



The Kayo Digital Review.

2022 Edition.

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Reviewing the
South East's
fastest growing
companies online



Who is Kayo Digital?

Kayo Digital is a Digital Partner to companies looking to grow and innovate. We're a team of specialists that complement each other and find solutions to clients' problems. We make real world change through technology.

We call our process, the 'KAYO Way' :



Knowledge and connectivity

we understand the digital landscape and the latest technologies



Strategic insights

we analyse your customers, your competitors, and your market to identify opportunities



Apply clarity to the complex

we meet your objectives with an optimum technological solution



Our considered approach sets us apart

We deliver bespoke digital marketing campaigns, build and maintain cutting edge websites, consultancy and software for clients, including:



Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex (KSS)



NHS



Three



Macknade



Swale Heating



Berry Gardens



Parson's Nose

We can help your organisation develop a competitive advantage in the age of technological disruption.

About the report

The Sunday Times Top Track 100 is a yearly leader board classifying the 100 fastest growing privately-owned companies in the UK. Our team reviewed the South East's top companies to find out what they're doing online to increase their sales and reach - and highlight what they could be doing better.

We looked at the Top Track 100 results and compared them to the results from the last three years. We analysed 17 different touchpoints and have summarised our findings in this report.

Making sure analysis was consistent

To ensure the data was objectively reviewed, the review team did not collect it themselves. To avoid any bias in the reviewing and scoring, company names were anonymised.

Q: "What is the future of online sales"

A: "A data driven marketing strategy with the ability to be agile for the ever changing consumer needs."

Jessica Smith, Marketing Manager, Swale Heating.



The companies we reviewed are below:

| Company | Sector | Location | |
|-------------------------|---|------------|-----|
| Screen With Envy | Garden and home products designer | South East | b2c |
| Thriva | Healthcare service | London | b2c |
| Green Biofuels | Biofuel | London | b2b |
| Really Local Group | Leisure and hospitality | London | b2c |
| Freemarket | Cross-border payments provider | London | B2c |
| Mt ART Agency | Talent Agency | London | b2b |
| Oodle Car Finance | Car finance provider | South East | b2c |
| Lovat Parks | Holiday Park operator | South East | B2c |
| A Collected Man | Online Watch Marketplace and retailer | London | B2c |
| Cloudstratex | Digital Services provider | London | b2b |
| Expectation TV | TV production | London | b2b |
| Creation | Events producer | London | b2b |
| Bloom & Wild | Online Flower retailer | London | b2c |
| Voxsmart | Technology developer | London | b2b |
| Kernel Global | Recruiter | London | b2b |
| Eden Sustainable | Renewable Energy consultants | London | b2b |
| Muuto Consulting | Management consultants | London | b2b |
| Xalient | Digital Services provider | London | b2b |
| Billion Dollar baby | Influencer marketing agency | London | b2b |
| Thortful | Greetings cards retailer | London | b2c |
| Aker Systems | Technology developer | London | b2b |
| Capital on tap | Business credit provider | London | b2b |
| Wood Thilsted | Offshore windfarm designer | London | b2b |
| Me+Em | Fashion brand | London | b2c |
| European Medical Group | Publisher | London | b2b |
| Person Centred Software | Software developer | South East | b2b |
| Huel | Nutritional meal replacement | South East | b2c |
| Greosn | Plant nurseries and seasonal staff provider | South East | b2b |
| LeMieux | Equestrian products retailer | South East | b2c |
| Sidekick Group | Facilities services provider | London | b2b |
| Woolovers | Fashion brand | South East | b2c |
| La Vida Europe | Professional services consultants | London | b2b |
| TechNuovo | Technology consultants | London | b2b |
| We Us Ours | Recruiter | London | b2b |
| The Media Image | Digital Marketing services | London | b2b |
| And Digital | Technology consultants | London | b2b |
| SecureCloud+ | Technology services providers | South East | b2b |
| Kubrick Group | Technology consultants | London | b2b |
| Setfords | Lawyers | South East | b2c |
| Storal Learning | Nursery education provider | London | b2c |
| Tropic Skincare | Skincare brand | London | b2c |
| Regent Group | Education provider | London | b2b |
| Affinity fragrances | Wholesaler | South East | b2b |
| Two Circles | Sports Marketing agency | London | b2b |



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Executive summary

A year on from the last COVID lockdown, with the market settling into the new “norm” we were unsure of what to expect.

