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Future of Marketing

If you were to look into a room full of people, especially in the Silicon Valley, a common factor for many companies, large or small, is that marketing is a whole separate entity. Many of the big name, successful companies such as Google, Facebook, and Apple have their own branches for marketers to create new and unique advertising mechanisms. In the 21st century, one of the greatest used outlets of advertising is marketing through social media posts. Store brands, large companies, and more have been creating many social media accounts. Accounts are made on a few popular sites such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, where they post updates on sales, customer service advice, and future plans exciting their follower count. Although social media is a new thing, it has a lot of potential. Some see it not as valuable compared to other formats of marketing, but as time goes on the styles can evolve. Many people don't see anything wrong with social media as one of the many ways to get the word out about their business. Social media is one of the most affordable and quickest ways to get information out to the public to gain an audience.

Advertising has always been a key component to growing a successful business. It's practically required in order to gain customers. For start-up companies it's not uncommon to have a low budget when starting to advertise. It's recommended that smaller companies should

keep all their advertising in one form to keep it simpler so it doesn't disrupt the already rigorous journey of forming a startup (Lavinsky). Social media is one of the cheapest way of spreading the word to friends, family, and future customers. There's many calculations that exist for business owners can do to try and estimate how much money they should spend on advertisement. One includes needing to find the percentage of your estimated annual markup and deducting specific funds that you need then determine a maximum and minimum budget to spend on marketing (Williams). There is no way to determine the average amount of spending put towards marketing for a small business, since all businesses are different. However, for a company that is just beginning, there are so many start up costs required and fixed costs that have to be planned to efficiently maximize profit. Using social media, a free form of advertising allows business owners not to have to go deep into pocket when trying to cover costs.

On Facebook, the most popular social media site, has 1.23 billion active users worldwide monthly. The way that Facebook makes their profit is from the many opportunities to advertise a business. This has been a catalyst for many other social media businesses, starting to allow advertising as a means of making money. The use of social media marketing allows businesses to reach out to consumers based on their interests. Based on one's profile information and their internet search habits, Facebook is able to place advertisements on their profile timeline that may interest or spark their attention. (para. Riggs)

Other than Facebook using a partnership with Beacon to track what users are attracted by as a means of advertisements, private businesses can set up pages and accounts for their business where you can post photos and updates. The first step is to make a page where people can like and subscribe to hear news. You can easily invite friends and family to notice your page by

sending them an invitation to like it through Facebook. Once you have a page, you can begin to create ads through Facebook and eventually pay to campaign them. Facebook has more and stricter policies on advertising however, there are still ways to get around it. According to Facebook's Rules and Regulations, they also provide many directions and a video tutorial on how to manage the advertisements you would like to post. There are many possibilities to advertise through Facebook from QR codes to promotion photos. The only downside is that they don't publicly state a price. (Facebook.com)

Due to their huge increase in user count, other tech companies began to realize the success behind the advertising and began to join in themselves. Some of these companies include Twitter, and Instagram, which attract the younger users of Facebook (Riggs).

Instagram is a cellphone application that allows you to post photos and short videos with clever captions. You can follow and be followed, you can also tag your photos to a trending hashtag to get your published pieces more recognition.

A new feature on Instagram allows large companies to pay to have their posts be sponsored, automatically popping up in others' news feeds without needing a follow. Instagram has been very secret about the price of this product, it is estimated to be \$350,000 to a million dollars. Similar to Facebook though, there are still other ways that smaller sized businesses can get the word out for free. Instagram has very simple "promotion rules" that are easy to find ways around. The two rules include mentioning that the post isn't in any way associated officially with Instagram and making sure sharers and viewers don't post false advertisement. A few ways to work around this and successfully get recognition is to hold contests that allow customers to be interactive with the company. It allows people to get excited about winning a prize, and finding

the company more genuine through a connection. Another way is having a well known influencer, a celebrity of any sort, take over the business's account and allow them to make posts promoting the products or service. Lastly, you can pay people to promote a business to their following. This last option is the only one out of the three that requires money, to pay the person for advertising. (para. How Small to Medium-Sized Businesses). The amount of different social media platforms can be difficult and slightly intimidating, in Likeable Social Media by Dave Kerpen, Kerpen helps with almost step by step instructions on how businesses can start their social media advertising efficiently. There's also a way to stick out from the 500 million Tweets, 80 million Instagram photos, and 30 billions shared Facebook posts, and it's by telling a story to captivate your audience (Vaynerchuk).

