
International Guitar Month  
Keep America Beautiful Month  
Lawn and Garden Month  
National Poetry Month  
Stress Awareness Month  
Sexual Assault Awareness Month

April 1st - April Fool's Day  
April 11th - Passover Begins  
April 16th - Easter Sunday  
April 18th - Passover Ends  
April 26th - Administrative Professionals Day (US)

2nd - Reconciliation Day  
2nd - Peanut Butter & Jelly Day  
5th - Caramel Day  
5th - Walking Day  
6th - Sorry Charlie Day  
7th - No Housework Day

7th - National Beer Day  
9th - Winston Churchill Day  
10th - National Siblings Day  
11th - Barber Shop Quartet Day  
11th - National Pet Day  
12th - Grilled Cheese Sandwich Day  
13th - National Scrabble Day  
15th - Tax Day  
15th - Titanic Remembrance Day  
16th - Wear Your Pajamas to Work Day  
20th - Pineapple Upside Down Cake Day  
20th - Look Alike Day  
22nd - Earth Day  
22nd - Girl Scout Leaders Day  
22nd - Jelly Bean Day  
25th - Picnic Day  
26th - Pretzel Day  
27th - Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day  
30th - Adopt a Shelter Pet Day  
30th - Bugs Bunny Day  
30th - Hairstylist Appreciation Day



## Top Marketing Trends for 2017

Marketing is a world that moves fast and nothing damages a business more than refusing to move with the times. Businesses need to find new, exciting, and human-centric ways to engage with their customers and it's clear that strategizing to include upcoming marketing trends is one of the best ways to do this.

These are the marketing trends you need to look out for in 2017.

### **Behavioral Emailing**

Behavioral emailing is hugely effective but largely unimplemented. It essentially refers to sending automated emails to your customers depending on how they interact with your business across social media,

your website, and online shopping.

This ensures that your customers receive emails about offers or products that they have demonstrated interest in rather than catch-all newsletters that might be largely overlooked.

### **Interactive Content**

In 2017 you need to get

your customers involved. Interactive content like quizzes, polls, customer-relevant infographics, and competitions will allow your customers to engage and feel personally involved in your business - this is vital in a world where native advertising is key and consumers want to feel invested.

Using social media to offer interactive content is quick, easy, and doesn't require too much tech knowledge so this is a ready option for most business models.

## **Wearables**

Wearable technology (in the form of activity trackers and augmented reality products) is going to be huge in 2017 and beyond.

The complete proliferation of smartphones has cemented the idea that constant consumer connection is expected and desired, so targeting your link with customers through a handy wearable device is simply the next step, particularly if you're in a health or technology related

field.

## **Influencer Advertising**

Native advertising through influencers like celebrities and social media personalities is a must these days. Customers don't want to feel like they're on the receiving end of a barrage of adverts; they just want to hear about the product from a trusted source. The credibility that a strong influencer can bring to your brand is unparalleled so search YouTube and Instagram for reliable options.

## **Livestreaming**

Video creates a far stronger connection with viewers than text or plain audio, so livestreaming is likely to become a big marketing hit in the coming year with Facebook and Instagram rolling out live video platforms to dupe the success of YouTube and Snapchat.

Find a trustworthy and reliable face to conduct regular livestreams for your business and you'll

see customer loyalty and engagement rising significantly.

## **Chatbot Assistance**

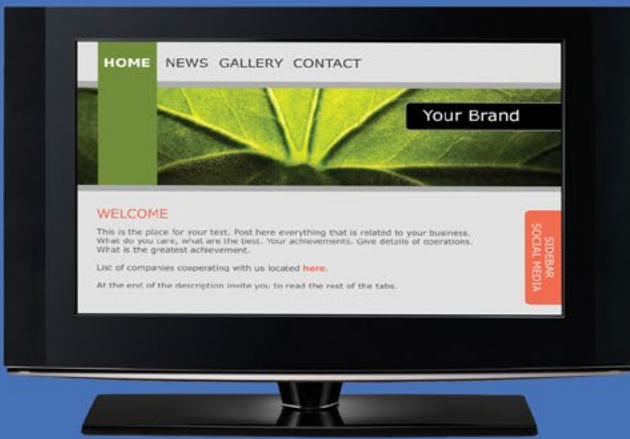
Thanks to the internet and increasing frequency of international travel, you can't rely on customers to stop using your service between outside office hours (and why would you want to?). But round-the-clock engagement requires 24-hour assistance, so chatbots are becoming a necessity.

