



**DON'T STOP AT THE TOP**

**HOW TO  
CREATE THE RIGHT  
MARKETING MIX  
FOR MEASURABLE  
ROI**

**SOCIUS<sup>®</sup>**

# INTRODUCTION

Close your eyes and imagine the parts that make up your car. There's a steering wheel, gas pedal, floor mats, seats, windshield wipers, tires, wheels, and radio. Get even more specific. What's under the hood? Bolts. Nuts. Pistons. Oil. Camshaft. Serpentine belt. And on and on.

Now, imagine this...you walk into a car dealership to buy a new car, only to find these pieces strewn about. The dealer says, "Come over here and let me show you our latest model." He then points at all those parts scattered throughout the show room. Confused, you'd say something like, "Yeah right. That's not a car!"

And, of course, you'd be right. Pieces of a car don't make a car. It's the assembly of those pieces in the proper order, with the proper combination of parts that makes a car.

Your digital marketing experience is no different than this metaphor. Sure, you may have an agency that does PPC, builds websites, writes SEO content, and delivers web traffic reports. But those are just pieces. And they're certainly not creating as much value on their own as they could together.

The point is this: the right mix of parts matters. But knowing what to do with that mix—how to put those pieces together to create a powerful machine—matters even more.



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# 01



**IN THE SAME WAY**

## 01 IN THE SAME WAY

In the same way you shouldn't be expected to build your own car, you can't expect to be a digital marketing expert. You'll, likely, have to trust your marketing efforts to a digital marketing firm, one that's promised to be your "partner," run your ads, write your content and get you more clients.

However, as a business owner, it's important to understand the ROI of those outsourced efforts.

Do you know if those efforts are giving you a good return for your money? Do you have insight into how an agency creates the marketing machine they talk about? Have they shown you, exactly, how to turn a \$1000 investment into a \$10,000 customer?

Among answers to those questions, you should also know how much a customer is worth—now and five years from now. You should know, clearly, what industry benchmarks you're measuring your efforts against. And you should know, precisely, what mix of marketing tactics are being deployed in your brand's name, even if it's only to justify the money being spent.

More importantly, your digital marketing "partner" should be talking to you about these things on a regular basis.

ROI doesn't come from advanced tips or high-level, complicated strategies. You just need to understand a few digital marketing basics so you can prioritize your attention and money.

When you know what you're asking for, you can stop saying, "How much is this going to cost me?" and you'll understand what you want your marketing to achieve. You'll also quickly know when it's working. Instead of being in the dark, you'll be guided by real, transparent data.

We're going to show you how to focus on the big digital marketing wins—the things that get you disproportionate results. It'll be up to you to ask your "partner" the hard questions. Let's go.

5 warning signs your digital marketing efforts can be improved.

- You don't understand your conversion rates
- You're not mixing the right marketing tactics to create efficiency
- You don't know the lifetime value of a customer
- You don't have an easy way to calculate marketing ROI
- You're not investing in repeat business with reviews and referrals

# 02



**TRANSPARENT MARKETING MEANS  
ACTUALLY SEEING RESULTS**

## 02 TRANSPARENT MARKETING

Transparent marketing means actually seeing results it's not uncommon that you wouldn't know the total value of a customer. Or even your costs. That's what you've hired others to do for you, right?

Many digital marketing agencies that tout their "partnerships" are the same ones who thrive on keeping you in the dark about your true costs and returns.

That's not to imply that digital marketing agencies are out to get you or are scamming you in any way. They're not. But it's often to their advantage to bundle packages, create obscure reports, or roll costs together.

**Your best defense against this? Know your numbers.**

### HOW TO COMPARE: KNOWING CONVERSION RATES, INDUSTRY BENCHMARKS, AND ROI

For the purpose of this exercise, we're going to define a conversion as a sale—signatures on paper, if you will (Your organization may define a conversion differently, but that's okay).

Calculating your conversion rate, then, simply means you know how many sales you get from your total number of leads. Here is the simplest version of that idea:

If you close 10 out of every 100 leads, you have a conversion rate of 10%. You can use this simple math inversely, as well, to calculate how effective you need your marketing efforts to be. For instance, if you know your team closes 10% of all leads, your marketing efforts needs to consistently generate 100 leads to maintain that close rate.

Now, that's an obvious over simplification, but you get the idea. You likely know your conversion rates at this point, so we won't spend time walking you through how to figure those out right now.

Conversion rates are only part of the equation though. Once you know them, you're likely asking (or being asked) "is that good?" Again, that's up to you and your business model. But industry benchmarks can help give you a better idea of how to answer that question.



03



**THERE'S NO WAY TO KNOW**



### 03 THERE'S NO WAY TO KNOW

There's no way to know if your conversion rates are good or bad if you don't, first, have some idea of what industry averages are. There can be nuances and variables that change, but at a minimum, you should know the average cost per lead, click-through rate, cost per click, and monthly spend for digital marketing in your industry. It's a good starting place, if nothing else. Armed with this information, you can begin asking more specific questions about your agency's marketing efforts.

