



HFMA UPDATE

by Graham Keen,
Executive Director

For many of us, we are now at a point in time where we have experienced more years – either of our working lives or our lives in general – with the internet, than we have without it. A scary thought, perhaps. But it remains the case that for many businesses, in the health food industry and beyond, the world of digital marketing is still something of a mystery.

So, what is digital marketing? It is defined as being the promotion of products or brands via one or more forms of electronic media. For example, advertising mediums that might be used as part of the digital marketing strategy of a business could include promotional efforts made via the internet, social media, mobile phones and electronic billboards, as well as via digital and television and radio channels.

Social media is changing the way we eat, and how we eat more healthily. This means that digital marketing is especially vital to our industry because of the rapid spread of new natural health trends, and health is, of course, now one of the biggest topics on the internet. The 'eat and tweet' phenomenon, where users post photos of their meals on Twitter, is now commonplace, and the hashtags #food and #foodporn apparently have close to 230m and 130m posts on Instagram.

Often, a company's approach when it comes to digital marketing is either to restrict it to simple strategies, i.e. what they know best or have direct experience with, or to attempt a number of different tactics, without fully optimising them. But, as with all types of marketing, one size does not fit all, and with the success of your digital marketing strategy potentially having a significant impact on the bottom line, getting it right as early as possible in the process is vital.

Part of the HFMA's mission for



its members – and for those yet to become members – is to try to ensure they are as well-equipped as possible to get it right. Next month's Digital Marketing Seminar marks the latest in a series of events organised by the HFMA, which will bring together a number of esteemed speakers, discussing a variety of topics from user experience to data protection. The latter will, I'm sure, prove to be a particularly pertinent and nuanced issue in the wake of the recent GDPR legislation. This adds another layer of complexity to the situation, and indeed, even greater reason why we in the health food industry must keep abreast of our responsibilities and restrictions.

As well as taking the opportunity to present our 2018 Blogger of the Year Award, other content to be addressed at the seminar includes:

- How to use influencer and customer generated online content in your marketing plan. How to use customer reviews to your advantage while staying on the right side of regulations.

- How every word you write could be adding £££ to your e-commerce business, with each link providing the key to traffic building.

- Understanding the psychology of

keeping a customer on your page, tips and tricks for converting those key sales and examples of brands who have done it right, and those who've missed the mark.

Amid the complex digital marketing landscape, however, there remain some simple and undeniable truths. In 2018, the average internet user now has seven social media accounts. That's up from three just five years ago. The average person spends two hours a day on social media, whilst teenagers average up to nine hours a day on social media and 48 per cent of people say they made their last online purchase as a direct result of a Facebook ad. And these statistics only refer to social media marketing. The plethora of digital marketing avenues available mean that while social media may not work effectively for your business, another channel or channels certainly will.

While there is undoubtedly still a place for traditional advertising, there is also little doubt that its role is shrinking. The rise of consumption online, along with on-demand television, has presented people with the option to consume media that does not force them to sit through adverts and, overwhelmingly, this

is a choice people have taken. In today's time-poor world, people want someone to provide them with targeted information that helps them make informed decisions. They want to hear from brands that value what they value. They want you to be part of their conversations, and the importance of digital marketing is that it has the capability to do just that.

So, to me, it's clear. Businesses in the modern economy need digital marketing to compete. Online is where the customers are. It's where they prefer that you reach them and, increasingly, it's where the buying process begins. I for one look forward to learning more at next month's seminar, and hope many of you are able to join us. If you would like to know more about the event, or anything else about the HFMA's extensive range of activities, please contact philippa@hfma.co.uk **hfb**

To help us in our efforts to protect this industry and benefit from the gold-standard advice we provide, join the HFMA at the earliest opportunity. To learn more about our activities, please contact me at graham@hfma.co.uk.

HFMA membership is vital to ensure that your company keeps abreast of the fast-changing regulatory environment. The HFMA is the UK's best source of information and most effective defender of our industry's interests. To help the HFMA defend your business at this most critical time contact hfma@hfma.co.uk or call 020 8481 7100.





DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO SURVIVE THE DIGITAL AGE?

Digital Marketing Seminar

One Moorgate Place, London EC2R 6EA

Tuesday 13th November 2018

9:30am - 4:30pm

In an increasingly online world, understanding the impact of good digital practice could propel your brand further and help you truly understand your customer.

Whether it's digital targeting, SEO prowess or customer testimonials, your online presence could be worth more than you think.

Learn about the psychology of the click, how every word can add to your bottom line, and why good content beats clickbait every time.

HFMA Member:
£99 + VAT*

Non-Members:
£199 + VAT*

• *Buffet Lunch and refreshments will be provided*

For further information, please email: Philippa@hfma.co.uk

*(VAT invoice will be sent on receipt of booking form)

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