Improved artificial intelligence has allowed chatbots to effectively answer customer queries and provide real issue resolution, so 2017 is the year to implement chatbot assistance on your website if you haven't already.

Marketing tactics are becoming increasingly advanced and savvy businesses should find ways to keep up. Use these marketing strategies to stay at the forefront of customer engagement, sales, and growth.

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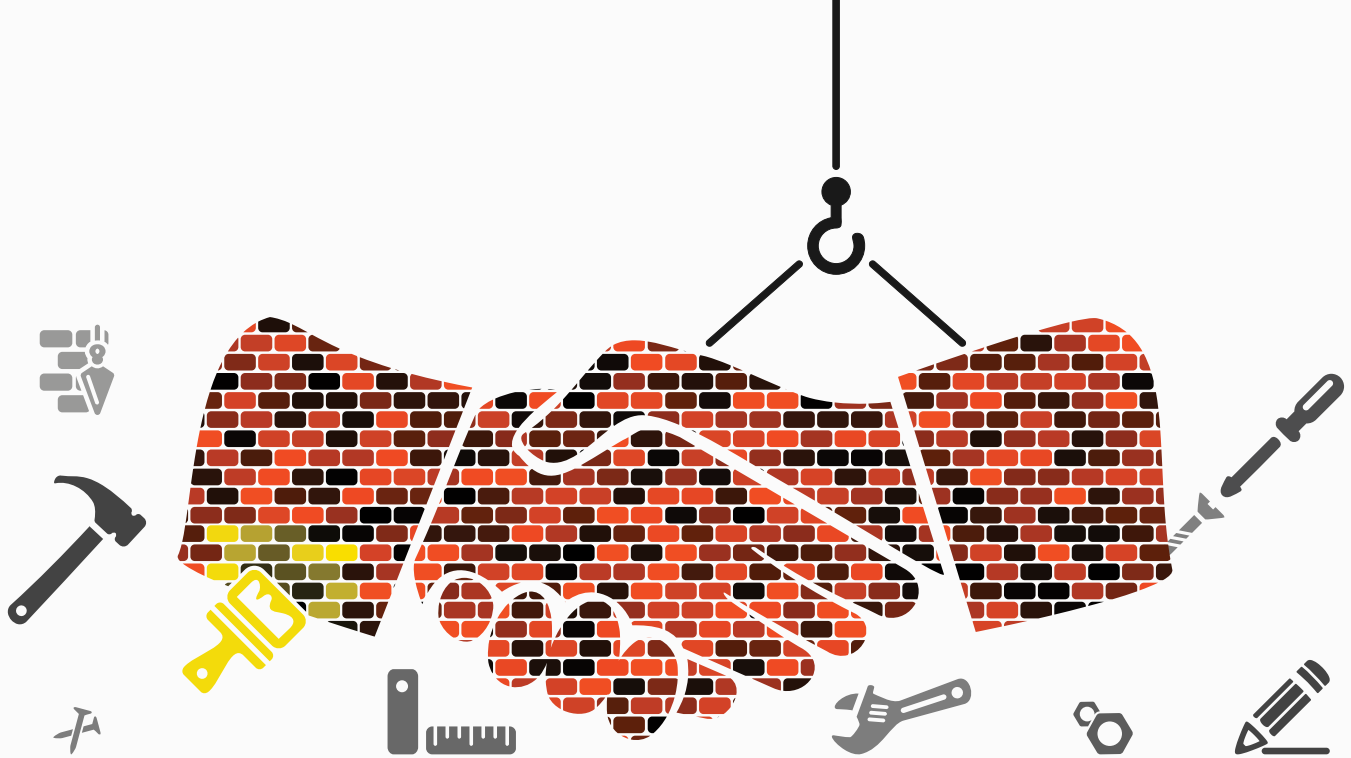


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## How to Quickly Gain Visitor Trust from Your Business Website

Successful business owners understand the need to develop trust with consumers. Vast sums are spent each year on marketing and branding to build relationships that result in sales. If site visitors have any reservations, conversion rates will almost certainly be negatively impacted. With the right attention to detail, though, it is fairly easy to develop trust quickly and put visitors at ease.

