

Marketing Trends That Should Become Best Practice In 2017

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What are the trends that will move your company's business development initiatives in 2017? With digital, mobile, social, marketing technology and content marketing now mainstays of B2B marketing programs, it is clear these strategies and tactics have completely altered the modern marketing landscape. What's more, these advancements are continuing to evolve and yielding their own new trends. Here are three we feel merit your attention.

Customer-centric everything

What B2C companies discovered long ago is now recognized by B2B firms – a customer-first approach to doing business delivers success. The reason is simple: B2B buyers are influenced by their consumer experiences and expect similar experiences in their professional relationships.

Many marketing experts predict customer experience is overtaking price and product as the key brand differentiator. Undoubtedly, this will impact how companies market and sell as well as how they deliver their services and products. For the majority of businesses, this change will require a significant shift in marketing strategy and organization structure.

Maturing content marketing

Nearly 90% of B2B marketers utilize content marketing. Despite this high level of integration, few businesses feel they are effective at it. That noted, a number of companies are poised to leverage their content marketing with more strategic and measurable programs, including:

- A documented content marketing strategy
- A focus on quality, target-specific content, versus quantity
- Integration of content marketing into sales-driven activities
- More video, podcasts and interactive content
- Increased paid amplification to boost distribution

More native advertising

Often confused with content marketing, native advertising is a form of paid media where the ad, article or post blends into the context of the content (or native) surroundings. As many B2B companies have discovered, native advertising is a highly effective means of generating exposure.

For some businesses, sponsored posts on LinkedIn may be the extent of their native advertising efforts. However, many more opportunities are available, including those with publications such as Forbes, Business Insider and BuzzFeed.

As you finalize your plans for 2017, understand that new and upgraded skills in digital marketing, analytics and technology are necessary to optimize the evolving trends that drive business development. The Decision Associates marketing practice welcomes your questions and continued discussion.

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