

Eight Internet Marketing Trends Dermatology Marketers Should Follow in 2018

Some vital trends may develop in 2018 to impact your dermatology marketing strategy.

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The needs of your dermatology patients, as well as their thoughts and interactions, are constantly evolving. Every year in this digital era we witness innovations in social media platforms and mobile apps, and overarching changes in consumer preferences that continue to influence and reshape the world of digital marketing.

Ahead are some of the vital trends that may develop in 2018 and impact your dermatology marketing strategy.

1. BIG DATA

While big data has been a trend for a number of years now, it has mainly been restricted to large organizations and significant players. Big data is already prevalent with more than 6 million developers undertaking projects, and is more accessible due to the advent of AI (Artificial Intelligence) and machine learning. This makes it a viable possibility for small and medium-sized enterprises to also benefit from big data. Many more advertising avenues and marketing outreach techniques are including big data into their realm. It will be challenging to stay competitive in dermatology marketing if you are not using the multitude of data points available through big data analytics.

2. NON-VISUAL SURFACES

People did not expect the smart speaker industry to proliferate in the manner that it did in 2017. Smart speakers are estimated to be a standard part of more than 55 million households in the US by 2022. More than 20 million smart speakers have been sold the past year alone. Many people

are already using these devices routinely, speaking voice instructions and waiting for the results to be played back to them. Slowly, consumers are getting more comfortable with interfaces that do not need any visual surface or inputs. This new comfort level will have a transformative effect on your dermatology marketing communications with consumers.

3. RELIANCE ON APPS

Apps are everywhere. While a multitude of apps have been available for over a decade, now customers have real and practical benefits from apps in fields such as transportation, weather, and news. Many apps have become a routine feature in a consumer's life. They have become a part of consumer psyche in the same way as Google is for search engine results. This signifies an area of robust growth for brands through app-based marketing. In 2018, more app capitalization is expected, which means more businesses will buy ads and negotiate deals for targeted presence on relevant apps.

4. NATIVE-FOCUSED ADS AND CREATIVE CONTENT

Native ads resemble editorials but are actually sponsored content. A large percentage of digital ad revenue is estimated to be driven by native ads in the next five years. Native advertisements can garner more consumer mind space through natural placement rather than the conventional banner advertisements. There is one catch, though. Native ads need a vividly different approach to developing copy. This approach should encompass the diverse preferences of the people these ads are targeted towards. The year 2018

will definitely see more spending on native advertisements and growth in “smart content” for native-focused ads, which will be customized to audience’s tastes and a deep understanding of native audiences.

5. MICRO-MOMENTS

According to Google, micro-moments are a moment where the customer is driven to use his/her mobile device on the go for any activity such as going somewhere, doing something, or purchasing an item. Businesses that will be the most successful in 2018 will be the ones that spend time and effort in learning, understanding, and capitalizing on such micro-moments. This needs more in-depth demographic study and a more mobile-focused strategy. However, with the new tools that will emerge, it will be simpler for modern brands to follow this approach.

6. INFLUENCE NETWORKS AND CONTENT

While content marketing has been the most popular approach for some time, it has been recently encountering the challenges associated with saturation. Today, every company with a portal has some type of strategy for content. Social media is particularly saturated with content, with marketers battling it out for visibility. This is the reason that there might be significant shift in digital market spends in 2018 and beyond. Instead of vying for new space, marketers will utilize the already available space. Summarily, more businesses will strive to make themselves visible and increase their influence through influencers who have an established audience and popularity. These ready-made influencer net-

works will be less costly, reduce the quantum of content, and provide businesses more targeted online visibility.

7. PERSONALIZED COMMUNICATIONS

The internet is crowded, which makes it easy for communications to get lost. For this reason, consumers prefer personalized experiences, including individual interaction with brands more increasingly. Effective, personalized communication is not sustainable, so more and more companies are opting for chatbots as an inexpensive alternative. Now chatbots are smarter and more personalized, which is increasing their popularity amongst both consumers and brands. This year will see chatbots becoming a standard for companies that want to offer their consumers a large-scale yet individualized experience.

8. INCREASED FOCUS ON PRIVACY PROTECTION

Large and small digital marketers must be set to comply with new privacy regulations worldwide. These regulations will alter what digital privacy means to companies as they face requests or rules for the permanent deletion of consumer data based on the “right to erasure” and mandates around how future information is gathered and used for marketing purposes.

Additionally, serious security issues in 2017 have affected consumers all over the globe, especially in the United States. Consumers are concerned about the security of their data on the web. In future, they will prefer organizations and products that focus heavily on information security. Attacks on consumer data are becoming more frequent, and expert marketers will use information security and privacy protection as a valuable asset.

AN OPPORTUNE TIME

Many more trends may emerge in 2018, but these are some of the most prominent and established. This is the opportune time to adjust your dermatology marketing strategy in accordance with the new digital marketing trends in 2018 and beyond. ■

Naren Arulrajah is President and CEO of Ekwa Marketing, a complete internet marketing company that focuses on SEO, social media, marketing education, and the online reputations of dermatologists. With a team of 180+ full time marketers, www.ekwa.com helps dermatologists who know where they want to go, get there by dominating their market and growing their business significantly year after year. If you have questions about marketing your practice online, call 855-598-3320 to speak one-on-one with Naren.



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