We predicted companies using content to compete in the market and advertise their services would grow, and that was proven true, but we never predicted how people would diversify how they view content... enter TikTok.

Year by year we see companies investing in and developing their digital footprint to suit the audience they want to talk to. This is perfectly highlighted by some of the changes we've seen in the past four years:

- ▶ The % of companies implementing SEO within the list has grown from 28% to 50%
- ▶ The % of companies using email marketing within the list has grown from 20% to 64%
- ▶ The average amount of social media accounts a company uses has grown from 1.6 to 3.8.

We continue developing the report with personalisation, TikTok, and advertising and content, creating a new challenge for owners and marketers, being heavily featured within the report.

Advertising and content

Advertising relies on a captive audience: without it, there's no such thing as “advertising”. Content has had to evolve online and replace traditional advertising by being engaging, thought-provoking and helpful, displayed in a way the intended audience wants to engage with it. For example, TikTok.

TikTok

TikTok is expected to reach almost 15 million users in the United Kingdom by 2025. One in four people would have a TikTok account in the UK by 2025, which is a huge audience to miss out on if you're not already exploring it.

Personalisation

Automation and personalisation, through data, has continued to grow, with a third of the top companies using content to generate a relevant experience across one or more of the four C's:

- ▶ Content (that can be provided in experiences like emails or other such content)
- ▶ Commerce (such as physical retail, e-commerce, or a hybrid experience)
- ▶ Community (such as encouraging people to engage with a community/publication)
- ▶ Convenience (like offering consumers offers, loyalty schemes etc.)

The value of automation and personalisation has led marketing and business development (BD) professionals to start flirting with digital experience platforms (DXPs). DXPs for clarity, are in the simplest form, a content management system (CMS) with all your marketing tools embedded within it.

We have already seen DXPs being used at a wilder scale, with Hubspot and Umbraco now accessible to the SME market – when historically, DXPs have only been used by enterprise business. Our predictions this will become the norm.

Owned data

Historically, we have mentioned that the value of the data you own will increase, whilst online targeting becomes less effective as privacy laws become more rigorous. This is progressively becoming truer by the day with email marketing making a resurgence as companies try to target their customer base.

Methodology

The criteria in this report reflect the path-to-purchase journey of a potential customer:

It also considers how the latest technologies and movements affect the market, reflecting changing trends and customer behaviours.

The path-to-purchase model below is a helpful tool that helps us understand how the fastest-growing companies focus their digital activity. It emphasises customer impact.



Awareness

Awareness refers to the activity produced by a company that can influence a customer to think of the company once they need a product or service.



Engagement

Engagement refers to how you communicate with your prospects and clients, nurturing them towards the point of sale.



Sales

Sales describes the 'final straw' that enlists a sale.

NB: Tools used to collect data consisted of SEMrush, Google Lighthouse, Builtwith and Wappalyzer. All data was collected in November 2022.



Breakdown of the data reviewed

The fastest-growing companies were a good mix of sectors, with 64% being business to business (B2B) and 36% business to consumer (B2C).

The majority of companies we reviewed are based in London. We also completed a survey on LinkedIn to understand the most important areas for online business growth in the coming years.

The companies based in South East England are defined as:

- ▶ London
- ▶ Berkshire
- ▶ Surrey
- ▶ Buckinghamshire
- ▶ Hampshire
- ▶ East and West Sussex
- ▶ Kent
- ▶ Oxfordshire



Key opportunities highlighted

The information gathered from our research was insightful and revealed six key opportunities:

25%

Marketing automation

For the fourth year in a row, companies using marketing automation and have grown, with more than a quarter using this method.

65%

Video content

Content is increasingly consumed online but the definition of content has diversified. TikTok and video content have become a staple in growing companies. 65% of companies now have video content with a third of all those reviewed using TikTok.

