How to Know If Your Marketing is Working

Free eBook

ThriveHive
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You invest time, energy, and money into marketing your business, all precious resources that you can’t afford to waste. To ensure that you’re getting the most out of your marketing and generating the strongest return on your investment, you’ll need to actively evaluate the success of your efforts.

*But how do you know that your marketing is working?*

In this eBook, we'll help you understand different success indicators for marketing activities and provide actionable solutions to help you improve your marketing performance for your:

- Website
- Lead Generation Efforts
- Email Marketing
- Social Media
Is Your Website Effective?

The first thing you’ll want to know is whether your website is working to generate traffic and leads for your business. What are the things you should look for?

WEBSITE SUCCESS INDICATORS
There are three main success indicators to analyze the success of your website:
- Search engine ranking
- Website traffic growth
- Website performance

Search Engine Ranking

Google and other search engines are the go-to resources for people today, to get their questions answered and to find products and services they need. What makes search engines such a trusted resource is that they rank their results for user queries according to relevance, quality, and popularity.

To understand your search engine ranking, perform a Google search for various keywords related to your business and location.

Does your website show up on the first page? Which searches trigger search engines to show your website? Do some pages on your website rank higher than others? This information will help you to understand your search engine ranking, which is an indicator of the visibility and credibility of your business website.

How to Improve Search Engine Ranking

If your business isn’t getting found on the first page of Google, your SEO needs to be improved. The higher you rank on Google, the more likely a potential customer will find your business.

Here are some ways that you can improve your website SEO to rank higher on search engines:
- Get a mobile-responsive website. Google favors websites that perform well on both desktop and mobile devices.
- Include relevant keywords on your website pages and blog posts.
- Add your location to your website.
- Add a services page to describe your services.
- Publish blog posts to answer questions, offer helpful advice, or showcase some of your work.
Website Traffic Growth

Your website traffic is the number of people that visit your website during a period of time, such as per day, week, month, or year. It's not website traffic itself that indicates your website success, but rather the growth in website traffic. Is your traffic growing steadily each month? If it's not growing, then it can be improved.

How to Improve Website Traffic Growth

*Below are two types of website traffic to look at and how to improve each one.*

**ORGANIC TRAFFIC**

Organic traffic includes visitors arriving at your site from search engine results pages. You can improve your organic traffic by working to improve your website SEO.

Another excellent SEO strategy is blogging. Every blog post is treated by search engines as a page of your website, and page volume helps to boost your rankings. The higher you appear on search engine results pages, and the more of your website pages that appear on the first page of Google, the more visibility and traffic you will get to your website.

**REFERRAL TRAFFIC**

Referral traffic includes visitors arriving at your site from other websites or platforms, such as by clicking on a link to your website from another blog or from a social media post.

**To improve your referral traffic:**

- Include links to your website pages and blog posts in your social media posts
- Encourage others to share your posts
- Share useful content from your blog or website on industry sites or forums
- Collaborate with other blogs, websites, or micro-influencers to include links to your content in theirs.
Website Performance

Growing your website traffic is important, but you also want to make sure that you’re attracting the right visitors. One indicator of the performance of your website traffic (as well as the quality of the website itself) is bounce rate. You may have heard of bounce rate before, but what does it really mean? Bounce rate is the percentage of visitors that have left your website after only viewing one page.

How to Improve Website Performance

If your bounce rate shows that a significant number of people leave your site shortly after landing on your homepage, then consider re-optimizing the design or revising the keywords that you are using to attract visitors. To cut down on bounce rate, be sure to create a clear path for visitors—not to the extent that they feel forced to take action, but in the sense that they don’t feel underwhelmed by monotony or overwhelmed by too many actions and elements.

The elements of an effective website include:

- **A clear navigation menu**: Have someone visit your website who is not familiar with your business or website, and collect feedback on their experience.

- **Fast page loading times**: Large file sizes and images are a major culprit of slow page load times. Try compressing or reducing your file sizes.

- **Clear and structured headings**: Make use of the heading features in the text editor part of your website.

- **Calls to action**: Make sure your calls to action are clear and in context so that visitors know exactly what clicking each button will do. Examples of calls to action include downloading a free guide, subscribing to an email list, or requesting a quote.

Keep in mind that bounce rate is not always the most accurate indicator of website success, because it ultimately depends on your industry and the design of your website.

For example, if a pest control business has their number in large font on the homepage, a customer may quickly dial for immediate service and then exit or disengage with the page once they are connected.
Are Your Lead Generating Efforts Working?

Part of running a business is generating new leads to grow your business. However, the success of your lead generation efforts isn’t just determined by the number of new clients, customers, or sales that you’re closing each month.

