

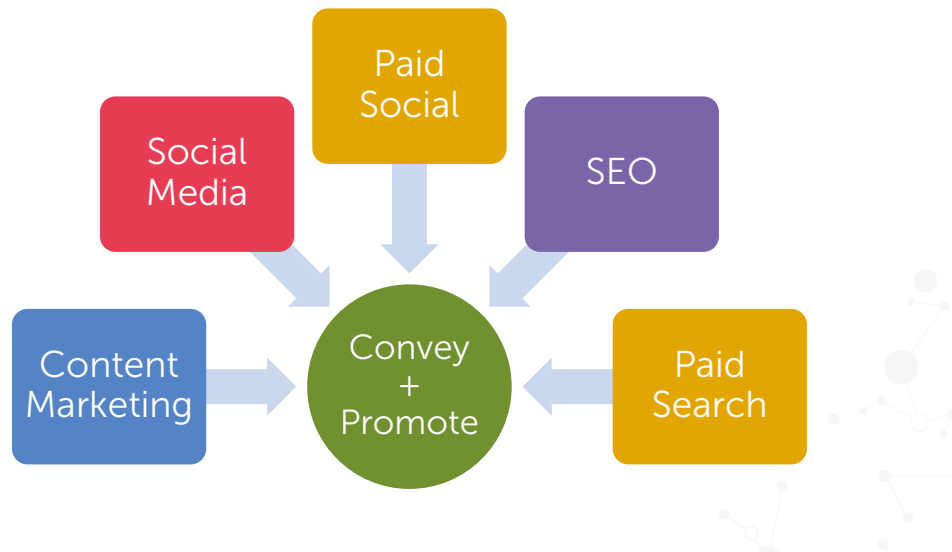
DS 780

Data Science and Strategic Decision-Making

Lesson 9 Introduction

Strategy: Convey and Promote

IDM Best Practices: Convey and Promote



Well, welcome to the second step in implementing the IDM strategic model. Last time, we talked about the first step and that's defining and establishing your brand. And this week we're talking about the second step, which is conveying and promoting your brand message.

Now by convey we're talking about communicating, pushing the information out, making things known, phrases like that. On the promotion side, it's all about advancing and being an advocate for the brand. To do this now, we're going to take a look at five main things.

So to actually accomplish this convey and promote tactic, what we're doing is going to use content marketing which involves using information basically as bait to attract people that might be interested in your brand. Social media, I think we all know what that is. We're using social media or digital word of mouth to convey and promote the brand.

Also paid social. So that's where we're paying a fee for not necessarily exactly advertising but different ways where we can come to the top and grab attention in the social media arena. Then search engine optimization or SEO where we can make our website easier to find when people start searching for whatever our product or brand or service is. And then finally paid search where to supplement the organic search where we simply use keywords and so forth to get a good spot in the listings where we might pay to get listed up at the top or off on the side of a search result.

Traditional vs. Content Marketing

Traditional Marketing

Find target recipient



Interrupt



Gain attention of recipient



Deliver marketing message

Content Marketing

Offer content valued by target



Target audience finds you



Provide content + start talking



Deliver marketing message

So let's talk about exactly what content marketing is. And probably the best way is to contrast it with traditional marketing. And if you think about the way you go out and try and talk to potential customers, first you have to find target recipients. So you're actually beating the bushes looking for these people. And typically whatever kind of marketing mechanism you're using, you're going to reach them while they're doing something else or talking to somebody else or simply not necessarily being focused on what your product is. So whether you're the telemarketer that interrupts dinner, the direct mail piece that clogs the mailbox, an advertisement on TV when you're trying to talk to your friends or your family on the commercial break, you're actually interrupting the consumer while they're doing something else.

And then you have to gain the attention of the recipient. And of course Madison Avenue is very good at this. You know that's why we get some fairly entertaining TV commercials, say, or radio commercials. But whatever media we're using, we have to gain the attention of the recipient, and that includes digital media. And then lastly, we deliver the marketing message.