40%

Website accessibility and performance scores

Accessibility and website performance, when judged by Google's metrics, on average, is >40% better than four years ago. The reason why this is important is that it showcases the need to ensure your website is accessible and quick for all!

You can review how accessible and quick your website is here: <https://web.dev/measure/>

60%

Email newsletter

The evolution of data and privacy means companies are looking for any way to reach audiences effectively, and email marketing is becoming a popular tool to talk to a company's audience. This year, more than 60% of companies reviewed had a newsletter; 40% more than 2019, and we've seen this grow yearly. Maybe the fear of GDPR has gone, and companies are progressively starting to utilise their own data.

70%

Knowing your audience

Following our LinkedIn survey, 70% of professionals wanted digital mediums to be a way of knowing their audience better. Tools being discovered by our research of the top companies have highlighted this tactic is increasingly being used.

9%

DXP's

9% of companies invested in DXPs. Something the SME market may not have heard of yet but its an integrated set of core technologies that support the composition, management, delivery and optimisation of digital experiences with an aim to help drive visitors to the relevant area or action on the website.

Automation and personalisation will continue to play a vital role within the e-commerce landscape, however, AI and machine learning will advance the online experience increasing customer expectation to be individually understood and catered for.

James Enderby, Pioneer Veterinary, Digital Marketing Specialist.



Four years on and everything is changing!

With four years' worth of data, it's clear that marketing changes are happening on the websites featured in the top 100 fastest-growing companies in the UK.

The table below highlights the differences between the groups of companies:

| | | 2019 (MegaGrowth companies) | 2020 (South East fastest growing companies) | 2021 (38 of the South East fastest growing companies) | 2022 (44 of the South East fastest growing companies) |
|-------------------|--|-----------------------------|---|---|---|
| Awareness | % with a social media presence | 66% | 96% | 100% | 100% |
| | % who regularly create and publish content | 30% | 66% | 73% | 70% |
| | % who use video marketing | 36% | 63% | 50% | 63% |
| | % which has invested in TikTok | Not recorded | Not recorded | Not recorded | 32% |
| | % who use basic SEO | 28% | 30% | 50% | 52% |
| Engagement | Average number of social media accounts | 1.6 | 3.66 | 3.68 | 3.79 |
| | % who use personalisation | Not recorded | 10% | 10% | 34% |
| | % who have an email newsletter | 20% | 22% | 34% | 64% |
| | % who use paid advertising | 14% | 32% | 21% | 20% |
| Sales | % who have an external app | 8% | 28% | 13% | 16% |
| | % who use social proof | 27% | 46% | 26% | 27% |
| | % who have a CTA (call to action) on their website | 42% | 80% | 97% | 90% |
| Tech | % with live chat on their website | 6% | 4% | 5% | 16% |
| | % who have eCommerce functionality | 14% | 10% | 16% | 40% |
| | % who are mobile optimised | 79% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| | Average Google performance score (how fast web pages load) | 33 | 28 | 27 | 50 |
| | Average Google accessibility score | 74 | 81 | 79 | 87 |
| | % using automation | 0% | 10% | 18% | 27% |
| | Who uses non Google tracking methods | Not recorded | Not recorded | ~2% | 9% |





Investment in tech and software

Technology continues to advance more quickly than ever before, but many small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are slow to adopt new technology. The larger companies in the SME market are hesitant to change, even if it would benefit them. With the help of technology, companies can level the playing field and gain a competitive advantage.

Five key highlights to note for your business:

- ▶ 1 in 4 companies now uses marketing automation
- ▶ 100% of websites are optimised for mobile
- ▶ 9% of companies had DXP capabilities
- ▶ 16% of companies recorded how visitors clicked and scrolled on the website
- ▶ 39% of companies had eCommerce capabilities

Further thoughts and analysis

Automation

Our findings may not just be because companies are investing in better technology but may come from the evolution of the technology available. As automation and personalisation become more available to the market, companies should be looking to investigate/invest in these mediums to help talk to the people they want to. As technology evolves so does the CMS; updates have become a necessity for speed, security and saving time and money in the future. It is not just your phone that needs an upgrade!