LEADER GENERATION SUCCESS INDICATORS
You can look at your lead generation on a smaller scale, with such success indicators as:

- Size of email list
- Conversions
- Volume of phone calls

For this section, we’ll go over each success indicator first, then provide strategies for improving these areas altogether.

Size of Email and Blog Subscription List
To identify how successfully you are generating leads, look at your email and blog subscription list. Is it growing? If your email list isn’t growing, it isn’t successful.

Conversions and Reconversions
A person’s contact information is not something they are readily willing to give up, so it’s important to offer something of value to them in exchange, such as a useful guide. Set up tracked links to see how well your offers are succeeding in converting leads.

Tracked links allow you to attach a unique code at the end of a particular link. For any given link with a set of tracking code, the page will appear the same, but the unique code will allow you to separate out the visits to that page based on the source.

By tracking your links, you can see which marketing activities are attracting people to your site. You can even see how the same offer is performing across multiple channels. For example, if you have a form on your website, you can see which leads arrived at the form from a Facebook post vs which ones arrived at it from an email you sent out or from a search engine advertisement.
Volume of Phone Calls

People who call your business are also considered leads. Even if they don’t become a paying customer right off the bat, you can still open the door to future communication with them by collecting their email address.

To determine whether your phone lead generation efforts are working, set up tracked phone numbers. Like tracked links, tracked phone numbers allow you to identify the specific source that encouraged the lead to call your business. You can have one number that you use for your website, one number you use for print ads, and another number you use on event flyer. Each of these numbers forwards to the same line, but since they are all unique, you can see which number the lead called, and therefore which marketing content they found. This will enable you to determine the most effective marketing activity for phone calls.

How to Improve Lead Generation

If you want to improve the number of leads you are generating for your business, here are several steps you can take:

Email:
• In your contact page, remove your email address and replace it with a contact form to generate leads.
• Include call to actions on your website to join your email list or subscribe to your blog.
• Using landing pages with forms for lead generating offers. Landing pages encourage a user to complete the action needed to obtain the offer.

Conversions:
• Increase the appeal of your offer by testing out different CTA content.
• Increase traffic to your website where visitors can become leads.
• Provide something of value for free such as a free eBook, discount code, or free consultation.

Phone Calls:
• Make your phone number or other call to action button clearly visible on your homepage.
• Use tracked phone numbers for different marketing activities.
Is Your Email Marketing Successful?

When it comes to performance, email marketing metrics are fairly straightforward. You want to know how many people opened your email, how many people clicked on an offer, and how many people took action.

EMAIL MARKETING SUCCESS INDICATORS

Open rate  Click through rate  Conversions

Open Rate

Open rate is the number, by percent, of emails that are opened out of the total number of emails that were delivered. Open rate is best calculated when doing a large email send, rather than one-off emails. Most email programs calculate open rate for you but in case you need the formula:

$$\text{open rate} = \left( \frac{\# \, \text{emails opened}}{\# \, \text{emails delivered}} \right) \times 100$$
How to Improve Email Open Rate

Open rates differ by industry but when it comes to open rate, needless to say, the more emails that are opened, the better. Aim for at least a 20% open rate. If you’re experiencing a low or stagnant open rate, here are three steps you can take to improve it.

1. IMPROVE EMAIL SUBJECT LINES

A subject line is the first thing viewers see when receiving an email. Some tips for writing a good email subject line:

• **Keep it short:** Subject lines shouldn't be long. A quick phrase will jump out to a person skimming their inbox.

• **Ask a question:** A question as the subject line of an email will make people curious and increase their likelihood of opening it. Just make sure the question is relevant to your email!

• **Use numbers:** Amidst the sea of text flooding every user’s inbox, the use of numbers in headers will diversify and attract the individual’s eye. To take advantage of this, consider using percentages or statistics when promoting a sale, giving a discount, or inviting customers to an event.

2. TIMING OF DELIVERY

The day and time at which you send out your emails can also have a significant impact on open rate. We suggest aiming to send your emails around 11:00 AM or between 8:00 PM to midnight on a Tuesday, as these generally are the times when individuals are most prone to open them.

However, optimal times vary for different audiences, so your best bet is to test various times and days, keeping track of the data in order to see what works best for your business.

3. SENDER NAME

A third explanation for unopened emails is unfamiliarity with the sender’s name. A great way to make sure the sender name for your emails is being recognized by your recipients is to employ an A/B test. Segment your list and send the email to half of your recipients from one name, and half from the other.