The following elements of a website can be worked on to quickly let a visitor know

you are a secure, reliable, and trustworthy business.

### Contact Details

Your business details should be easy to find, typically located in the header or footer of the site. Look to include the address, phone number, and email address, maintaining consistency, as Google will use your details across their business listings. You can also improve communication by adding a live chat facility and support desk, but this will vary depending on the type of

business you operate. Most visitors won't contact you directly, but the appearance of these details helps to make visitors feel secure.

### Security Seals

There are regular news stories about data breaches and hacking, so people have naturally become more conscious about security. If a visitor is signing up to a service or making a purchase, you can anticipate they will be looking for signs of security. Even if you are not asking for any details, there

will be some visitors wanting to know you take security seriously. There are many security seals available, usually described as SSL certificates. Some common examples include Norton, Comodo, GeoTrust, Thawte, and GlobalSign.

## Business Seals

A business seal can work alongside a security seal, adding credibility to your enterprise. Just as there are many security concerns online, people are also worried about dealing with disreputable businesses. A recognized business seal can quickly overcome any concerns, letting people carry on browsing your site without objections. TRUSTe, Better Business Bureau, and Google Trusted Stores are among the most prominent organizations providing certification, while various industry review sites can provide embedded user ratings.

## Personalize

Many sites, particularly for smaller businesses, can benefit from personalization. Letting people know the

names and faces behind the business can increase trust levels and even make consumers more likely to buy from you. A page dedicated to the story of the business, brand values, and team members may seem inconsequential, but a surprising number of visitors will look at these details and be encouraged by them. You could even create a video to give some behind-the-scenes access.

While each of these elements can appear fairly minor, they all combine to put visitors at ease as they browse your site. Most visitors won't actively be looking for these individual elements, but they have become standard across authority sites. When you don't include things like business contact and address details, it can make a portion of visitors uneasy enough to abandon thoughts of a purchase. In most cases, ensuring your site is trustworthy is a simple process, so with some minor adjustments you can improve the user experience and possibly see an increase in the overall conversion rate.



- Promotional Products
- Online Company Stores
- Trade Show Giveaways
- Executive Gifts
- Stress Relievers
- Team and Collegiate Items



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## 9 Classic Email Marketing Mistakes to Avoid

Email marketing is a reliable and affordable way of reaching new audiences. Brands of every size take advantage of this method to get their messages across.

However, here are nine common email marketing mistakes you should avoid.

### **Broken or outdated links**

Make sure the links in your emails actually lead somewhere. One of the primary purposes of newsletters is in driving conversions. Broken links are not only unprofessional but also end up wasting your readers' time. When sending

out newsletters, you want to keep your readers' interest. Broken, missing, or outdated links can be both distracting and frustrating to your subscribers.

### **Not using people's names**

Avoid making your emails impersonal. No one likes

being reminded that they've subscribed to a big corporate entity. As much as possible, use people's names in your emails and newsletters. Using a person's name is a quick way to get his/her attention. This works both in public and on emails. Include people's names in the first paragraphs of your emails to trigger an emotional response.

### **Using your business' (or an employee's) name in the "from" section of an email**

People don't like receiving emails from businesses. People are more likely to open your newsletter if they believe that it came from a person instead. Simply including your or an employee's name in the "from" section of your email can bring a significant increase to your open rates. It's a subtle change that's easy to apply, but its effects are significant. You can also try including a picture of a person in your email.

### **No clear call to action**

Readers should know how to proceed after reading your emails. A call to action is the best way to funnel your readers' attention into something that can benefit

your brand. Make sure to always include clear and visible calls to action in your newsletters.

### **Uninteresting subject lines**

Boring subject lines fail to capture the interest of your readers. Chances are, you won't be the only brand that your readers are subscribed to. You have to make every attempt to stand out from the crowd. The best way to do this is by using catchy subject lines to draw attention to your email. In addition to using witty subject lines, make clever use of preview text.

