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LOCAL DIGITAL MARKETING: BEST PRACTICES FOR POOL AND SPA COMPANIES

Make the most of online opportunities to get more feet through your door

WITH LIMITED BUDGETS and time available, it's crucial for pool and spa companies to make every dollar and minute spent on marketing count. Online local marketing is one of the most efficient channels and can help increase your brand awareness, improve your search engine rankings and bring more people onto your website and social media accounts — which ultimately helps you reach a wider audience in your area and provides you with a wave of potential new customers.

Here are some ways you can improve your local digital marketing

practices for your pool or spa company.

WHAT IS LOCAL MARKETING?

Before we get into how you can improve your local marketing online efforts, we need to look at what local marketing actually is.

Local marketing is marketing that targets the community around your physical headquarters or office. It is any promotional message that is solely directed at your local population rather than the wider geographical market.

There are a number of tactics you can use to improve your standing in the local community, and we're going to run through the details of the most

popular ways to do it. By following our simple tips, your company can become a significant presence within your local community and the go-to pool/spa provider for customers in your area.

IMPROVE YOUR LOCAL SEO

Local SEO is essential for smaller businesses to reach regional customers (as opposed to national ones) and is a key element of improving your local marketing.

Optimizing your local SEO will help you to increase the amount of local people that visit your website and will help you gain more customers in the process.

A few things that help improve your local SEO are:

- Optimizing your Google My Business profile
- Including local keywords in your website content and social media posts
- Creating locally-based content
- Getting regular reviews from customers on a range of review platforms
- Making sure your website is mobile friendly

Let's look at these one at a time.

GOOGLE MY BUSINESS

If you search for your business on Google you may notice a small profile pop up on the right-hand side of the screen. This is your Google My Business listing. It is an incredibly useful tool to have, especially for smaller pool and spa businesses.

The best part? It's FREE. You just need to claim it! Your Google My Business listing can show potential new customers where your business is, your opening and closing times, links to your website and much more.

If you haven't already claimed your

listing with Google My Business, get it done as soon as you can.

There are two ways you can set up your Google My Business:

1. Search your business on Google.

If it comes up on the right-hand side, you can claim it as your own. Once confirmed, you can begin to edit your listing as you see fit. Add images, opening times, services listings, etc.

2. If your business doesn't come up, simply go to the Google My Business website and click "start now" to begin creating your business profile.

Now that you're all set up on Google My Business it's a good idea to make sure it's optimized for local marketing. All you need to do is:

- Upload high-quality photos of your staff, logo, company offices/showroom
- Ensure all of your information is correct, including:
 1. Company name, number, address
 2. Opening hours
 3. List of services
 4. Social media links
- Encourage customers to leave reviews
- Add a link to your website

With a fully optimized profile, whenever someone searches for your service in your area, you'll come up as a recommended company.

BE LOCAL ON SOCIAL MEDIA

When you post on social media, try and tag your location (and other relevant local businesses) so your posts will show up more for those who live in the same area. Try to use location-specific keywords in your posts and in your bio to help attract locals to your profile.

Using location-based keywords on your website will also raise your rankings on search engine results for local searches.

If you use advertising methods like Facebook or Google ads, you can choose your location so your ads will only be displayed for users in that area. This way you can run your ads in the areas that you service to the people you think are more likely to hire you.

CREATE LOCALLY-FOCUSED CONTENT

Content is always key to a good marketing strategy and focusing your content around your local community will benefit your business even more.



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If you create website content that is focused on your local area, like events or local news, it will increase your visibility to local customers. It'll help establish your business as a voice within the community that cares, enabling you to become the trustworthy go-to for all their pool and spa needs.

When you decide to create local content, try to keep your customers in mind and ask yourself:

- What are their issues, concerns and problems?
- What can your services or your products do to benefit them?
- How can you relate to local news?
- Are there any local events you can sponsor or make an appearance at?

By answering these questions you'll have the perfect set up to provide your local community with quality content they'll actually want to read.

ENCOURAGE REVIEWS AND FEEDBACK

Most customers will check reviews and testimonials before committing to hiring you or purchasing a product from you. This is why it's important to encourage customers, especially those

who were happy with your services, to leave a review on your website, Yelp, Houzz, Facebook page or Google My Business.

Companies that don't have reviews, or have very few reviews, can come off as untrustworthy to a customer – which means they won't employ you or commit to making a purchase from your store. If you have reviews, especially from local customers, it will make future customers more comfortable buying from you.

Encourage people to leave reviews by sending them a follow-up email after they've had their pool serviced. You can ask them in the email to leave a review on your page if they were happy with your services or to give you any feedback on the job you performed.

BE OPTIMIZED FOR MOBILE USE

Everybody uses their phones to access the internet these days, which means it's vital that your website is optimized for mobile use. Being mobile friendly will improve your rankings on the search engines and potentially provide your business with more customers.

You can optimize your website for

mobile use by:

- Ensuring your website loads within three seconds
- Using larger and clearer fonts so they are easy to read on a mobile phone screen
- Make sure your website is developed mobile first

Combining local SEO and locally-focused digital marketing techniques can help your company attract a new audience of local customers. By implementing these tried and tested methods, you can promote yourself ahead of the competition as a trustworthy, professional company that takes pride in your local community. By invoking a sense of local loyalty, you can convert your neighbours into loyal, repeat customers. ~

Pam Haskell's website design and development company Chili Pepper Design (Pool & Patio Marketing Division) helps businesses in the pool and outdoor living space create and maintain a modern web presence and provides online marketing and reputation management services. She can be reached at 410.757.7852 or pam@cpdesignco.com. Visit www.cpdesignco.com for more information.



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