So once we find the people, interrupt them, whatever they're doing, get their attention, and then we can deliver the message. Now contrast that with content marketing. Here we're simply going to offer content that would be of value to the targeted customers, the target audience. So that target audience finds you because you're offering something that is of value to them. Now it doesn't have to be a gold plated anything, it can be some fairly straight forward things, a white paper, for instance, is probably one of the ones that get used a

lot in at least in B2B content marketing. But it's something that would be of value to them.

So your target audience actually comes to your website, requests whatever the content is that you're using essentially as bait, and then you provide the content and that provides a basis for starting a conversation. And from that point, it's a little bit easier quite often to deliver the marketing message. In fact, the marketing message may be, it probably should be included at least subtly, in whatever content it is that's being provided.

Content Types

Blogs – blog posts relevant to brand and target audience

Premium content – webinars, PPTs, whitepapers, ebooks

Multimedia content – infographics, videos, podcasts

Newsjacking – content related to current events/news stories

Smart Content – customized to consumer (uses CMS)

Branded content – relevant advertorials (Facebook Sponsored Stories, Promoted Tweets, etc.)

So to attract people with content, there's a number of ways to do it. Blogs actually are a pretty good way of doing it. If you establish yourself or somebody in your organization establishes themselves or maybe it's the author is sort of unknown but the blog is well-known, you've established either the person in the blog as an expert in whatever topic it is. And, of course, whatever the topic is for the blog, the general topic that you stay within, it has to be relevant to both your brand and also to the interests of the target audience.

So if you're trying to portray yourself as an expert in electrical engineering, then you're not going to want your blog to be talking about fishing one week and then talking about home repair the next week. It needs to be focused somewhere in that realm of electrical engineering, and it needs to be relevant to your brand. In other words, whatever your product line. If you sell a product, a line of high-voltage switching gear or something like that, then your blog should probably stick to that area of electrical engineering. And, of course, it needs to be something that would be of interest to a target audience, electrical engineers that maybe need the latest information in that particular part of their field, for instance.

Then there's something the book classifies as premium content. And typical examples of this are webinars, PowerPoints, or quite often on some sort of slide service, and then white papers and e-books. Sometimes there's some similarities between the white papers and e-books, but it's some kind of content, some knowledge that can be imparted. And this does two things. One, it helps establish you and your expertise, and it also fulfills this need of the target audience. So a webinar might make sense both B2B and B2C, and

something like a white paper tends to lend itself more to a B2B, so it's got to match up the kind of market you're in.

Now there's also multimedia content. Infographics are a huge thing right now, have been for quite a while, actually. So something like that can bring people in and catch their interest. So it's perfect for content marketing. But the same thing with videos or podcasts. So it's not just something that's going to end up being a PDF that they can print out, this could be richer media content, anything from the graphics and numbers and text on infographics all the way through to audio and video.

The fourth thing that's mentioned in the book is news jacking. Or one of the things that's mentioned is news jacking. And all this really means is you take something that's hot in the news that day or week or month and you kind of reposition it for your own needs. So if there's something that's happened out there and it's getting a lot of play on the news, maybe you somehow connect your product to it. So for instance if there was, as there has been from time to time, a break-in of say a retailer's database and customer information and credit cards and information and that sort of stuff is compromised.

Well, if you're in the security business, that's a perfect time for you to establish yourself as an expert and provide information directly out to consumers on how do you protect yourself in this scary world, that sort of stuff. Or maybe even hold yourself out to reporters and the media in which case you suddenly become this expert that ends up embedded in the story. That's the sort of stuff that can then lead people back to your website. And as long as you've got some content on this same story, the same event, that can be a great way of getting real topical sorts of things and getting people motivated to go out and start looking for it.

Then there's smart content. And all this really means is that it's variable, it gets customized on the fly for each consumer. Usually it involves using your website's content management system and probably a couple of other things as well depending on exactly what you're doing. But the idea is whatever information you can garner as this person comes in to request something, you can then customize what it is that you're actually going to give them by where they are geographically or what company they work for or whatever it might be.

Last thing on this list anyway is branded content. And all this really is advertorials. Now they have to be relevant advertorials, things that are relevant to what your customers want and what your brand stands for and all that. So it would be something like the Facebook sponsored stories or promoted tweets.