### **Failing to include social media**

Links to your social media profiles should always be included at the end of your emails. Email marketing is a great way to grow your following on social media. A newsletter can feed your profiles more likes or follows. Social media marketing works well together with email and other marketing approaches. Social media also provides your subscribers with more avenues to connect with your brand, and when combined with email, works surprisingly well to make

your content go viral.

### **Emails are too long**

Newsletters and emails should be kept short and concise. Overly long emails are tiring to read and can be boring to digest. Your emails should be able to capture and maintain the attention of your readers. Your readers should be able to glance over your email and still get the gist of your message. Save the 2,000-word essays for your blog.

### **Grammar mistakes**

Basic grammar mistakes are among of the worst things you can send out in your newsletters. Misspelling an easy word or accidentally using "your" instead of "you're" looks unprofessional. This can lead to your readers thinking twice about subscribing to you. Even a simple mistake can ruin an otherwise good newsletter.

Email marketing is one of the most effective ways of marketing your brand because checking emails is a part of people's everyday routines. Take note of the aforementioned tips, and you should be well on your way to improving your email marketing campaign.



## 10 Steps to Building a Rock Solid Personal Brand

"Call now to order!"

"Go ahead and push that like and share button."

Let's face it, people are tired of being bombarded with ads and sales pitches. That's why personal branding has become so important. When done right, it convinces people that you're the one to meet their needs above all other competitors.

A strong personal brand

is the golden key of entrepreneurship. It opens doors to rewarding contacts, more clients, and exciting business opportunities because it stands head and shoulders above a world drowning in sales promotions and gimmicks. It is a badge announcing you as the best in your field.

Here are ten steps which can help you build a robust personal brand.

### 1. Building an authentic identity

A vital building block in any distinctive personal brand is an authentic identity.

Many entrepreneurs think a besuited, business-speak approach to entrepreneurship is the way to go. But life coach and author Marie Forleo has gone in the opposite direction, using her natural charms to work her way into

the hearts of her followers.

With videos that are fun, edgy and chock-full of useful information, Forleo harnessed her unvarnished qualities to amass a vast army of loyalists. In being herself, she has cultivated a highly successful business with an unshakeable foundation in personal branding.

Okay so you've heard the word "authenticity" so often it sounds hackneyed. Being your authentic self, though, is still one of the best tactics to create a memorable personal brand. You need to put in the hours figuring out your core skills, strengths, and passions. Once you've sharpened the talents and abilities that make you special, the authenticity will ooze out of your pores.

## **2. Finding a niche**

It's important to be crystal clear about your area of expertise.

The personal brand of tech titan Elon Musk lives in the world of tomorrow. Already a maverick in the design and production of electric and self-driving cars, Musk has turned his sights towards the stars.

Nothing's more niche than space exploration. Where others chase space tourism, Musk's company SpaceX designs, manufactures and launches advanced rockets and spacecraft with the ultimate goal of realizing human settlement of other planets.

As an innovator and tech revolutionary, Musk has created a cult of personality that dares to wrestle the stuff of science fiction into the realm of science fact.

What's your space odyssey? What do you offer that puts competitors in the shade? When you settle on the answers to those questions, start carving out your own lucrative niche.

## **3. Sharing your personal brand online and offline**

Now that you've got your identity and niche sorted, sharing them online and offline is the next step.

That's very much the approach of entrepreneur, author, and blogger, Pat Flynn. He is well known for his Smart Passive Income blog where he helps entrepreneurs convert their passions into thriving businesses. Flynn also stages

events to meet his followers and answer their questions in person.

Your bios, social media profiles, business cards and elevator pitches should be edited to consistently reflect your personal brand. Whether it's on digital media or your real life persona, your messaging should be the same across the board. This can help identify you as an expert in your chosen field.

## **4. Show people what's in it for them**

A website is an invaluable weapon in the entrepreneurship arsenal. It can help attain high search rankings and give you control over the messages associated with your personal branding. Here's where it's most critical, though; a website can provide free added value through useful information and relatable tips.

Founder and former CEO of Moz, Rand Fishkin, is an SEO wunderkind who shares his tricks of the trade through multiple blogs and social media posts. Fishkin has set himself up as an SEO grandmaster through whom, all questions are

answered.

