

# The Dish on Digital Marketing

Today's meat eater no longer shops how they used to, so meat companies can no longer market how they used to. It's time to go digital.

Grocery shopping used to be a straightforward, mundane task. People might flip through a cookbook or browse the pantry before making a handwritten list with meal items needed for the week. A coupon or circular clipping might influence their selection, but for the most part it was a seek-what-you-need trip. Traditional marketing materials like direct mailers and point-of-sale items met shoppers where they were and got the job done.

But it's a new day. Now shoppers stroll the aisles with smartphone in hand, toggling between a Google search and Pinterest board. They step up to the meat case and aren't just thinking about cut, price and quality. Their purchase decisions are swayed by things that can't be explained on a small label or iron man.

Let's break down exactly what today's meat eater craves:

- Eagerness to know more about their food and where it comes from – ingredients, animal well-being, natural practices, etc.
- Looking to connect with a brand and the company behind it
- Migration to online shopping and grocery/meal kit delivery services
- Consideration of consumer reviews and similar product options
- Generational differences of shopping and pre-shopping behavior on social platforms
- Expectation of personalized content and shopping experiences
- Demand for instant gratification – immediate answers, quick entertainment
- Searching, consuming and sharing information online

With this understanding of the modern meat buyer, processors and retailers have a multi-faceted challenge: How do we satisfy consumers' growing need for information, deliver it exactly when and where they're looking, all while pushing them toward the meat case? The answer: digital marketing.

Put simply, digital marketing encompasses all marketing tactics that are executed online: email, social media, advertising, websites and even consumer reviews – if it happens on the internet, it's part of this category.

Going digital provides more opportunity to focus marketing efforts so the right content is shared at the right time to the right people – all in the palm of their hand. But as with all marketing strategies, digital is not one-size-fits all because there are no cookie-cutter consumers or copy-and-paste goals. Companies must understand each of the top channels and align those benefits with their needs to create a plan that successfully influences their shoppers and drives meat sales.



# CHANNEL BREAKDOWN



## Responsive Web Design and Search Engine Optimization

A website can have all the bells and whistles and transitions and videos, but if it doesn't reach and serve its users, then what's the point? Responsive web design uses templates and code to guarantee a site looks and works exactly as it should, no matter the screen size. This is more important than ever with 70% of web traffic happening on a mobile device.<sup>1</sup>

One component of this design is having visual elements (engaging photos, appealing typography, embedded videos, etc.) that load quickly to encourage a positive user-experience for its visitors. Cue search engine optimization. Search engine optimization (SEO) encompasses all site improvements that increase its likelihood of appearing in search results when someone uses terms/phrases related to its content while browsing search engines like Google, Bing and Yahoo. When a site implements SEO best practices it is rewarded by search engines and appears higher on the search engine results page – making it more likely to be found organically by web users.



## Search Engine Marketing

While search engine optimization helps users find websites organically, search engine marketing (SEM) is a form of paid advertising that promotes a website at the exact moment someone is searching with keywords that are relevant to its content. Let's say your company specializes in natural<sup>1</sup> beef. By implementing a paid search campaign, you can bid on the keyword phrase "natural beef" and pay for your website to pop up when users search "natural beef near me" or "where to buy

natural beef." This type of ad is known as pay-per-click (PPC) because you are charged – you guessed it! – every time it is clicked.



## Digital Advertising

From weekly circulars to rail strips, advertising isn't a new concept for the meat industry. Now with engaging digital placements that are strategically targeted, advertisers can more effectively reach their audience and drive them to the meat case. These evolved capabilities help deliver relevant messaging to select consumers in the platforms they use while on specific devices. And although people often gasp at how the ads they're served are eerily spot-on, 63% of consumers are interested in personalized recommendations when making shopping decisions.<sup>2</sup>

So how can companies make sure campaigns resonate with their audience? By using attention-grabbing images paired with copy that is relevant to the reader, all served precisely where they are through behavioral, geographic or contextual targeting.



## Content Marketing

Unlike other forms of marketing that focus on promoting a specific brand or company, content marketing uses various forms of engaging content, like videos, case studies, blogs and social media, to help consumers connect – which is exactly what today's meat eater is eager to do. They are no longer making purchase decisions based solely on protein type, but on the company behind the product. Nearly 50% of consumers value open and honest business practices when deciding where to shop.<sup>3</sup> They also want to learn about ingredients, animal well-being standards, sustainability practices, company integrity and

<sup>1</sup>McLeod, Betsy. (2019, Feb. 28). 61 Mobile Marketing Statistics for 2019 and Beyond. Blue Corona. Retrieved from [www.bluecorona.com/blog/mobile-marketing-statistics](http://www.bluecorona.com/blog/mobile-marketing-statistics)

<sup>2</sup>Ellett, John. (2018, February 8). New Research Shows Growing Impact of Online Research On In-Store Purchases. Forbes. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnellett/2018/02/08/new-research-shows-growing-impact-of-online-research-on-in-store-purchases/#433a387616a0>

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Grocery Shopper Trends 2018. Food Marketing Institute; The Hartman Group.

more. The solution? Content. Whether a piece is designed to educate on a relevant topic, illustrate a brand story or simply entertain, this form of marketing helps satisfy consumer curiosity while guiding them through the buyers' journey to engage with a brand and encourage loyalty.