Many known and loved businesses have been converting to social media as a way to advertise. Nestle, a very influential business in the food and drink industry has began to lead the way of using social media in an creative and innovative way to advertise. Their strategies are to "drive marketing and leadership potential". They plan on transforming their operations and capitalizing digital and social networking channels (Nestle). These bold steps starts a race for more companies to join social media, starting to put more of their marketing and advertising money towards that.

Another industry that is very reliant on its means of advertisement and is always looking for newer, bigger, and better is the alcohol industry. They are trying to find new ways to attract customers based on tastes, preferences, demographics, and consumer behaviour (Digital). Brands are starting to recognize that the new social media strategies are becoming more trendy and end

up engaging more customers. They are now in a competition on who can find the most unique, and resonating way to relate to a customer through their interests.

There are other ways to advertise too that catch many people's attention. For example, making a quick commercial. The price for that 30 second commercial though is pretty expensive, especially for a company just starting out. Local television stations charge from \$200-\$1,500 for just 30 seconds of screentime (Wagner.) Because it's a local television it's not certain how many people will be tuning in since it isn't a big time channel, where they cost even more for airing. You also have to pay for the cast and crew's appearances and the set in which you film your commercial. Paying for a commercial is not a practical form of spreading out information to a large audience for start up and smaller companies looking to save more money.

Another costly way to advertise would be through a billboard. Prices of billboards range depending on where you want to build them. In places with greater populations, designing a 14 foot by 48 foot billboard can cost up to \$3,000 per billboard with a maximum of building 16 billboards (Prosser). You can usually guarantee many people seeing your advertisement, but you can't control how long it'll be seen for in a car. It is also difficult to make billboards captivating and personal, some people may see your billboard and not even be looking for some a business like yours, however with the technology of social media, it will be personalized for users.

Like all things, there are a few negative effects and not so efficient aspects to using social media as a source of marketing. For example, whatever is posted to the internet can never be permanently deleted, a fate that many social media users eventually realize. If people were to give out false information they would have to do major work to retract it, especially if the false

information wasn't directly from the business. Businesses also need to watch out for trolls and try and prevent poor online reviews.

Another issue is that half of major companies executive leaders believe that social media isn't effective and has no value. Also, social media is only 1.14% of all online traffic. The ratio between email conversations over social media is a large 40 to one rate. However, 90% of the world's data has been made in demand of social media, pushing the form of advertising back into light. 74% of people between the ages of 16-24 also report to never able to be apart from their phone, considering it a necessity, they constantly update their social media accounts. Before buying products, 80% of people look up reviews from websites and 25% TV watchers are aware of programs due to online advertising. Advertising online is also expected to have a budget increase by 71% in the next year, meaning that it is becoming more popular and an ideal way of marketing. (para. Morrison).

Before Facebook and their proposal of advertising, the once popular website MySpace allowed advertising but limited to to bulletin boards and chat rooms (Facebook). The deepest they got was allowing users to post in depth profiles advertising what they wanted to sell, similar to a resume on LinkedIn.

Before social media, marketers had to rely on radio announcements, paper posters, and word to word exchanges. Nothing considered to be extremely trustworthy or reliable. Thanks to the evolution in technology during the 21st century, people are able to easily put information out in the world for all to see and share. The innovative way of social media advertising not only reaches out to all corners of the internet in one way or another, it is also very cost efficient. Although not many business executives believe in this form of advertising, it promises many

positive results. Companies can experiment with fun and creative ways to capture an audience's attention, ensuring more customer involvement. Using social media as a main and persuasive source of advertisement for businesses, small and large is a practical and efficient way to get the word out.

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