Similarly, if you impart some of your wisdom without any strings attached, your personal brand will rise in prominence as a go-to resource. Your customers or clients must come to see you as an indispensable asset in meeting their needs or solving annoying problems. If you bring them in with appetizers, they will stay for the main course.

## **5. Keep it consistent**

The importance of maintaining consistency between personal brands and social media accounts can't be overstated.

It's a game that hugely popular motivational guru Tony Robbins has mastered. Whether it's his website, LinkedIn page or Instagram account, Robbins has created a formidable online persona which is mirrored across all his platforms. He takes every opportunity to make it clear to his audiences what he's all about and how he can help them.

Your tweets, photographs, and status updates are all vital strands of your digital DNA. It is crucial that all of

your online messaging is playing the same tune.

## **6. Sharing the work of others**

There's no substitute for keeping up with like-minded individuals online in the world of entrepreneurship. Commenting on and sharing the content of other industry experts strengthens personal brand credibility.

This is a mantra practiced by Neil Patel. Ranked by Forbes as one of the top 10 online marketers, Patel believes content sharing is a key ingredient in achieving success.

Sharing the work of others is a subtle way of earning a place in the galaxy of high-achieving entrepreneurs. As the saying goes, a rising tide lifts all boats. Your brand credibility will get a boost by the associations you make through content sharing.

## **7. Be open about personal failures**

Being frank about failures on the road to success can be a powerful way to connect with people.

Alibaba founder Jack Ma was a less-than-stellar student who was turned down by Harvard ten times and was rejected for thirty jobs. Ma, nevertheless, went on to create the largest e-commerce company on the planet. He is forthright in putting his failures front and center as part of his unique personal brand.

What you may process as embarrassing failures, others will read as signposts to success and the struggles of a mere mortal on the path to greatness. That's the kind of personal touch people can relate to.

## **8. Reaching out through public speaking**

Public speaking can be an effective strategy for cementing bonds with people.

New York Times bestselling author and former publisher of SUCCESS magazine, Darren Hardy credits public speaking for most of his success.

Recognizing the tremendous value of effective communication, Hardy has invested considerable effort in improving his public

presentations and communication skills.

You're probably thinking that speaking in front of an audience is the fastest way to trigger cardiac arrest. It is, though, an entirely conquerable fear. If you are able to command the attention of audiences with the confidence that comes with time and practice, the rewards will be significant.

There's something to be said for pressing the flesh with living, breathing audiences. You can allow them to share their experiences and ask questions in a setting that's more intimate than a blog or a website. Those are the connections that will lead

to an unassailable personal brand.

## 9. Paying it forward

Few gestures say personal branding more loudly than giving something back.

When it comes to giving back, legendary entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson is famously committed to many non-profit initiatives and charitable causes. Sir Richard epitomizes philanthropy as an important business value.

If you volunteer your expertise for a noble cause, that's the sort of action that will trumpet the qualities that are most important

to successful personal branding.

People respect entrepreneurs who put their money where their mouth is; respect is a key building block in any successful personal brand.

## 10. Track the growth of your personal brand

Google is a great resource to help you gauge the resonance of your personal brand. A name search will turn up the most recent information associated with your products or services. If mixed messaging pops up, well, you've got some work to do.



## MARKETING

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web traffic from search than non-users

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Marketing guru Seth Godin places an important burden on the value of personal branding. For him, it must answer the question: "Will people miss me if I'm gone?" Godin says the answer to that question will determine whether you're on the right track.

Knowing what people are saying about your personal brand means you can jump in where necessary and generate content that's more direct about what makes your brand the one

customers can't do without.

So will your customers miss you if you are gone? You have to answer that by making yourself unforgettable to them.

### **No overnight success**

Cultivating a distinctive personal brand takes focus and persistence. There are no shortcuts, no legions of faithful followers overnight. These ten steps, though, have a tested and proven track record of building

personal branding that will ultimately stay the course.

Increased revenue, greater business opportunities, rewarding contacts - all of these can be achieved by establishing real connections with people through a personal touch.

Don't be afraid to get out there and put your own stamp on the world of personal branding.

