

5 Marketing Trends To Pay Attention To In 2019



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At each of my last three keynote addresses, I was asked this simple question: “What do you think is going to happen with marketing next year?” There are a lot of [marketing speakers](#) and [sales speakers](#) already shouting out the trends for 2019. It’s still only summer, but people are already trying to look ahead and see what’s around the curve. And I understand why: The world is changing a mile a minute, and it’s hard to scale, differentiate yourself, and maintain trust in the ever-changing marketing world. The more you can plan ahead, the better equipped you feel to manage those changes when they happen.

Here are some midyear thoughts about what you need to keep an eye out for in 2019:

1. People are putting more trust in others they know and reputable content, not ads.

We knew years ago that people were running away from traditional ads. A [Nielsen study from 2015](#) showed that the top four most-trusted sources of advertising were: people you know,

branded sites, editorial sites, and reviews. Ads are near the bottom of that list, and that fact hasn't really changed.

In fact, [30 percent](#) of all internet users are expected to be using ad blockers by the end of this year, meaning traditional ads now won't even reach 30 percent of possible target audience members. So, does this mean marketers should abandon ads completely? Not necessarily.

I honestly feel there's still a place for some ads, but they have to be more relevant and valuable to the consumer. This is why we see more money going to [content marketing](#), [influencer marketing](#), referral partnerships, and other methods that are designed to deliver actual value to audiences. This shift isn't going to stop until ads start being more valuable for the consumer.

People have been saying for a long time that print is dead, but I recently came across a company that used software to obtain physical addresses for clients and started sending them print newsletters. Imagine that. In the age of MailChimp and HubSpot, this company went against the grain and spent extra money to do it the old-fashioned way. I was also surprised to find that its campaign was extremely successful — but why?

Simply put, everybody else had gone digital, and this company saw an opportunity to do something different. Now, I'm not advocating that businesses should try to resurrect print marketing or do something only because it's uncommon and not because it resonates with their audiences. But they should consider integrated campaigns and [creative distribution tactics](#) that focus on ways to engage audience members that their industry competitors might not be considering.

3. Winners won't be concerned with internal barriers.

In my first point, I talked about the need to create engaging content rather than just advertisements. This engaging [content doesn't just help marketing](#). It can [enable your sales team](#) and be beneficial to recruiting, investor communications, internal training, and just about every other area of your business, too.

Every time I do a keynote presentation, I have people come up to me and say “John, we just can't do this stuff! There's too much red tape with other departments.”

My response? Companies that put up barriers between departments will fail in the long run. Leading companies are built on departments that work together. Creating engaging content isn't just a marketing concern. Great content can [fuel other parts of the company](#), resulting in better talent, lower costs, and improved relationships with investors.

4. Understanding how your customers communicate is vital.

Technology has evolved tremendously over the last several years. Recently, my 4-year-old daughter picked up my old Timex watch. After playing with it for a few minutes, she discovered that the face of the watch lit up when she pushed a button on the side. She grew excited and told

the watch: “Call Grandma Hall!” Needless to say, my mother’s face did not appear on my aged Timex, which disappointed her greatly. You can watch the video [here](#).

Customers aren’t unlike my daughter. They expect that companies will communicate with them in the ways they like. That’s why it’s so important for marketers to be aware of their customers’ communication preferences.

Experts out there are making some big predictions about how customers will operate in the future. Some analysts say they think close to [50 percent of all searches](#) will be made through voice search by 2020. I’m not sure how accurate predictions like this really are, but I do know that my daughters and the generations that will come after them are growing up in a world where smartwatches and smart speakers are the norm.

5. Helpfulness and authenticity will combat relationships lost through tech and automation.

There’s no stopping marketing automation and technology. These advances help marketers scale more effectively, make better decisions, and save money. However, these advances sometimes come at the expense of the relationships those same marketers have typically built with members of their audience.

Although automation might cover basic tasks, it’s important to do your best to add a personal touch or offer direct help when possible. I was recently speaking to some contacts at a consulting company that had done an amazing job scaling marketing communication, but they still made a rule to visit their clients in person once every year to see how they could be helpful or improve the relationship and get to know the people better. They said that when they do this, the clients stay longer and spend more money.

These are just five trends to look out for as you think ahead for the end of this year and into the next. Remember, there’s not a single “right way” to build a marketing strategy, but these five tips can help you achieve any marketing goal.