Benchmark data like this helps reveal how efficient your spend actually is and how you stack up to your competitors. It lets you ask questions like:

- How much should we be spending on cost per click?
- Are we above or below average? And, how can we improve?
- Are we bringing in new customers with our PPC ads or are we just showing ads to existing customers (i.e., wasting money)?

Your agency should be able to provide you with benchmark data like this in your industry. If you want to get really detailed, ask for a breakdown of your brand keyword performance and industry keyword performance too.

As a final note about conversion rates, if yours are NOT above 5-10% on average, you need to start looking for opportunities to improve them.

[Talk to a Socius representative and we'll help you out.](#)



# 04

**PIECES DON'T MAKE A MACHINE:**  
WHY YOUR GOOGLE ADS AREN'T WORKING

## 04 PIECES DON'T MAKE A MACHINE

There are more than seven million advertisers<sup>1</sup> using Google Ads. And while you may think you have other advertising options, keep in mind that Google accounts for 62% of all search queries<sup>2</sup> in the U.S.

All that to say, online advertising is getting more expensive each year. When everyone is playing in the same sandbox, it can get a little crowded—and start to cost. Your success using pay-per-click alone is only going to get harder as keyword auction bids go higher. Fortunately, there are other ways to improve your marketing efforts that go beyond a paid-only strategy.

There's no better one-two punch in digital marketing than syncing your search engine marketing (SEM) efforts with search engine optimization (SEO). At Socius (and more broadly across specific industries), clients who have both SEM and SEO working together have better click-through rates (CTR) than those who don't.

It's been our experience that when clients employ an SEM-only strategy, they see a CTR that hovers in the low single digits. When those same clients couple SEM with SEO, we see somewhere around 60% higher CTRs—almost 3 full points. That can translate to a lot of added revenue.

Granted, there are factors like budget size and vertical to take into account (results don't always translate one-to-one) but you can't deny the difference in these results. Even if you got a fraction of the improvement we've seen with our clients, you'd still be heads and tails above your competition.

At the very least, coupling SEM with SEO is a conversation worth having with your agency—and an experiment worth trying.

How a Premier Cabinet and Renovation Company Increased Web Traffic by 90%

Reborn Cabinets had an digital marketing partner whose's efforts weren't delivering results for them. Reborn wanted to launch Google Ads, which they felt were essential for success in their vertical, but they felt their existing agency didn't have the right industry experience to launch these efforts.

<sup>1</sup> <https://klientboost.com/google/google-ads-ppc-stats>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/267161/market-share-of-search-engines-in-the-united-states/>



## INDUSTRY EXPERTISE, ADAPTABILITY AND HIGH PERFORMANCE

In initial conversations with new vendors, it was clear to Reborn Cabinets leadership that Socius was a leader in the Google Ad space. Their knowledge of targeting and increasing SERP (search engines results page) rankings impressed them. Socius also gave them full control of their website property, something the existing agency did not.

Socius Marketing stepped in and began managing all of Reborn's digital marketing initiatives, including the launch of Google Ads. With an updated modern website, continued optimization, and the right combination of Google Ads, SEO, and social media marketing, Reborn Cabinets experienced substantial growth in traffic and conversions.

## SITE TRAFFIC DOUBLES AND CONVERSIONS REACH 3,000 MONTHLY

Socius leveraged a variety of marketing strategies and tactics for Reborn. As a result, the website traffic increased. That led to more opportunities for conversions.

Through a marketing mix of Google Ads, SEO, and social media ads, Reborn Cabinets realized digital marketing success. The website traffic is nearly double what it was prior to Socius's involvement, increasing by 90% since 2012. The website conversions also continue to grow year-over-year, averaging about 3,000 per month.



Reborn Cabinets defines their success with Socius around results, performance, and ROAS (return on ad spend).

"Socius never tried to own our website. They always were just there to help us manage our website."

— EDNA LOZANO

MARKETING DIRECTOR, REBORN CABINETS

# 05

UNDERSTANDING YOUR MARKETING COSTS  
& THE LIFETIME VALUE OF A LEAD

## WHAT'S THE VALUE OF A CUSTOMER TO YOUR BUSINESS?

Of course, the answer depends on how long a customer sticks around. One who makes a series of small purchases over 10 years could be worth a lot more than one who buys a big-ticket item one time. Regardless of how you calculate the numbers, it's important to take the long view when considering customer value.

The creation of an efficient marketing engine begins by understanding the cost of a single lead (this is separate from the conversion rates we discussed earlier). When you know how much revenue a single customer brings you over the average amount of time they do business with you, the math about how much you should invest in finding new customers becomes much easier.

It's commonplace to put digital marketing resources toward lead generation, but this can be a mistake when you know you get more bang for your buck with existing leads and customers. Part of the reason organizations put so much focus on lead generation is because retention efforts are much harder.

Retaining customers is not an exact science, nor is there any single answer for how to achieve it. However, you can begin to get a clearer understanding of how much a customer is truly worth—and in turn determine your marketing efficiency—by blowing up the value of ONE of your leads.