Mobile optimised

It should not come as a shock to many that a website is optimised for mobile, especially when we can all be guilty of staring at our phone. However, we still find companies who have not invested in mobile technology, which is why we have highlighted the importance of this for the fastest growing companies.

eCommerce

We've documented before that COVID increased internet usage and eCommerce websites have thrived as a result. It is no surprise, therefore, that eCommerce stores feature so heavily within the top growing companies, with people coming to the internet for convenience.

DXP

DXP's, a CMS on steroids, are becoming more common place in fast growing companies. With just under 10% of the companies investing in this technology to help them automate and personalize their proposition to their desired audience.



Q: "What is the future of online sales"

A: "The future of online sales will be centred around customisation and unique sales experiences. Improved data analysis will play a central role in driving personalised experiences that attract and retain customers."

Aidan Lewis, Head of Beta,
Beaumont Bailey.

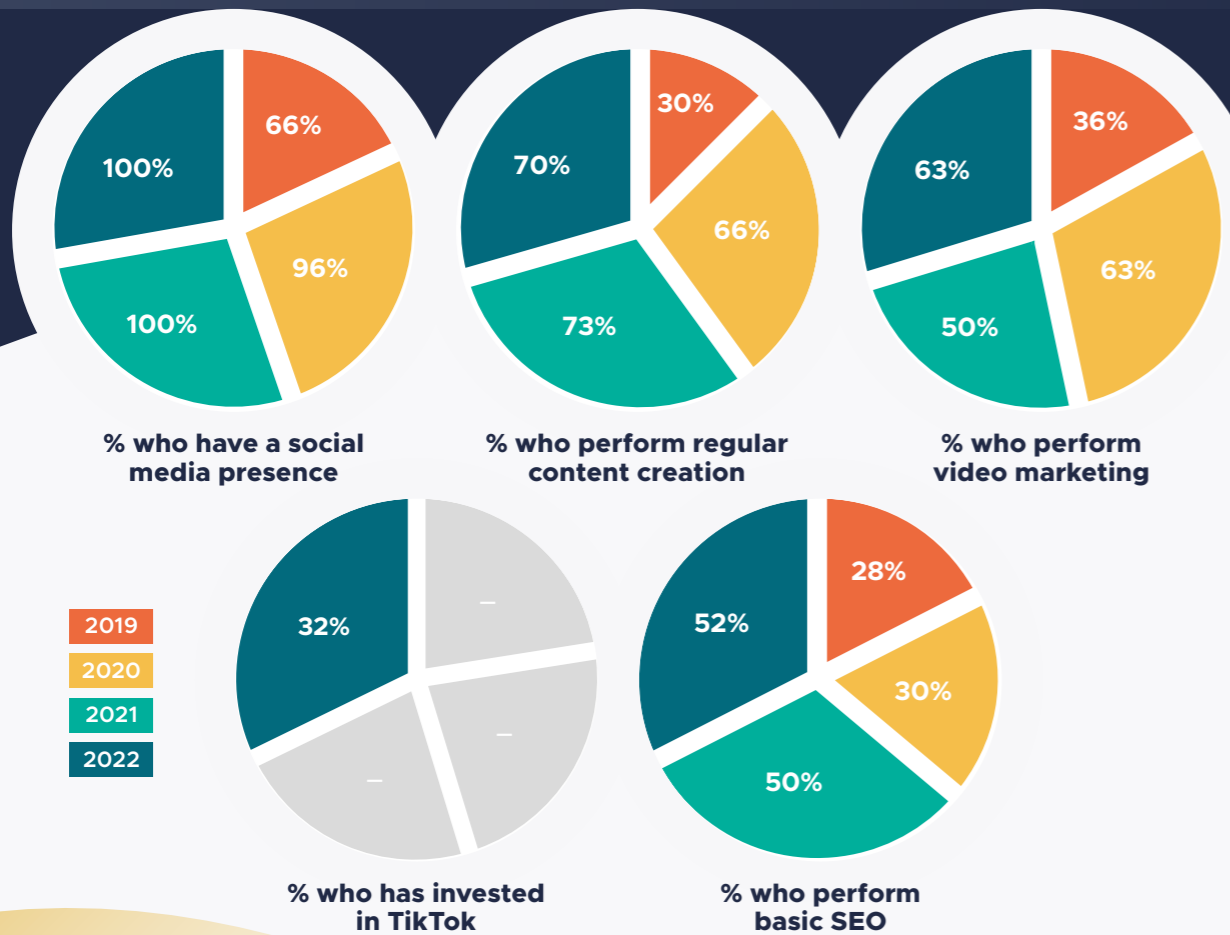


Awareness

Brand awareness measures how well people know a brand and its products or services. In other words, it's a way to see how memorable and recognisable the brand is. Making sure that people recognise and remember you is vital in marketing. People are more likely to trust and engage with a name they're familiar with.

Five key highlights to note for your business:

- ▶ 32% of the companies had a TikTok account
- ▶ 60% of the companies produce long-form video
- ▶ 70% of the companies produce content regularly
- ▶ 50% of the companies have the basics of SEO



Q: "What is the future of online sales"

A: "As AI gets even better at natural language, customisation of sales and support content on the fly, dynamically optimised for the visitor, will become more prevalent."

Patrick Cantellow, Digital Marketing Manager, Knauf UK & Ireland.



Further thoughts and analysis

Content

Content comes in many forms. From video to social media and content, businesses are using it to try to separate themselves from their competitors. Over the past four years, content production online has increased, from only 30% of companies producing content to now 70% of companies creating content, as companies look to capitalise on the continually growing online audience.

As mentioned earlier, content has been fostered to create a relevant experience across one or more of the four C's:

- ▶ Content (that can be provided in experiences like emails or other such content)
- ▶ Commerce (such as physical retail, e-commerce, or a hybrid experience)
- ▶ Community (such as encouraging people to engage with a community/publication)
- ▶ Convenience (like offering consumers offers, loyalty schemes etc.)



