

11 emerging DIGITAL MARKETING *trends for* FINANCIAL SERVICES

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advisormarketing
complete online marketing solutions



Introduction

Marketing your business is a continuous process. A few years ago, a mailed letter and invitation to a presentation along with a no obligation lunch was a great way to reach prospects. Today, your clients probably pay more attention to email than paper mail. You need to find ways to reach them where they live, online, without ending up in their spam folders.

Here are 11 trends for marketing financial services you should consider trying:

1 Collect and Use Marketing Analytics

Every business collects information about its customers, not just in formal customer files but also via other means like email and online messages. There's useful data in those information streams, but you need to invest time in analyzing them. Taking these data points and creating actionable insights is the key. If a customer opens or clicks an email on Social Security benefits, then they might be interested in having a conversation about retirement income planning and how Social Security fits into the equation.

We Suggest: Easy-to-navigate lead-generation channels like email and content downloads make these marketing analytics simple to understand. Customers who download retirement materials will probably be more open to talking retirement income planning than a blanket message to your customer database.

Inbound Marketing delivers
55%
more leads than traditional
outbound marketing.¹

2 Creating Market Segmentation and Buyer Personas

The better you know your customers, the more finely you can target them. Market segmentation lets you organize them into groups with homogenous needs. Different groups will have different needs and you might want to market to them differently. Your marketing analytics may have told you your customers have adult grandchildren who need insurance or financial services, but you'll need to reach out to the grandkids very differently from the grandparents.

We Suggest: Developing buyer personas or fictional buyer profiles to help visualize a targeted demographic and how they may interact with the services you provide. This may sound like new terminology to some, however, personas have been used by many companies since the early 2000s.

Using Analytics and Personas for Segmented Emails

Use your marketing analytics and segmentation data to send targeted digital marketing. Analytics data can also help you cross-sell products and services to your customers; annuity products to life customers, life to investment clients and so on. While compliance and privacy concerns will control the messaging to some extent, the more personalized the message, the more likely a customer is to respond.

We Suggest: Drafting emails and messages to your buyer persona profiles mentioned in “Trend 2.” Then create emails around that content to better engage your target audience.

Ease Users’ Fears with Right Touching

Right touching means getting to the right person with the right message at the right time for the right result. This is a challenge in any communications medium, but even more so with email. Phishing scams that try to trick customers into revealing passwords to bank accounts have made consumers wary of emails from financial institutions, and many simply will not click a link in any email from a financial firm. This means you have to work to ensure your email appears professional and legitimate in order to trigger a response.

We Suggest: Including your phone number, social links and physical address in all email. Also, be aware of where your links are pointing traffic to and if your links require sensitive information.

44 Emails with social sharing buttons increase click through rates by

158%¹

Social Media Marketing is Now for Everyone

Social media used to be just for younger people, but everyone uses it now. According to Fast Company, people 55-64—unquestionably a key market for insurance and financial services—are the fastest growing user segment. Every business needs to have a Facebook page. You should also be using Twitter to get your message out. And these shouldn't be one-way communications, with you blasting out advertisements. **See Trend 11, Customer Engagement**—use these tools to get your customers to interact with you.

We Suggest: At the least, allocate time every day or so to share an article with your clients and prospects on your social media outlets or subscribe to a social media publishing service like the **Social Media Elite** program available through CreativeOne. Advanced practitioners build a social media brand related to their practice and present your thought leadership by crafting B2C content.

“**89%**
of marketers used
Facebook last year.²”

Leveraging User Segments with Facebook Native Advertising

Having a page on Facebook isn't the only way to utilize this platform. You can also advertise your business; ads can be in the right-hand side of the page or can be “native advertising,” meaning they show up in the user's News Feed almost as if they are regular content. Facebook will help you tailor the target of your campaign to be most effective.

We Suggest: Creating a downloadable piece of content to entice users to click on your advertisement. While drawing upon your fictional buyer personas mentioned in “Trend 2”, define your segments inside of the Facebook Advertising platform and target them with relevant and clickable content.

Using Video on YouTube and Beyond

Most humans are visual; given that, people naturally respond to human faces. Get creative and put yourself into a professional video online. CNet reports that Youtube streaming is nearly 20 percent of all Internet traffic.⁴

We Suggest: Trying something different. Video can be utilized outside of YouTube by sending it directly to them in an email via a video email service. Many video email system have an easy-to-use interface and even tells you when your email is read and the video played.

Learn Which Campaigns are Working with Touchpoint Attribution

In order for your marketing techniques to be effective, you need to know which ones actually work to bring you customers. The more methods you use to market, the harder this tracking becomes. Every communication you send should have some distinct key to let you know which message triggered a response. And you need to use that information to plan your next marketing push.

We Suggest: Keeping a list of tracking codes and campaign notes in Excel to help track all of your links and pages. Define your channels with codes and abbreviations ahead of time to streamline any reporting and analyzing you may want to do during a campaign.

Videos on Landing Pages

increase conversation by

86%¹

Improving your Web Site with SEO and SEM Benchmarking

What keywords do you expect customers to use to find you? SEO, or search engine optimization, means having an effective web presence that makes your site rank high in search engine results. Ideally, your business will be on the first page of Google search results for relevant keywords. Google periodically changes its page ranking strategy in an effort to weed out junk content; it's a never-ending battle to make sure your site remains visible. SEM Benchmarking (search engine marketing benchmarking) will help you make sure your content is effective.

