

Step Four

Module One

Mini Lesson Guide

the
marketing
Democracy™

Welcome!



Every business--whether Brick and Mortar or virtual--has a digital storefront. In today's digital age, your website and social channels aren't optional assets. They are "must haves" that are a critical element of any and every business. The worst possible mistake that you can make is to neglect these important assets. This module focuses on shifting your point of view. We encourage you to think of websites and social media pages as your digital storefront.

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Module Overview

In this module, we are going to focus on four key ideas:

- In [Lesson One](#), you will learn that the physical and virtual divide is disappearing. Everyone carries the digital world with them on their smartphones. You need to be ready.
- In [Lesson Two](#), you will learn how to apply the principles of design/merchandizing to your digital assets.
- In [Lesson Three](#), you will learn the dangers of delegating management of your digital assets to the most junior person in your company.
- In [Lesson Four](#), you will learn to count what counts. Forget "likes" and "followers" and focus on engagement instead.

To help you optimize the customer experience on your digital assets, you can purchase an "Owned Media Attributes Checklist." This downloadable PDF is fully functional if you open it in Adobe Acrobat Reader. Be sure to click on the "listen" icon in the lower right-hand corner to learn more about this helpful tool. And, for additional inspiration, you can watch the real-world example video to see this lesson in practice.

Congratulations on taking this important step in your journey to developing world-class marketing for your business.



Lesson One

The Physical/Virtual Store Divide is Disappearing

Why This Matters

Thanks to the explosive growth of digital media, every business can have a digital storefront. There are so many opportunities to create a digital presence: from Facebook, to Instagram and YouTube, among others. And most are free. In addition, every business can and should have a website. But what you do with all this digital real estate is up to you. This lesson will reinforce one of the most important opportunities that you have: you need to think of all this digital media as your digital storefront, whether you are an online business or brick and mortar. What you do with that storefront is up to you.

5 Key Takeaways

- There used to be a clear divide between brick and mortar business and ecommerce. Today, the physical/virtual divide is disappearing.
- It's likely that customers will visit either your website and/or your social media pages at some point during their shopper journey. Be ready for them.
- You never have a second chance to make a first impression. Your digital channels may be the first experience your customers have with you. Make a good first impression.
- Your digital assets should reinforce your brand promise and support the sale of products and services. Don't choose one over the other. Make sure you can accomplish both.
- Shift your mindset and think of your digital channels as your digital storefront. The same principles that you would use to staff and merchandise your store should apply.



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to Lesson Two, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of the lesson?

Thinking of your business/product category, what are all the different ways that customers use various digital channels such as websites and social media throughout their shopper journeys?

Take an impromptu visit to your website and your social media channels. Are you delighted by the experience? Are you creating the best first impression?

Does your content on your website and your social media channels lead to some form of commerce? Even if you don't sell goods or services through your digital channels, how can your content work harder to create the sale?






Lesson Two

Apply Design/Merchandising Principles to Your Digital Assets

Why This Matters

Your digital media assets need to be thoughtfully designed. Yet all too often, businesses randomly post stuff and the experience becomes a bit of a mess. Some of you may have heard of the UX (User Experience) craze. This lesson is going to demystify what UX means and provide a design strategy for you in simple terms. If you approach your digital assets the same way you would design and merchandise a physical store, you will be well on your way to creating a welcoming user experience for your customers.

Key Takeaways

-  Your digital assets should be designed with the same attention to the user experience as you would when designing and merchandising your physical store (if you had one). The physical store metaphor will help to ensure that every aspect of your experience is thoughtfully merchandised from the entrance all the way throughout the store.
-  Your website home page and social media landing pages are much like the front windows of a physical store. You need to create features and displays that give shoppers a reason to go through the store and experience what's inside.
-  Consider the type of flow that works best for site/social media visitors. You can either create a more utilitarian flow that makes it easy for visitors to find what they need and make a transaction or you can create a flow that encourages more casual browsing.
-  Take advantage of templates. You don't have to figure this out all on your own. There are fantastic templates for websites and social media landing pages that can help you to organize the user experience that best fits your situation.
-  Seek feedback from users by having them visit your website and your social media pages and have them critique the experience based upon how they would want to use your digital media assets.