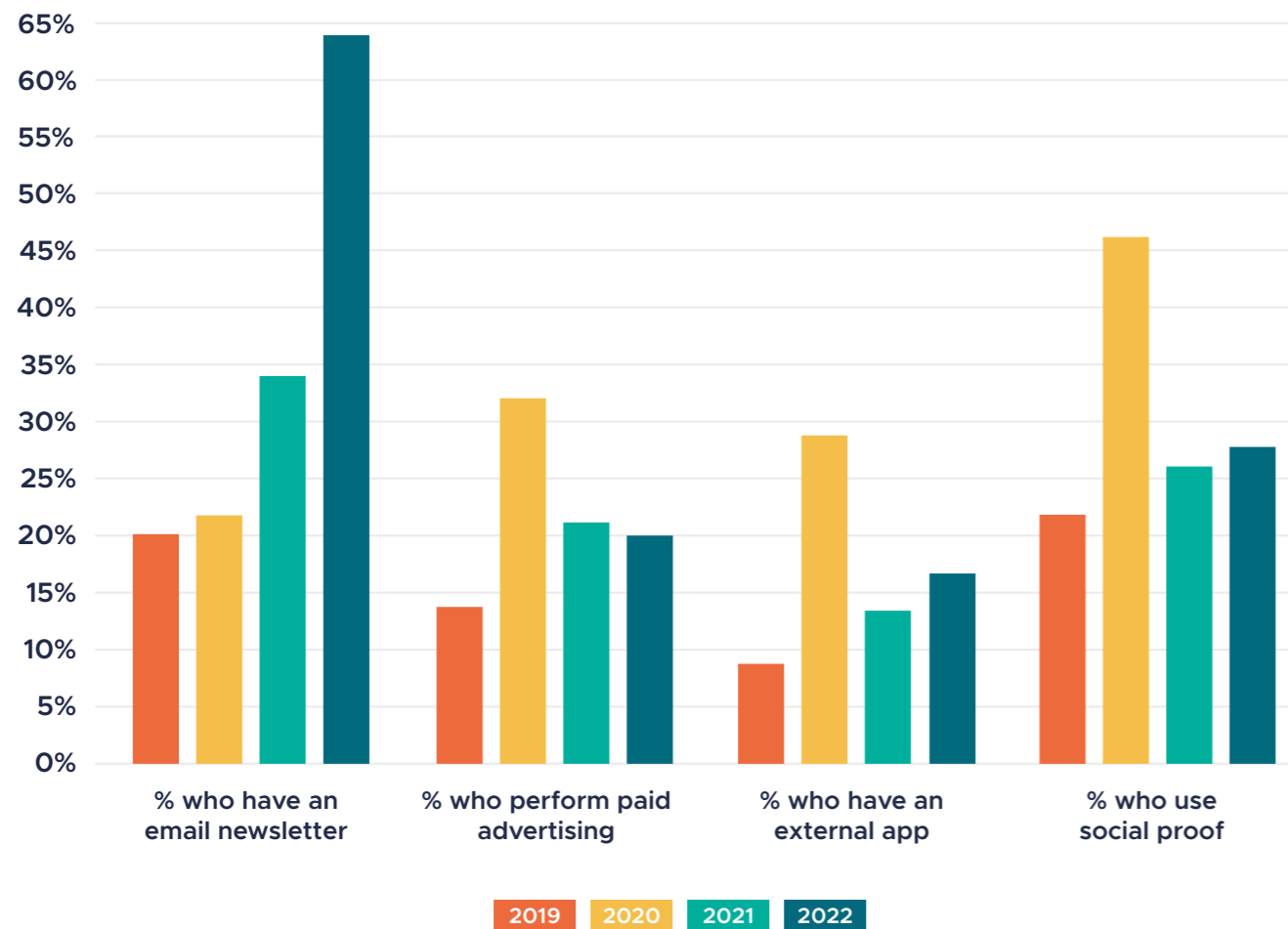
Engagement

Why should people care about your content? Why should they engage with your company?

Organisations need to show that they're experts in their sector to get people's attention. And have valuable content and services or products to offer. Companies need to promote themselves in an interesting and relevant way to their target audience.

Three key highlights to note for your business:

- ▶ One in three companies had personalisation on their site
- ▶ Three times the number of companies have a newsletter
- ▶ Paid advertising use has remained pretty consistent



Q: "What is the future of online sales"

A: "The future is accessibility. Things are more accessible than ever online and with technology, this will only continue."

Clio Davies, Marketing Manager,
Martin Tolhurst.



Further thoughts and analysis

Email