## **Is Your Website Mobile Friendly?**

Over 50% of all online searches are now performed on a mobile device.



*With Google's Recent Algorithm change, having a mobile-friendly website is more important than ever!*

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# TOP SIGNS YOU NEED HELP WITH YOUR MARKETING

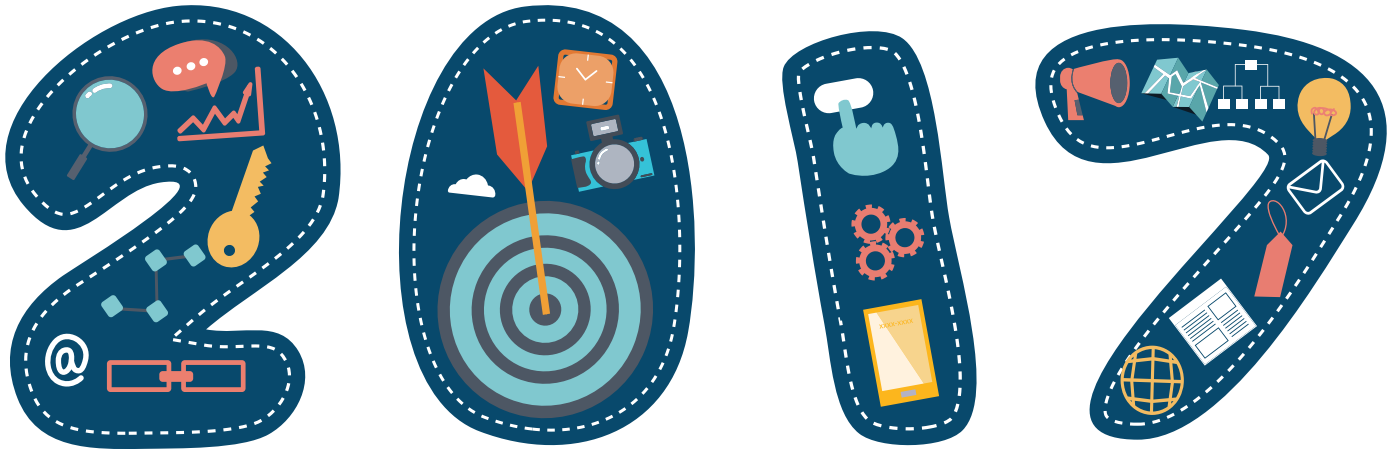
- *You're Overworked*
- *You're Confused*
- *What You're Doing Isn't Working*
- *You Can't Focus On The "Real Work"*

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# SEO Best Practices for 2017 and Beyond



As search engine algorithms continue to evolve, keeping track of all the changes in the world of SEO can be difficult. While great content and backlinks are still key, there are gradual changes in SEO trends that you should bear in mind. Here are six of the most important actions you can take today to future-proof your search engine rankings.

## Optimize Content for User Intent

With recent advancements in machine learning, search engines are more equipped to understand content and connect users to pages that match the meaning of

their search queries. While keywords are still important, make sure your content delivers on the promises made in your headlines and meta descriptions, and focus content around specific topics.

Tip: Use related keyword phrases based around a single topic and your primary phrase. Don't just repeat specific phrases.

## Optimize Content for Voice Search

In the next few years, more people are going to be using voice search to find information online, especially with

new products emerging like Amazon Echo. Voice search will likely become as common as text search as the technology evolves.

For now, though, it's enough to optimize your content by providing complete answers to common questions in your industry. You will have noticed that when an "answer box" appears in Google's search results, the content usually includes a complete sentence that answers a specific question.

Tip: To adapt your content to the voice search trend, include specific questions and answers in your page content.

## **Focus on the User Experience**

As consumers are more likely to remain on websites that offer a good user experience, it's no surprise that Google is rewarding more user-friendly websites with higher search engine rankings. A good user experience comes in many forms:

- Clear site navigation.
- Accessibility for people who are differently abled.
- Content that improves visitors' understanding of your products and services.
- Uncluttered design, featuring appropriate colors, fonts, and spacing.

## **Maximize Page Load Times**

Website speed is likely to become a more important search engine ranking factor in the years ahead, especially as mobile searches continue to rise. Google's research team found that 53 percent of mobile site visits are abandoned if pages take longer than three seconds to load.