And if you're not familiar with the term advertorials, of course, it's a mash up between advertising and editorial. So it kind of has a foot in both worlds. In media, there's usually a pretty strict dividing line between editorial content, in other words, a story, say, in the newspaper or on the TV or in a blog and advertising that gets paid for and runs right next to it. Advertorial starts to mix the two, which can when used correctly be very, very, very useful in promoting a brand.

Now one thing to remember when we're talking about content is this doesn't just happen magically. It takes a lot of work to produce it, and it also takes a lot of work to coordinate it. And that's where an editorial calendar is really, really, really important. You can't really pull this off without having a plan that really amounts to a calendar where you pick dates on OK, I'm going to publish the blog every Tuesday and we're going to run premium content before and during major trade shows in the industry plus these other two times, because this is the main selling season for our product. That sort of thing. So there's some logic behind when you do it, when you put it on the calendar. And in the case of things like blogs, you want to make that regular on a regular basis so it can become habit forming for consumers.

So whatever these things are, you'd want to have them on your editorial calendar. Now obviously, something like news jacking where it depends on some event happening which is going to be an unknown, a little harder to put on the calendar. But once it does happen, you'll want to put on a calendar how you're going to play this out over the next week or next month, depending on how much the legs are on whatever the event is.

Social Media

- Share brand content useful to target consumers
- Social media channels are two way
- Listen to your customers and engage!



Now the next way that you can convey and promote is social media. So the book focuses on seven major social media, which is fine. Not likely that you're going to be using all seven, but you have to find the ones that make the most sense for your brand, your industry, your customers.

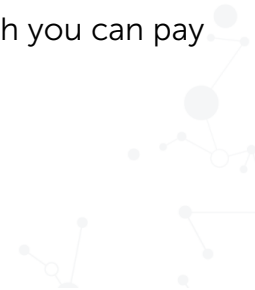
Things to keep in mind, whichever ones you end up going with is that the whole point is to share brand content that's wanted and useful to your target consumers, which is starting to sound familiar, right? So that's what you're trying to do. And keep in mind this is word of mouth, except it's digital word of mouth where you use the leverage of social media and it goes a lot faster and it goes to a lot more people than if you're just talking at the office water cooler or over the back fence to the neighbors or to somebody in a coffee shop. This needs planning and it needs good execution.

While executing, keep in mind social media channels are two way. That's crucial to keep that in mind. You want to be listening to your customers and then engaging with them. Something we've talked about before, but it can't be overestimated how important this is. You've got to listen to the customers and engage.

With the two-way channel, a rich two-way channel like social media, it's relatively easy to do. But you have to remember to do it. You can't just charge in, start blasting away in Facebook or on Pinterest or wherever you choose to go and not listen to the input that's out there from your potential customers. If you start with that, then whatever information you put out will almost automatically be more relevant to your customer and more helpful to you in the end.

Paid Social Promotion

- Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn offer well developed self-serve advertising options
- YouTube makes use of Google AdWords and has simple set up
- Google+ permits linking to Google AdWords
- Instagram has advertising options that are similar to content in appearance
- Pinterest offers promoted pins – regular pins for which you can pay to gain viewers



Now the next way of doing things is paid social promotion. Now Facebook and Twitter and LinkedIn all offer some pretty well-developed what I'd call self-serve advertising options. You can go in there, learn about what you have to do to use whatever promotional devices they make available, advertising or other things that might be unique to their particular platform, but you can learn about them, make choices, make the plan, sign up for it, put a credit card in there, and off you go. You're actually in business, and it's something you can do in a matter of sometimes minutes but certainly within a single day.

YouTube, which is owned by Google, makes use of Google AdWords, and that has a pretty simple set up as well. So with YouTube it's a little different, but again, kind of a self-serve easy to set up sort of thing. Google Plus works with AdWords as well. It handles it in a slightly different way, but it does permit linking to Google AdWords.

Instagram has advertising options that end up looking very similar to regular content. So if somebody is going through and looking at Instagram, the advertising options they offer would to the consumer look pretty close to just regular content. But you pay and you have a lot more control over placement and exactly what's, well of course, what exactly is going to be in there. What kind of picture and that sort of thing. Fairly straightforward, simple. Again, you can do it pretty much online.