## REPEAT CLIENTS ARE THE CORE OF YOUR HOME IMPROVEMENT BUSINESS

Now that you know how much a customer is worth to your business over time, you can begin to utilize strategies that keep them coming back.

Home improvement businesses often leave money on the table simply by letting communication lapse once a sale is complete or the job is done. This is a shame because the numbers show sustained customer communication literally pays.

Let's look at what the stats say about new customers: Research shows that contacting an online lead within an hour of an inquiry improves a salesperson's chance of a meaningful conversation by 7x.



## WANT TO RETAIN MORE MEMBERS?

If you're not frequently following up or re-contacting people — even after you've "sold" them — you're leaving money on the table. Even if a PPC lead costs you just \$100, they're worth nothing without proper follow-up.

Yet, other research shows that salespeople give up too quickly. Nearly half of salespeople quit following up with people after one attempt. More than 90% give up after four attempts.

This same logic can be applied to your communication efforts with existing customers. Sustained, communication clearly pays off early in a relationship, but it also has dramatic effects after job completion.

One option for capitalizing on existing relationships is to automate your post-job communications. By automating your follow-ups with educational content or helpful resources, you improve your chances of building loyalty with those who already do business with you. This goes a long way in building customer lifetime value.

It's also important to point out that your most satisfied and loyal customers are also the ones most likely to refer friends and family. Giving them a steady stream of good, automated content makes it easy

for them to share resources that spread the word about you.

In addition to automation, though, there are a couple of often simple, but overlooked strategies to take advantage of. Let's take a look at how you can make online reviews and referrals a core part of your retention strategy.

## GETTING THE MONEY ON THE TABLE: REVIEWS AND REFERRALS

When figuring the value of a lead (as we did earlier) customer acquisition becomes just half of the customer value equation.

The numbers may show that you should spend \$500 to make \$10,000, but there are other important ways to value customers that don't boil down to cold, hard math. Consider this:

- What's it worth to you to have customers refer your business to a friend or family member?
- How much is an online review worth to the reputation of your business?
- What are you doing to capture value AFTER a sale or completed job?

# 06



## A BAIN AND COMPANY STUDY



A Bain and Company study showed that when you improve your customer retention rate by just five percent, you can increase profits by more than 25%. Simply put: when customers return to your business, they buy more over time, thus increasing their lifetime value.

With numbers like that, the value of sustained outreach and other retention strategies like customer reviews and referrals becomes clear. As you look for ways to communicate with customers, address their concerns, and keep them coming back for repeat business, these strategies are worthy of your time and consideration.

These strategies are often ignored because they feel like “extra work.” It’s been shown time and again that people heavily rely on reviews—especially from strangers online—as well as word of mouth when looking for home services. How much revenue have you missed out on by not asking for reviews and referrals?

Generating referrals and online reviews doesn’t have to be hard (or expensive). There are plenty of tools out there to help you build your online reputation, manage reviews, and create new referrals that draw in customers.

Reputation management software is prevalent, easy to use, and relatively cheap (compared to what you’d lose by letting your follow-up lapse).



A 5% improvement in retention can lead to a 25% increase in profit.



"85% of consumers have as much confidence in online reviews as they do in personal"

- BUSINESS 2 COMMUNITY BLOG, 2017

These software programs not only help you manage and respond to reviews quickly but they also provide the added benefit of identifying potential customer issues by highlighting the keywords that are often associated with negative reviews. Pinpointing issues, gripes, or just plain negative reviews goes a long way in building your reputation and trust—two key factors in whether people choose to do business with you. If you're not using reputation management or reviews software, your digital marketing ROI is needlessly suffering.

Showing your customers (and anyone else who sees it online) that you're listening—and, in turn, thoughtfully responding to praise and detractors—will go a long way in helping you keep some of the money that's been left on the table.

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# 07



## BREAKING OUT OF THE BLACK BOX

Whew, that was...a lot. So let's take a minute to recap. Understanding some digital marketing basics will help you prioritize your attention and money. Those basics include:

- Knowing your conversion rates
- Understanding how the right mix of tactics can improve results
- Calculating the lifetime value of a lead
- Understanding how to figure ROI and marketing efficiency
- Focusing on creating repeat business with referrals and reviews

Let's face it, you've probably wasted money with digital marketing agencies that didn't understand your business.

Our team of marketing experts are leaders in the digital space, have deep knowledge of your industry, and know what it takes to reach qualified leads and make a real impact on your business's bottom line.

Say goodbye to cookie-cutter marketing that falls flat and doesn't work for your business. Our blend of industry knowledge and our customized

approach to design, content, and digital strategies result in superior marketing.



## ABOUT SOCIUS

Socius Marketing provides full-service, agency-model digital marketing services that drive leads for home improvement clients. The Socius team brings more than 300 years of combined experience in all aspects of digital marketing, from SEO content writing and web design to pay-per-click (PPC) advertising and web development.

Socius serves as an extension of your business. That means that as your business grows, our team will work with you to make sure we have the right marketing strategies in place to reach your company goals.

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SOCIUS, VISIT US AT SOCIUSMARKETING.COM**

**LEARN MORE**