Fortunately, hosting technology is improving, and with Google's Accelerated Mobile Pages (AMP) technology, improving mobile loading times is now easier than ever before.

Tip: Google's PageSpeed Insights tool will check your website speed and help you diagnose any mobile issues.

## **Continue Mobile Optimization**

Google has repeatedly stated that mobile-friendly sites benefit from higher search engine rankings. However, there's more to mobile optimization than squeezing things into a small screen. Responsive web design, captivating content, fast-loading pages, and a great user experience must all combine to give users the best possible mobile experience.

## **Produce More Video Content**

Video results are showing up more and more in search engine results pages, and it's no surprise - YouTube is actually the second largest search engine behind Google. Many people looking for answers online

would rather watch a video than read a long blog post.

Videos are a great way to improve engagement and show the personality of your brand. A great video will also outperform a blog post that is ranking for the same keywords. As you plan your content strategy for 2017 and beyond, make some room for video content. It's easier to produce than many people think, and it will take your SEO power to the next level.

Building relevant links and delivering quality content to your audience will always be an important part of a strong SEO strategy. However, to succeed with SEO in 2017 and beyond, bear in mind these new best practices for SEO success.

Consumers are becoming more impatient and demanding quick, relevant, and engaging answers to their search queries. Keep these tips in mind and you're more likely to appear higher in search results and protect your content from future search engine algorithm changes. If you don't make any changes, your search engine rankings could take a hit.

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## Why Keyword Stuffing Is a Bad Strategy - and What to Do Instead

Search engine optimization (SEO) has changed a lot over the last 20 years, and if you're still using outdated strategies like keyword stuffing, Google and other search engines might be penalizing you for it. It's true that keyword stuffing used to be a viable strategy for ranking high in search engine results. Today, though, the practice might damage your rankings as

well as your reputation. Learn why keyword stuffing isn't a good idea, and what you should do instead.

### What Is Keyword Stuffing?

Keyword stuffing is the practice of shoehorning a particular keyword into a webpage or article as many times as possible. This creates sites full of stilted, unreadable content. If

you've ever stumbled across a site that mechanically repeated the same word or phrase every sentence or two, you've seen keyword stuffing at work.

In the past, search engines couldn't tell the difference between spam and genuine content, so websites stuffed with keywords tended to rank well. Recently, however,

search engines have gotten a lot smarter. Thanks to algorithm updates, engines can now tell when a page is stuffed with keywords, and they tend to penalize these sites; after all, no one wants to sort through pages of spam in their search results. Unfortunately, many webmasters don't realize that keyword stuffing no longer works, and they continue prioritizing keyword density over their content's usefulness.

### The Consequences of Keyword Stuffing

Long gone are the days when repeating the same word or phrase would help you rank well. Keyword stuffing isn't just ineffective now; it also hurts your site. Google and other search engines are wise to this trick, and they lower the rankings of sites that try to game the system by overusing keywords. In fact, if you abuse keywords enough, search engines may decide to remove your site from their index altogether, making it impossible for anyone to find you.

Forcing keywords into your writing is also a turnoff for your human readers, who ultimately make or break

your website's success. No one is going to stay on your site long enough to read a page of keyword-stuffed copy, much less link to it or share it on social media. Between the high bounce rate and the fact that no one will link to your content, your site won't stand a chance of ranking well.

### A Better SEO Strategy

To win at SEO in 2017, you've got to play the long game. Shortcuts don't work anymore, and sites that human readers find useful and relevant are the ones that make it to the first page of results. To rank higher, ask yourself how you can provide more value to your visitors.

Providing more value is, of course, a broad directive, and the way you go about it will depend on what you hope to accomplish with your business. Nevertheless, this principle holds true for everyone who wants to rank better in search engine results. Make your visitors happy, and they'll help you build your site's authority and search ranking. It won't happen overnight, but neither does any other type of business success.

Does this mean keywords don't matter anymore? Not at all. It's still essential to do your keyword research and incorporate relevant terms and phrases into your content. That's how search engines know what topic your site covers. However, the quality of your keywords is much more important than how many times you use them. Google only needs to see a term once or twice to figure out what your website is about. Many top-ranking sites only use their main keywords a few times, so they're clearly doing something right.