Pinterest offers what they call promoted pins, which are just like the regular pins. And pins being the images, photographs, graphics, that people put up on their Pinterest boards. So these are regular pins, but you can pay to essentially

gain viewers. So you pay and it ends up being served up to more people than if it was just a regular pin. So a promotional pin or promoted pins in Pinterest language is simply something that gets exposed more because you paid to have it exposed more.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Rank high in Google, Bing/Yahoo, etc. by optimizing:

- Keywords
- Traffic from social networks with social sharing
- Content to which other want to link
- Web site to build trust once visitors arrive
- Conversion: visitors → leads → customers → advocates



All right. So next item is search engine optimization. And the whole point of this is to get certain key words, including probably your brand, ranked high by the search engine. And typically, the biggest dog on the block, of course, is Google, Bing/Yahoo because they're cooperate, who is the next, and I think that's something like 30% market share. And then there's a number of others. So most people would logically start with Google, since it has the biggest chunk of the market. And the optimization really starts typically with keywords.

So if you think about what happens when you're searching for something on Google or any other search engine, you're putting in a word or a set of words into the search engine and then you get a bunch of results back. So if you are setting up your website to try and get more eyeballs to it, you're going to have to pay very careful attention to a number of things, but especially keywords.

Now, for instance, if you were in the shoe business, you were a shoe retailer online. Well, obviously, shoes might be a key word for you, but it would also be a key word for a lot of other people. So you're going to be looking for other keywords, the brands of certain shoes you carry, maybe your brand if you've got a well-known brand as a shoe retailer. But also things like men's dress shoes or women's flats or whatever it is that fits your brand and the products that you have to offer.

You want to usually with keywords have simple one word keywords but you also want to have ones that can be much more complex. And for instance, if the shoe is a designer name and there's a certain name of that particular model or type of shoe, you'd want to put all that information in there so that

you can get very, very specific searches, because quite often they're the ones that are the most serious.

So you want to make sure you're going after that, and you'll have less competition there as well. If you just put shoes, you would have a lot of competition. Everybody that sells shoes is going to have that. You want to also have some that are catching these very specific searches because a lot of your competitors are not going to go out there and be that detailed on the keywords.

OK other ways to get at search engine optimization. Traffic from social networks, particularly with social sharing. So what's happening here is that the search engines don't just go by the keywords that you want your site to be associated with. They're also looking at what kind of traffic comes to your site. So you want to drive traffic to your site from the different social networks.

Another way of driving traffic is to provide content on your website that other people are going to want to link to. So if you're that shoe retailer, maybe you've got an online fitting guide or something like that, that you might get people, bloggers, and other folks linking to that if it's useful enough for their readers or their friends and people want to be able to send it to you so that the folks they know can make use of that content.

Well when all of this stuff happens, these links happen. That's something the search engines have the ability to be able to pick up on, and they're looking for that. And that raises you higher on the list and makes you more likely to have a good position in the search results.

You also want the website to literally build trust once the visitors arrive. And a lot of this has to do with your landing page. And quite often you'll want to have a landing page that is very relevant to your product but particularly to the product or in the keywords associated with that brought the people to your website.

So you might have lots of different landing pages. You might have a landing page for every brand of shoe you carry or maybe every model of shoe that you carry within a brand. So that when they arrive, if they've searched for women's flats by XYZ designer, then they're going to see women's flats by XYZ designer when they get to the landing page. So that is something search engines look for, and it's also something that will help you actually make more sales.

And that brings us to the last part, the conversion. When you get people to your site, you're looking to convert them, to move them to the next level. If they're visitors, you want to turn them into leads. In other words, they didn't

have any real focused need or interest, just as visitors maybe they were just curious or somehow wandered in, but there's enough content and it's good content that it gets them interested and now they're really elevated to the level of a lead, somebody who has an interest in something. They haven't pulled the trigger yet, but they have an interest. So then you turn those people into customers. They actually buy something.

And the next level after that is advocates. So you've got customers that are happy and they just go about their way. But then you've got other customers that turn into advocates. Not only are they happy customers, but they're also very willing and go out of their way to talk about this wonderful shoe retailer that they found online. And they just absolutely love it because of this and this. And when you've got people doing that sort of thing, that's when you've created an advocate.

