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ACCOUNTING

Engineering Marketing for the Accounting Firm Go-Getter

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Becky Livingston • Nov. 21, 2017

MARKETING



Marketing to engineers is hard – really hard. Difficulty, however, shouldn't stop you from trying to increase your engineering client base. As Winston Churchill once said, "The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty." Which will you be – the pessimist or optimist?

According to the IEEE Globalspec [2017 Digital Media Use in the Industrial Sector report](#), 50 percent of engineers spend six or more hours per week on the Internet, while 39 percent spend more than nine hours per week. That's good news. The bad news, however, is where do they spend the time? The study also points out that Google and other major search engines were the most visited, followed by vendor websites. Social media, ironically, was near the bottom of their list.

So, what's an accounting firm to do when it comes to marketing to engineers? Here are some key elements to consider.

First – Your Website

Is your site structured in a way that makes sense to new and returning visitors? You can get the answer by reviewing your analytics behavioral statistics, specifically the

behavior flow. Review how visitors are moving through the site and where they are dropping off. If you find a consistent drop-off point that you had hoped would be a conversion point, that's something to take a closer look at. Also notice the flow from one page to another; again, if you had a plan in mind when developing the pages, but the report shows something different, it's time to consider a change.

Do you have high-profile content linking to secondary content – also known as backlinking – to help drive traffic to more pages within the site? That strategic goal is to create an opportunity to increase a visitors' exposure to your content, while increasing conversions, such as downloads, video plays, podcast clicks, and more.

As a risk-averse group, engineers like to know that what they are looking at is safe. Therefore, having an SSL Certificate on your site will help in a couple of ways. First, it demonstrates to the search engine that you've put additional security measures in place to protect visitors from spam and hacks, which increases your search ranking. Second, it shows the searcher that your site is secure – a green lock will show up next to the website URL.

Are the pages within the site optimized with engineers in mind? You may have more than one industry vertical. Creating content specifically for the engineering industry will help you to convert more engineering visitors than simply providing generic content to the masses. Optimizing that content for the engineering field will help your content to surface during search engine requests. A quick way to determine the best engineering keywords to use are a combination of content topics and engineering terms.

Example

Let's say your firm created an eBook outlining the benefits of engineering firms outsourcing payroll and CFO responsibilities. You've created the content and landing page with a lead-generation form to collect names of those interested in downloading the information. On the landing page, you would include SEO keywords, such as payroll services, corporate payroll, engineering payroll, accounting firm, cfo, payroll outsourcing services for engineering firms, and cfo outsourcing services for engineering firms.

Second – Content

Creating content is a great way to draw in new readers and to gain leads. In fact, according to a [recent survey](#), 89 percent of engineering marketers were using content

as part of their overall strategy.

However, if you're not paying attention to engineers' "hot buttons," you may be missing opportunities. What are they reading about? What's important to them as professionals and consumers, e.g., "going green"? How do they consume media? Do they enjoy humor; if so, what kind?

Firms with best-practice techniques are researching and writing about new facts or perspectives where they can contribute their insights to the industry. They also share information that is hard to find elsewhere – not trade secrets per se, but juicy information engineers love. Finally, they not only promote the content on their own website and social media platforms, they seek the help of influencers and paid distribution to increase reach and conversion.

This doesn't mean you have to write more posts and distribute more content. What it does mean is that you should focus on high-profile pieces that will generate the leads you want and get you the online attention you seek. It boils down to quality over quantity.

Third – Media

Video is king – right now. If you can say the same thing in an entertaining and concise video that you could write in 2,000 words or less, then make a video.

Here's a best practice I've often used.

1. Create a blog post, which is broken into sections;
2. Use that post as the video script;
3. Find images that correlate to the blog content;
4. In a slide creation or movie creation tool, create a series of slides using the images and add snackable bites from the content to the slide;
5. Once the deck is created, do the voiceover;
6. Export the slide/voiceover file as a video;
7. Post the video on your firm's YouTube channel; and then
8. Share the video link in email, social media, website, email signature lines, and more.

Now that you have the three main ingredients, you have to put it all together. Here are several ways to generate interest in your firm's engineering services.

- Buy text ad space on Google's search;

- Invest in search engine graphical ad placements on engineer-specific website, such as engineering.com, engineeringworld.com, crazyengineers.com, and Engineer Knows Best (video placement);
- Create landing pages and content for lead generation;
- Locate and engage influencers to share your content; and
- Create a multi-pronged marketing distribution plan, including email, social media, ad buying, and more.

Monthly measurement will be part of your success. Paying attention to the best practices and procedures will help you to reach victory.

Marketing to people in technical fields is not easy. But, when you focus your efforts on a few great pieces throughout the year, you might be surprised on the positive return on investment.

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