## Social Media Marketing

As of January 2019, there were 3.397 billion active social media users. What's more, the average daily time spent on social media was nearly two hours.<sup>4</sup> And this time isn't just spent watching silly videos or sharing snappy headlines – to find meal inspiration 29% of consumers use Facebook, 26% use Pinterest, 24% use YouTube and 14% use Instagram. That's one quarter of the population who is highly interested in learning about their food purchases, eager to discover new products and willing to pay more for them.<sup>5</sup>

With such mass usage, the social media realm has become an ideal place to reach consumers – and with so many options, companies are able to find the right mix to meet their needs. Not only are there multiple platforms to choose from, but also message delivery options. If a company's goals are to interact with consumers and build a community, then unpaid social media posts (organic posts) will do the trick. If a company wants to increase brand awareness or drive website traffic, then paid activity will support these goals. Using the unique targeting capabilities available in each platform will also help zero-in on the right group of consumers. Have a summer ribeye sale at select store locations? Run a geotargeted campaign that will deliver ads to those specific ZIP codes. Want your store's pork ribs to be the tailgating go-to? Target users who are interested in football, tailgating, pork and grilling.



## Email Marketing

Even with all the shiny new apps and social media platforms, email is still king in the digital space. In fact, 75% of adult internet users identify email marketing as their preferred marketing method.<sup>6</sup>

Not only is content delivered directly to their inbox where it can be opened or saved at the recipients' leisure, it is likely to be more relevant to them. With customization opportunities available in the subject line and greeting, as well as the ability to segment send lists, companies can easily control who sees what content.



## E-commerce and Consumer Reviews

It's no secret the impact e-commerce has made on food retail. Driven by consumers' need for convenience, service providers and companies across the web are touting faster shipping and better products, all with doorstep delivery. Growing popularity led to a 75% increase from 2015 to 2018 in the number of shoppers who used online grocery retailers at least sometimes.<sup>7</sup>

E-commerce not only satisfies consumer demand for ease of shopping, but also product confidence, served fresh through consumer reviews. And when it comes to food, word-of-mouth is gold. Just think: How much more willing are you to try a new restaurant if you know someone who had a great experience? Or if Yelp is already buzzing with high ratings? Customers are likely to spend 31% more after reading "excellent" reviews.<sup>8</sup> And luckily for businesses, there are many outlets available outside of e-commerce platforms to promote and share consumer reviews. Google My Business and Facebook are two easy places to start.



## Influencer Marketing

Because consumer reviews and word-of-mouth recommendations are so impactful, a form of marketing emerged to leverage the reputation of online personalities: influencer marketing. Consider it like finding a mutual friend who is shared with target consumers. Partnering with a blogger who publishes content that is relevant to an audience, or appeals to the same audience profile, can help companies expand their digital footprint. Although it is a paid marketing avenue, influencer marketing

<sup>4</sup>Smith, Kit. (2019, March 1) 123 Amazing Social Media Statistics and Facts. Brandwatch. Retrieved from <https://www.brandwatch.com/blog/amazing-social-media-statistics-and-facts/>

<sup>5</sup>Power of Meat 2019. Food Marketing Institute; Foundation for Meat & Poultry Research & Education.

<sup>6</sup>Ward, Susan. (2018, Oct. 30). What is Email Marketing? The Balance Small Business. Retrieved from <https://www.thebalancesmb.com/email-marketing-2948346>

<sup>7</sup>U.S. Grocery Shopper Trends 2018. Food Marketing Institute; The Hartman Group.

<sup>8</sup>Marchant, Ross. (2017, March 15) The Impact of Online Reviews on Business. BrightLocal. Retrieved from <https://www.brightlocal.com/blog/the-impact-of-online-reviews/>

is designed to look and feel authentic. When bloggers are genuinely interested or pleased with a product, their community of engaged followers believe the brand advocacy and become eager to learn more. The numbers don't lie: 49% of consumers depend on influencer

recommendations and 40% purchased something after seeing it on Twitter, YouTube or Instagram.<sup>9</sup> All these digital marketing channels sound great, but what do they really look like when applied to a meat-and-potatoes industry? Read the case study to see what worked for the Tyson Fresh Meats Team.

Download the Case Study

## PREP FOR SUCCESS

Entering the digital marketing world without a strategy is like playing darts without a target... or dart flights... or a sharp needle. Bring intention to every tactic before hitting "go-live" by considering the following:



### GOALS: What do you want to achieve?

Define your marketing objective to help guide campaigns toward supporting a single initiative, whether that is brand awareness, user engagement, lead generation, online sales or brand loyalty.



### BUDGET: How much will you spend?

Set monetary guardrails to determine the best channels and placements that will give the most bang for your buck. Marketers can spend as much or little money (or none at all) in the digital space but need to adjust expectations accordingly.



### AUDIENCE: Who are you trying to reach?

Identify the consumers most likely to purchase your product so you can deliver targeted content directly to them. To start, consider demographic information, interests, pre-shopping behavior and digital channel usage.



### MESSAGE: What are you going to say?

Determine what and how you want to communicate to resonate with your target audience.

Highlight unique offerings, product specifications and attributes through the lens of your one-of-a-kind brand story.



### COMPETITIVE SCOPE: What are other brands doing?

Research the digital activity of competitors to see how they're promoting a similar product, what they are doing well and what you can do better. Keeping tabs on them will help you understand how you stack up and how to stand out.

There's no secret recipe for achieving digital marketing success. It's all about using the right channel mix, paired with traditional marketing materials to create a consistent, impactful message that follows meat shoppers from their online activities to offline discovery – and ultimately to the checkout line.

Get in touch with *the beef & pork experts*<sup>™</sup> to help convert "clicks" and "likes" to sales and repeat customers. Visit [tysonfreshmeats.com](https://tysonfreshmeats.com) to start today.

<sup>9</sup>Knightley, Emma. 20 Influencer Marketing Statistics that Will Surprise You. Digital Marketing Institute. Retrieved from <https://digitalmarketinginstitute.com/en-us/blog/20-influencer-marketing-statistics-that-will-surprise-you>