**Sender names to test include:**

- Company Name (ThriveHive)
- Your Full Name
- First Name From Company (Emily from ThriveHive)

Data-driven testing is the only way to fully understand what best resonates to the customers on your email list.
IS YOUR EMAIL MARKETING SUCCESSFUL?

Click Through Rate

Click through rate is the measure of how many people click on the links you put in your emails. If you’re sending out an email with a call to action (download, claim offer, signup, buy now), the goal is to get the recipient to click on the offer. As with open rate, most email programs will calculate this for you, but see the formula to the right just in case:

\[
\text{CTR} = \frac{\text{# clicks}}{\text{# emails delivered}} \times 100
\]

How to Improve Click Through Rate

If you’re noticing that plenty of people are opening your emails, but few people are clicking on the links in your emails, then your emails can use some improvement. To improve your click through rate (CTR) take the following actions:

CREATE AN OBVIOUS CTA

To get more people to click through an email to your website or landing page, create an obvious call to action with a relevant incentive. The call to action should include a direct action word and make its purpose in the email clear. For example, if you are linking a specific an offer or deal, have the call to action read “click here to receive our exclusive offer!”

INCLUDE FEWER LINKS

It’s easy to get carried away with including too much information in an email, and one of the biggest causes of low CTR is too many links in an email. If you have too many links to click or your CTA isn’t obvious, the reader may be overwhelmed or confused. Aim for three or fewer links. By directing the reader toward more specific action, more action will be taken.

POSITION CTA ABOVE THE FOLD

Another reason for low CTR is due to CTA not being “above the fold”. “Above the fold” refers to something being visible before the reader has to scroll. If you want the reader to take an action, make the CTA obvious by putting it above the fold. You can test the position, context, and text for the link to maximize your email marketing strategy.
Conversions

A conversion refers to the completion of an action that you want your email recipients to take, such as filling out a form. For the purposes of email marketing, conversions are the number of people who act on your call to action (they click and actually sign up, download, purchase, etc.)

If you’re seeing that people are opening your emails and clicking on the links, but aren’t generating many conversions, there are several ways to improve this.

How to Improve Conversions

To get more email recipients to convert into customers:

- **Use effective CTAs:** Direct your readers to take an action that will convert them.

- **Use Landing Pages:** Instead of sending readers to your website where they have to search for the download, create a landing page dedicated to only that download, where they can get more details about the offer and then easily fill out a form.

- **Improve Landing Page Content:** If people are clicking through on the CTA to a landing page, but not filling out a form on the page, there may be a disconnect between the messaging. Or, you may have too many fields in your form.

- **Make a Valuable Offer:** A person’s contact information is something of value to them, so you must provide something for which they would be willing to exchange their contact information.

- **Nurture:** Just because all of your leads don’t instantly become customers doesn’t mean they’re a lost cause. It often takes leads a few engagements with your business before they decide to become a customer. Nurture your leads by following up with them and continuing to send valuable content.
Does Social Media Work for Your Business?
SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS INDICATORS

Engagement

Engagement on social media refers to the interactions that occur between you and your followers. These interactions involve following, commenting, sharing, liking, direct messaging, and more. Engagement requires active behavior by both you and your target audience.

How to Improve Social Media Engagement

If you are frequently posting on social media but lacking engagement, here are some steps you can take to improve it:

POST LESS

If you’re posting consistently without any engagement, post less. Facebook and Instagram use an algorithm that shows only your most engaging posts to users. If you don’t have any engagement, your posts will be shown to fewer people.

DIVERSIFY YOUR CONTENT

In addition to sharing useful information via links to blog posts and helpful tips, get creative! Try posting videos, featuring customer reviews or photos, sharing relevant quotes, or fun facts about your company and its employees. Keeping things fresh and keeping your followers interested will help to keep them engaged.

RUN GIVEAWAYS OR CONTESTS

Users can enter the contest by commenting or liking a post. This not only provides something of value to your audience, but these types of posts generate high engagement rates.

USE QUESTIONS

End your social posts with questions, to invite your followers to share their answers, opinions, or feedback. You can then engage back in a conversational manner and build your relationship with your audience.

USE TAGS, HASHTAGS, AND LOCATIONS

This will enable more people searching for your products or services in your area to find you.

TAG PEOPLE WHENEVER POSSIBLE

Tagging improves post visibility by showing your post to friends and/or followers of users or businesses tagged in the posts.
Need help figuring out if your marketing is working? Or need help improving your marketing? ThriveHive can help!

ThriveHive is an all-in-one Guided Marketing Platform that provides local businesses with a marketing plan, a professional website, and the tools and expertise to effectively manage all of your marketing efforts, all in one place.

See how ThriveHive can help your business grow!

Request a Demo (It’s free!)