

Digital
Leadership
Forum

Session Report

Digital Marketing Trends to
Watch in 2020

December 2019



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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Content that Connects: How Understanding Culture Can Fuel Growth in 2020	4
Social Media Trends to Watch in 2020	6
Fireside Chat: with Igor Volzhanin, CEO, Datasine	8
Discussion Group Feedback	10
What is the Digital Leadership Forum?	12

Executive Summary

Digital Marketing Trends to Watch in 2020

13th December 2019 | Schroders

In December 2019, members of the Digital Leadership Forum met at Schroders in London to discuss digital marketing trends for 2020.

Representatives from leading organisations including Pfizer, LV=, EDF Energy, Schroders, Octopus Investments, BDO, and many more discussed how they are preparing their digital marketing strategies for 2020. Key topics included the role of employee advocacy within an organisation's marketing plans and how to manage increased personalisation capabilities responsibly and effectively.

Attendees began the session by breaking into smaller groups to discuss their success stories, challenges, and learnings from 2019, as well as the digital trends that they are focusing on for 2020. Discussion topics included: content marketing and personalisation; search and SEO; data, analytics and measurements; website customer journeys; and the role of influencer marketing.

Attendees then heard presentations from companies working at the forefront of new digital marketing trends.

Rebecca Allen, Chief Commercial Officer at Codec, explained how brands can tap into cultural networks that align with their values in order to engage new audiences.

We then heard from Dominique Elsey, Enterprise Marketing Specialist at Hootsuite who spoke about Hootsuite's 5 Social Media Trends to Watch for 2020.

Finally, we sat down with Igor Volzhanin, CEO of Datasine to discuss how brands can use AI, psychology, and semantic content analysis to personalise the ways in which they communicate with their audiences, and the opportunities that increased personalisation may present marketers in the future.

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Content that connects: how understanding culture can fuel growth in 2020

Presented by Rebecca Allen, Chief Commercial Officer at Codec. Codec is an AI-powered cultural segmentation platform and consumer insight tool that allows brands to discover, interrogate and activate new audiences.



1. Increased data regulation means personalisation must evolve

As content marketing becomes more mainstream, regulations on data collection are catching up. New Californian regulations, the CCPA, come into effect on January 1st. GDPR continues to restrict data collection, and the ICO will be enforcing existing regulations on brands in the UK. Personalised content can therefore no longer solely rely on data.

2. Demographics are not as insightful as we think

It is now more important to understand audience culture than demographics. Allen showed us photos of Prince Charles and Ozzy Osborne, who both fit the same demographics but clearly have very different cultural values. Allen explained that people belong to online cultural networks – which Codec calls Tribes – based on four shared elements: behaviours; values; symbols; and social organisation.

Content that connects: how understanding culture can fuel growth in 2020

3. Engage with cultural networks, but do so sensitively

When brands try to engage with these Tribes they need to engage with all four elements, not just one. Allen noted the Kendall Jenner Pepsi campaign, which misjudged how to engage culturally with the Black Lives Matter campaign and community. Pepsi only paid attention to the symbols of the movement, trying to make their can, and their brand, a symbol of BLM without acknowledging the values of the movement.

4. Play the “connector” within cultural networks

Brands should instead play the role of the “connector” within cultural networks. A brand can have an authentic voice in a cultural network as long as it aligns with your values. Allen spoke about the success of Nike’s 2018 campaign with Colin Kaepernick. Nike engaged with BLM’s leaders by providing a platform to a person with an authentic voice within the BLM movement. Moreover, they engaged with their values by supporting Kaepernick as a time when the NFL refused to.

You can read more in Codec’s whitepaper on Cultural Tribes [here](#).



Social Media Trends to Watch in 2020

Presented by Dominique Elsey, Enterprise Marketing Specialist at Hootsuite. Hootsuite is a social media management platform. Every year they compile a trends report based on their survey, expert interviews, and detailed analysis.



1. Brands strike a balance between public and private engagement

When Mark Zuckerberg announced this year that “the future is private” he signalled an industry-wide pivot to private. Despite increasing use of private channels, brand discovery is still happening in public social feeds. Brands will now need to use both public and private channels to engage with their audiences, striking a balance between both and understanding the functions and nuances of each.

2. Employers take centre stage in a divided world

Employees are more likely to trust their employers than the government or media, and expect their employers to take stances on social and political issues. Generally, employees want to work for companies that are making things better, not just making better things. Progressive organisations can continue to amplify their company purpose through employee advocacy, as having positive internal voices builds external confidence in brands.

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Social Media Trends to Watch in 2020

3. The Tik Tok effect

While TikTok's demographics may be too narrow for those not specifically seeking to reach Gen Z, brands can still learn from the effects that it has had on online content. Brands can gain valuable insights into the aesthetics and values of Gen Z, can take the energy of short-form video content and implement this across existing social channels, and also gain an awareness of the importance of experimenting with other growing niche platforms.