### The Takeaway

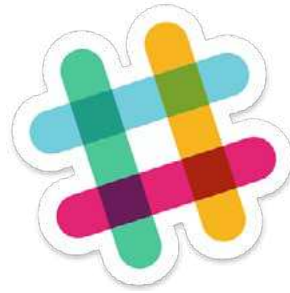
Keyword stuffing is an outdated strategy that no longer helps you rank high in search engines. In fact, it could cause Google and other engines to bury your site behind dozens of your competitors or remove you from the index altogether. Instead of keyword stuffing, your best bet for SEO success is to use many strong keywords throughout your site. After that, focus on creating valuable content that builds your reputation in your field.

# APP Watch

## Slack

Price = Free - Paid  
upgraded plans available

Availability: Android,  
iPhone & iPad



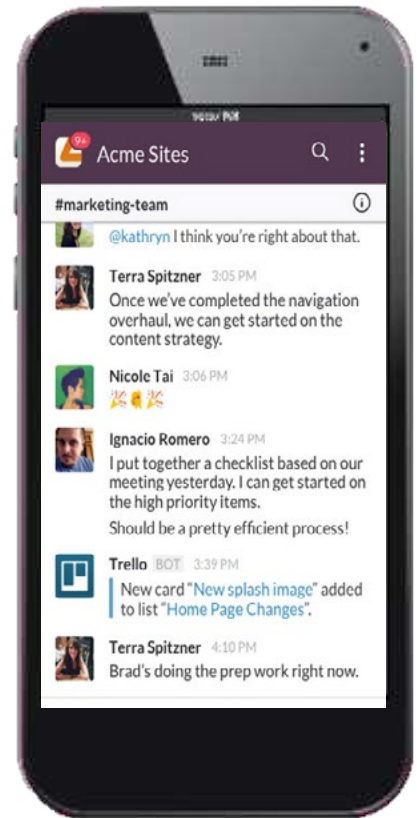
Slack brings team communication and collaboration into one place so you can get more work done, whether you belong to a large enterprise or a small business. Check off your to-do list and move your projects forward by bringing the right people, conversations, tools, and information you need together. Slack is available on any device, so you can find and access your team and your work, whether you're at your desk or on the go.

Use Slack to:

- Communicate with your team and organize your conversations by topics, projects, or anything else that matters to

your work

- Message or call any person or group within your team
- Share and edit documents and collaborate with the right people all in Slack
- Integrate into your workflow, the tools and services you already use including Google Drive, Salesforce, Dropbox, Asana, Twitter, Zendesk, and more
- Easily search a central knowledge base that automatically indexes and archives your team's past conversations and files
- Customize your notifications so you stay focused on what matters



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# Marketing Trends

## Testimonials

*Consumers, including B2B customers trust their peers more than any sales or marketing personnel or message.*

*The reliance on reviews, testimonials will only continue to grow in the coming years. Consumers see voluntary testimonials as unbiased.*

**53%**

of B2B buyers rely on peer recommendations before making a purchase decision

## Focus / Customer Group Events

*These face-to-face events allow companies to learn more about their target market, provides valuable information and opinions from their consumers, and gives them an opportunity to establish a positive, responsive image with consumers.*

## Customer Satisfaction Systems

*New online tools and survey platforms allow companies to better track customer satisfaction, an important metric that can be used to manage and improve their business.*

**37%**

of companies consider customer satisfaction as an integral part of their marketing strategy

**42%**

of companies hold customer events or user group sessions

## Online Customer Communities

*Typically an interactive, members-only website or social media group setup to collaborate on topics of mutual interest.*

*With advances in technology making it easier to setup a members-only, secure community, they are expected to become more prevalent in the next few years.*

## Referral Programs

*Referral Marketing encourages and rewards existing customers when they recommend your products and/or services. These programs include online and offline solutions.*

**92%**

of consumers trust referrals from people they know, and are 4X more likely to buy when referred by a friend

# Today's Marketing Platforms Have You Not Sure Which Way To Go?

**Give Us A Call!**  
**(484) 893-4055**