We Suggest: Consulting with a SEO or SEM company to establish these benchmarks before implementing an optimization strategy or subscription. Establishing a web presence can depend on a number of different factors so be wary of excessive promises. CreativeOne offers SEM services to contracted producers and our experts frequently consult with you on relevant keywords and strategies for your site.

Traditional Media Advertising

spending rose

14.8%

year over year compared to Digital Advertising spending

increasing by

11.1%³

Exploiting your Technology Vendors

Talk with your vendors and find out how they can help you reach your customers. Although marketing will always require a personal touch, marketing automation software can help streamline your process, track the success of your campaigns, and help you understand the data. Automated systems can also add "share" buttons to your content, helping with social media marketing (**see Trend 5**).

We Suggest: Shopping for an email automation system that may work in concert with other technology services like a Customer Relationship Management system. Having these pieces work together can save time and effort.

Customer Engagement and Maintaining a Relationship

Once you have customers, one of the best ways of keeping them is to stay engaged with them. This means giving them ways and reasons to stay involved after the initial service is provided. You might have a blog or discussion forum that lets your customers connect with you and others. This interaction keeps your business on their minds and makes it more likely you'll get repeat business. It also provides a venue where potential new customers see the opinions of your current customers; if those opinions are positive, this is a powerful mechanism for gaining additional clientele (remember to consult your compliance professional for guidelines).

We Suggest: Spending some time on social media and writing relevant blog posts to display your thought leadership abilities. CreativeOne also provides agents with access to blog posts and topics via the **Social Media Elite** program.

A **30 DAY**
case study for a **CreativeOne**
producer grew traffic to his website by
364%!⁵

In Conclusion...

The non-stop growth of online marketing means you need to have a bigger and better online presence as part of your marketing effort. Keeping up on online trends is a great first step, but you need make these initiatives actionable and incorporate them into your marketing campaigns to keep your business growing.

CreativeOne can help you implement a strategy to gain exposure with the **Social Media Elite** program. **Social Media Elite** helps producers grow awareness by creating a social media plan to leverage your business by:

- Nurturing personal client relationships
- Sharing useful and relevant information with clients and prospects
- Developing online credibility, increasing web traffic and building brand awareness
- Enhancing your reputation by positioning yourself as a knowledgeable resource
- Easily generating new leads and referrals
- Standing out against your competition

Since everyone's social media needs are unique, a discovery process is necessary to properly determine what strategy is most appropriate. Plans and packages are formulated to achieve results for practices of all sizes, and in any market.

The **Social Media Elite** program delivers custom content with flexible solutions to help you further develop relationships using the power of internet marketing. And, this program is exclusive to CreativeOne, so you won't find it anywhere else.

¹ <http://www.marketingprofs.com/chirp/2014/12372/20-captivating-marketing-statistics-that-will-drive-2014-infographic>

² <http://marketingland.com/social-media-driving-revenue-for-one-third-of-b2c-companies-one-fifth-of-b2b-firms-report-64256>

³ <http://www.emarketer.com/Article/B2Cs-B2Bs-See-Digital-Social-Ad-Spend-Rising-Traditional-Stalls/1010270#8xslx3Q3VluUobsW.99>

⁴ <http://www.cnet.com/news/netflix-youtube-gobble-up-half-of-internet-traffic/>

⁵ Based on one agent's experience. Additional results will vary.

Comprehensive Financial Advisor Online Marketing

Marketing your financial practice online requires substantially more than just a pretty website. In today's world where there are literally billions of websites, competition for attention is at a premium. Advisor Online Marketing is aware of the nuances and the science of online marketing and we utilize a comprehensive approach to achieve your desired results.



Branding and Design - Just as your clients require expert direction, so does your online presence. Branding your financial practice extends far beyond your logo and incorporates every word, image, video, email, and Social Media post that leaves your office. Your brand identity is used for your website design, development and marketing practices, and should maintain a consistent professional appearance. Advisor Online Marketing provides that consistency.



Creative Website Development - Having a professionally developed website is a must for today's financial advisors. Your website is the hub of your online existence and therefore must be strategically designed and created to not only represent the essence of your practice, but also to be a resource for your target audience. Very often, your website may be a client's first exposure to you. We all know how important initial impressions can be and you'll never know the true "cost" of not fostering confidence and competence beginning with that first "click".



Results Driven Digital Marketing - From ranking well with the search engines to database marketing with email, a successful online marketing strategy is planned, specific, and measurable. We handle the details while you build your practice. We take a comprehensive approach to your online marketing, assessing your goals, practice areas, and target audience before embarking on your project. Your practice is unique and deserves personal attention to assure that its online marketing plan is congruent with its goals and direction. Once helping you to determine your needs, we structure a program specifically designed to generate results.

In today's high-tech, fast-paced world, a strong and credible online presence can mean the difference between landing or losing that important client. Advisor Online Marketing understands the work required to build your online reputation and we are dedicated to that success. We have the industry expertise to help you grow your business efficiently.

Contact us today for a free, no obligation assessment of your current branding at www.advisoronlinemarketing.com

www.advisoronlinemarketing.com

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