Email marketing in some industries is being peddled as old hat, but this is increasingly being disproved. It still is a fundamental piece in your marketing puzzle. Recent eCommerce studies show conversion rates of around 15%. You'll need help finding a better ROI in the eCommerce world. But before you create any email, you need to consider whether it gives the receiver something. If not, you will struggle to generate a return on investment.

This has been proven with companies using email newsletters growing from 20% to 64% in four years.

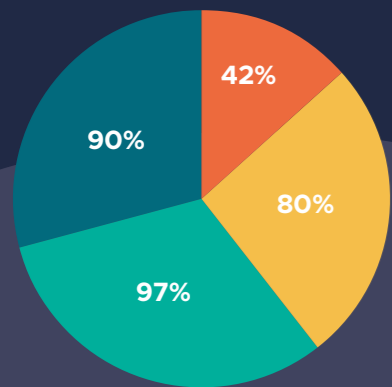


Sales

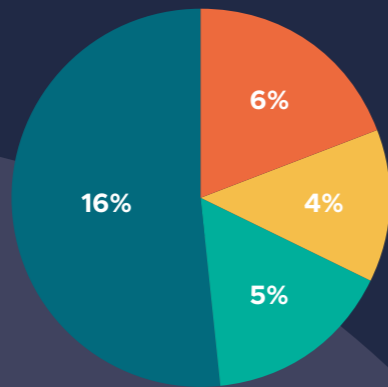
We encourage our clients to think of a website as a digital business development manager (BDM). Suppose you compare the cost of hiring a human BDA, including salary, travel, holiday, and other expenses, to the cost of building a website. In that case, a website is a more cost-effective way to generate new business.