Paid Search - Google

Google AdWords

- Easy sign up and placement
- Pay per click
- Google search results - ads displayed above or along side
- Google Display Network - 2 million+ sites reach 90%+ of web users
- **Based on:**
 - Keywords
 - Google Ad Rank – Secretive algorithm based on bid, quality score, location, rating, backlinks
 - Quality Score – expected CTR, ad relevance, landing page experience, ad format/enhancements
 - Auction Bid System – not based solely on amount of bid

Now we've just been talking about search engine optimization, which of course is sometimes referred to as organic search, where you're not paying for anything but you've simply set up your website and your keywords and all of that to maximize the number of times where you get listed fairly high in the search results. Another way to approach it, a complementary way, you'd probably want to do both, is paid search.

So one example of this, a very common example is Google AdWords. And this is something that is very, very easy to sign up for, and it's very easy to start placing the ads. The cost to you is on a per click basis, so you don't pay anything unless somebody actually clicks on your ad to go to your website. and they end up with the Google search results so they're displayed either above the organic results or along side off on the right.

What's involved with this is the also is the Google Display Network where they have over 2 million sites and that represents like more than 90% of web users that are signed up for this advertising network they have. So if you're placing on Google AdWords, your ad could end up on any of these two million sites. But of course, it's going to end up on sites that make the most sense. You're going to offer some guidance on that, you'll have requests on that. But their algorithm also assigns you to a large degree. So you have to understand the algorithm and how to make it work for you.

So this thing is based on keywords, so the same thing as with organic search. But it's also based on something called Google Ad Rank. So this sort of super secret algorithm that's always changing, people are always trying to figure it

out. And it's always morphing and changing in sort of a continuous improvement process on the part of Google.

It's based on a number of things. One is on the bid. So you bid for how much per click you're willing to pay. There's a quality score which we'll get into here on the next item to define exactly what that is, the location, your location, the ratings that maybe you're getting on sites in terms of what your services and your product, and then the back links. Those are those links that come in from other sites where you've created content that get people to link to you. So Google looks at those, and the more back links you've got the higher your ranking is going to be.

Now this quality score that we just talked about that's in Google Ad Rank, it's made up in turn of a number of things. One thing is the expected clickthrough rate. So they're more interested in featuring ads that are going to have a higher clickthrough rate when they're displayed on this particular kind of page. Because at the end of the day what Google is really looking for is to please the searchers. They want the searchers to find stuff that is of interest to them, including the advertising.

They also want to keep you as an advertiser happy, and, of course, they want to keep themselves happy. And in the long run, they're going to make more money if they're keeping both the searchers and the advertisers happy. And in fact, they will forego immediate revenue in pursuit of this longer term goal.

So they want that expected clickthrough rate to be decent or at least projected to be decent given their forecasting of it. They want the ad to be relevant. So if you're advertising new cars, they're probably not real excited about displaying you on a cosmetic site.

They want the landing page experience, the thing we talked about before that can actually help you sell more. This is where it makes a difference not only in search engine optimization but also in getting paid ads displayed. If the landing page experience is better, there's a better chance that your paid ad is going to display where you want it to or where it's going to be most useful to you. And then also, whatever your ad format is and what they call enhancements which might be things like ratings and extra information where they can tell that you're a serious website that treats the customers well and all that.

And then lastly, there's what is called their auction bid system where you say OK I'm willing to pay \$0.21 or I'm willing to pay \$5 a click for this particular keyword. And it's a very complex system, and it's not based solely on the amount of bid. And in fact, there's a video this week as part of the assignments that runs through this whole thing. It's actually kind of fascinating, and I encourage you to watch that video and watch it carefully.

Paid Search – Bing/Yahoo!

Yahoo!/Bing Network

- 30% market share
- Operates similarly to Google
- Smaller network



Now our friends at Bing and Yahoo, that network, do pretty much the same thing as Google. They have a smaller network in their roughly 30% market share in the whole search game. And it is something that would be complementary. So if you were advertising, you might want to advertise in both networks, the larger Google network and the smaller Bing Yahoo network.