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to Lesson Three, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of the lesson?

Can you envision your digital planogram? What goes where? What should be featured in your digital “front windows?”

Do you have a content strategy? Or do you randomly post content to your digital channels? When was the last time you cleaned house?

If you removed your name and logo from your digital assets would you look like everyone else? What can you do to make your digital assets more uniquely “you?”

Lesson Three

The Dangers of Delegating

Why This Matters

One of the most important opportunities to engage with your customers should not slip to the bottom of the “to-do” list or fall into the hands of someone who doesn’t understand your brand promise and how to communicate your brand story. If you need to delegate, be sure to equip whomever is responsible for your digital media presence with the right insights and assets to get the job done. This lesson serves as an important reminder to invest the proper time and resources to develop and maintain your digital storefront. There’s too much at stake here to let your digital presence fall through the cracks.

Key Takeaways

- Developing and maintaining your digital assets should not fall to the bottom of the “to-do” list. When you consider how important they are for creating a positive customer experience, they should be a top priority.
- Digital asset management is a legitimate job in any business. Be sure to allocate the time, the budget and the resources for someone (either inside or outside the organization) to do the job well.
- Your digital assets are far too important to delegate to someone without the proper knowledge and skillset to create and manage the best possible experience for your customers.
- If you have to delegate the role to a more entry-level position (either inside or outside the organization) be sure to provide the proper training on your brand architecture and brand personality. A simple website update or a social media post can cause a lot of damage.
- Regardless of who does the work, you own the vision and strategy for your digital media assets. The Owned Media Attributes checklist provided in this module will help you to develop a vision and a brief that others can follow to ensure that your vision is met.

CHECKLIST

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Ask Yourself

Before moving on to Lesson Four, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of this lesson?

If you had to place your digital content strategy on a continuum from high priority on one end to low priority on the other, where would this important function land?

Who is currently responsible for the design and implementation of your digital content strategy? What makes them qualified for the job?

How often do you check-in with the digital content strategy team? What types of information do you share with them to help them understand your business?

Lesson Four

Engagement is Your Goal: Don't Worry About the Number of Likes/Followers

Why This Matters

Once you invest all this time and resources into building your digital storefront, of course you want people to show up. But is counting “traffic” the right measure? We are obsessed with numbers of friends, followers and likes. These numbers aren't very helpful in our personal lives and they certainly aren't helpful when it comes to business. This lesson will help you to focus on counting what counts and to forget everything else. Size doesn't matter. Instead, engagement is your goal. And, even engagement isn't a one size fits all proposition. We will break engagement down into stages that can lead to deeper interactions and ultimately to business growth.

Key Takeaways

- 📍 Einstein said it best, “Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted.” Focus on the metrics that matter and ignore the rest.
- 📍 Our obsession with the number of website visitors, social media followers and the number of likes our posts receive is a measure of ego more than a measure of marketing impact.
- 📍 Choose quality over quantity. You're better off with fewer visitors and followers who choose to stick around and spend time on your channels.
- 📍 There are three levels of engagement: observation, participation, and co-creation (Source: Spiegel Research Center). Your job is to move visitors to your digital assets up the ladder--get them involved.
- 📍 Remember, your digital media assets are in place for a reason. Engagement at even the highest level that doesn't lead to some form of business outcome is a waste of time and resources.



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to the action plan, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of the lesson?

How do you currently measure engagement? Are you trapped by focusing too heavily on traffic, followers and likes?

How can you apply the three levels of engagement: 1) Observation 2) Participation 3) Co-Creation to your digital content strategy? What level best represents your current/typical level of engagement?

Does each piece of content on your digital channels have a purpose? Can you see how each piece of content will help you to build your business?