Three key highlights to note for your business:

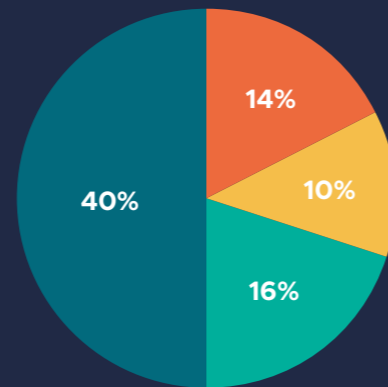
- ▶ The number of people using live chat has tripled compared with four years ago
- ▶ 40% of companies are eCommerce
- ▶ 90% of companies have a CTA



% who have a CTA on their website



Live chat



% who have ecommerce functionality

2019 2020 2021 2022

Q: "What is the future of online sales"

A: "Blockchain technology mixed with AR shopping. Virtual product appearances within homes."

Joby Stephens, Director and Owner, Jam96.



Further thoughts and analysis

Live chat

Live chat can be divisive. Especially if you've been stuck on live chat with a 'robot' or have received impersonalised messages, but with resources, a human touch, and a user journey, live chat can become the link to your customer base.

Offline is experience and online is convenience; live chat can help people talk to you more easily and quickly than most mediums. Companies seem to be buying into this with companies investing in live chat growing.

CTA

When someone suggests placing a Call To Action (CTA) on every page of your website, you may think, "That sounds like overkill, why every page?" We are here to convince you why:

- ▶ People want convenience and it's not guaranteed they'll land on the homepage. Without a clear CTA, the user may not know the next steps to take to purchase a product or sign up for a newsletter and will likely leave the site without accomplishing their task.
- ▶ CTAs motivate your sales funnel. The calls to action serve as transitions between the phases of the buyer's journey.

It's interesting to see CTA banners still do not remain a fundamental part of every page.

eCommerce

It is not surprising to see a significant sum of the companies on the list have eCommerce functionality. With COVID, an increase in internet use and the push for convenience online stores are continuing to flourish.



Use our checklist to audit your company's online presence

The table below details the 14 points we reviewed for each top company. We have simplified the matrix so you can review in a simple way how you match up against the top companies.

The average top company reviewed in this report had over 11 or more marks in the below boxes.

Please mark x in the box against any items you believe your company reflects.

| We... | Mark an X in the box if applicable | Further information |
|---|------------------------------------|---|
| Regularly post on relevant social media channels | | Regular is considered at least once a week. |
| Regularly creates & publishes content | | Regular is considered at least once a month. |
| Uses video marketing | | |
| Consider SEO when using our website | | SEO means the process of improving your site to increase its visibility in search results. |
| Have an email newsletter | | |
| Use paid advertising | | Paid advertising can be within search engines or social media. |
| Have an app for the organisation's audience and customers | | |
| Uses social proof | | Social proof is defined as having reviews on your website. |
| Have CTA's on key pages | | CTA are defined as items on a website that encourage your audience to do something. |
| Have live chat on the website | | |
| Have eCommerce functionality | | |
| Have a website that is optimised for mobile phones | | Optimised means the ability to be viewed properly on a website. Without zooming in. |
| Have a website that loads quickly? | | Quick is considered anything under 2 seconds! You can test your website here: https://tools.pingdom.com/ |
| Use marketing automation | | Marketing automation is software that handles routine marketing tasks without the need for human action. Like A/B testing. |
| Total X's | | |

Q: "What is the future of online sales"

A: "For AttractionTickets.com, the future of online sales is joined up website and email personalisation that meets customers at the right point in their buying journey. Being able to display different content to brand new customers vs. customers browsing the same tickets again and again, for example, will give us the ability to adapt our messaging and improve the experience for our customers, as well as hopefully increasing our conversion rate."

Eleanor Cobbe, Head of Campaigns, Attraction Tickets.



If you would like to have a review of what your company does, contact Kayo Digital and we're be more than happy to do a full audit for you, for free.



How we can help your business grow.

Questions? Comments?

Kayo Digital is a Digital Partner to companies looking to grow and innovate, based in Sittingbourne Kent. We're a team of specialists that complement each other and find solutions to clients' problems. Making real world change through technology.

If you're looking to grow your business, let's have a chat about your challenges and initiatives. Give us a call today.

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