Paid Search – Other Networks

Display-Side Platforms (DSPs)

- Similar to Google AdWords
- Less search centric
- Focus on display ad campaigns



Now there are other networks. There is something called display side platforms or DSPs. They actually work pretty similar to say Google AdWords, but they're going to be less involved with search. So search is so central to Google and Bing for that matter, but these networks are more, they act a little bit more like traditional advertising sellers in the non-digital world. And they tend to focus on display ad campaigns, so using banners and all of that, which Google AdWords does as well.

But this is focused on where are we going to put these and what's the campaign overall look like and things of that nature. So depending on what your needs are as an advertiser, this might make sense for you. But you just have to be careful to see how big their network is and what sort of sites you might end up on or you know you will never end up on because they're not part of that network.

Paid Search – Ad Retargeting (aka Remarketing)



- Target past visitors of your web or mobile site
- Displays relevant ad to same consumer visiting other web sites on ad network
- Repeat exposure of brand to people who have shown interest
- Ultimately increases conversion rate

Now there's another very interesting part of paid search, and this is ad retargeting or quite often it's called remarketing. And what it does, it provides a system for advertisers to be able to target people who had visited their website, either their regular website or their mobile site, and then maybe not bought anything. And you can fine tune this. It can be that maybe you abandon some items in your shopping cart or you looked at this particular product but didn't take any action. What they do then is display relevant ads to this same consumer when that consumer visits other websites that are on the same ad network.

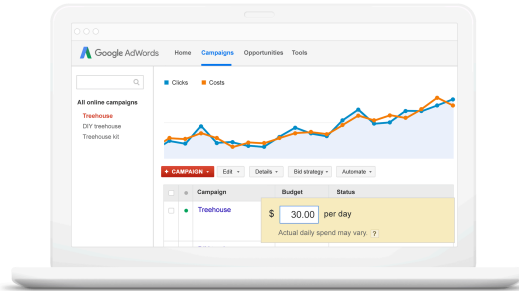
So example, if you look at a I don't know, a particular set of headphones say at some electronics site and you don't put it in the cart. But you've looked at it and you spent some time on that page. They may mark you for followup ads. And the way that's done is they drop a cookie in your browser, and then as you go about your way, you leave that website and you start looking at other websites. And they may be totally unrelated, but what you'll notice is that suddenly you're going to start getting a bunch of ads maybe for that particular headset that you were looking at or maybe similar headsets, but they're all going to be pointing back to that electronics retailer.

And what is happening there is that quite often consumers don't make up their minds right away. That can happen in physical stores, but it certainly happens online. So if you go back and you ping them and remind them and keep them interested, they may eventually circle back, especially when it's nice and easy. They just click on the ad and they're back at your website and can order it. You get a second, or third, or third, or fourth chance to make the sale.

The reason it's popular is because you know that person at least has an interest, so you've got a higher potential of making a sale when you serve up that ad to this person than to just some random consumer. So the repeat exposure certainly helps the brand, and it may make that individual sale. So what this does is at the end of the day it increases your conversion rate.

Data and Decision Making Considerations

- Many of the marketing decisions related to Convey and Promote benefit from data generated by these activities
- The same activities also create data for other data streams to better inform and support management decisions of all kinds



All right. So for some final thoughts here, particularly taking it back to data and decision making considerations. A lot of the marketing decisions related to convey and promote really do benefit from the data that's generated by these activities. So the kinds of things we're talking about actually kind of supercharge the marketing.

Now the same activities that we've talked about in this chapter also create a lot of data. So they're creating data, these data streams really, that can be used to better inform and certainly support all kinds of management decision making. And that's something that we don't want to lose track of here as we go through all this stuff. The reason we're talking about it is there is a lot of data used in the process and then also a lot of data that ends up being generated.

So as you start tracking consumers going to web pages and you start getting the reports from the ad networks and that sort of thing, a lot of it can be displayed by the ad network simply in their own decision making tools like the one shown on this slide from Google AdWords. But also a lot of times this stuff can be downloaded and can be added and enrich databases that are already being used and can simply increase the value of the data that's being used by the organization.

So that kind of brings us full circle for this chapter. Reminder, make sure you do watch that video on how Google decides who's going to win the bid for advertising. It is a very enlightening little seven-minute video. In any case, I hope you have a great week.