4. Social marketing and performance marketing collide

Brand-building marketing and performance marketing now need to be combined as organic reach declines and paid ads become increasingly important. Performance marketing may generate temporary lifts, but it is brand-building that generates long-term value. The roles of social marketers will also be reshaped as skillsets evolve.

5. The social proof gap closes

Although methods for measuring the impact of social media are becoming more precise, many social marketers have yet to take basic steps to measure the business value that social is bringing to their organisation. Organisations that are the most confident in measuring ROI do so by: uniting social data with other channels for a more holistic view; focusing on omnichannel integration; and using tried and tested attribution models from other channels like SEO, TV and outdoor advertising.

Read Hootsuite's [Social Media Trends 2020 Report](#)



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Fireside Chat: with Igor Volzhanin, CEO, Datasine

Igor Volzhanin, CEO of Datasine, sat down with the Digital Leadership Forum to discuss the opportunities that increased personalisation may present marketers in the future. Datasine personalises how brands communicate with their audience using AI, psychology and semantic content analysis.



Do you think personalisation as a trend is becoming more popular?

Whenever we mention what we do the thing that resonates with people is personalisation. A lot of the time people don't know what it means to personalise and that personalisation can take many different forms. Previously it meant when you personalize an email with someone's name, or when you buy a vacuum cleaner on Amazon and it shows you five more vacuum cleaners. The meaning of personalisation has evolved over time, so it's not a new idea, but the idea has become more refined.

What is holding back increased personalisation in marketing?

There have always been bottlenecks to personalisation. Today's bottleneck is actually the content that you're creating. You can only create so much content, and that's the reason why true personalisation hasn't really existed. The closest we've gotten so far is something that Netflix does with the TV show Stranger Things. Customers actually see different ads for the same show, so somebody might see kids looking with a flashlight, somebody else might see a scary monster - they have about eight different versions. Their click rates and engagement rates have gone through the roof using that kind of personalisation.

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Fireside Chat: with Igor Volzhanin, CEO, Datasine

Where do you predict personalisation will take us?

You're going to see the kind of personalization that we haven't really experienced before where the ad that you see in front of you is completely tailored to you uniquely. The picture in the background, the text, and then pair that with the method, the timing, and the product, and that's the kind of personalisation we're talking about.

What advice would you give to organisations on introducing more personalisation into their marketing?

Figure out why you're doing it. Don't do it just because everybody else is doing it, figure out how and why you move into the personalisation space.

Then the next step would be to create a strategy. Don't just repeat what other people are doing - every business is unique. There are technologies and providers out there that can do all sorts of things but you need to have a very clear strategy because once you go down the personalisation route you can waste a lot of money and waste a lot of effort.



Discussion Group Feedback



Search and SEO

Led by Rob Welsby, Joint Managing Director, Performance at Further Digital Marketing. Feedback from Ollie Boyd, SGS.

- Brands need to look at search intent, not just keywords, and understand the questions that users are asking.
- Over 50% of search results don't lead to click on website - companies need to optimise for Google snippets, making it as succinct and useful as possible
- New KPIs are needed to measurement the results of SEO results as search rankings no longer give an accurate picture.

Data, analytics and measurements

Led by and feedback Victoria Lennon, Head of Digital Marketing at BDO.

- Challenges this year include how to manage privacy, both globally and responsibly.
- Need for new data skills in organisations, through recruitment and upskilling existing workforce.
- How to change senior management attitudes to data to value the right KPIs and not just vanity metrics.

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Discussion Group Feedback

Content marketing and personalisation

Led by Laurence Ollier, Senior Manager, Digital and Social at EDF Energy. Feedback from Clementine Bernhardt, Codec.

- Challenges this year include the need for paid media, as organic reach declines.
- Organisations need to invest in employee advocacy – question is how to get programs started and incentivise them.
- Hyper-personalisation is declining and instead there is a need for brilliant content.

Influencer marketing

Led by and feedback Harry Seaton, Managing Director at Fluential.

- Looking at integration – can influencers become a deeper part of existing content, campaigns and can brand be integrated more with influencers?
- Can you bring influencers into your content teams, using their skills as well as their audiences.
- Using influencer marketing in B2B businesses – how to run employee advocacy programmes.

Website customer journeys

Led by Mona Steininger, Head of Digital at Octopus Investments. Feedback from Ian Govier, EDF Energy.

- How do you serve personalisation and number of different journeys?
- Need to invest in new CMS systems to improve customer journeys.
- In the new year need for better measurement and more personalisation throughout the customer journeys.



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What is the Digital Leadership Forum?

At the Digital Leadership Forum, we help our members and their organisations to innovate and grow in the digital age.

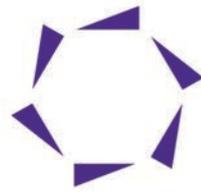
We design and run highly interactive and collaborative sessions where our members can share experiences and gain valuable insights to help support their digital strategies.

We tackle a range of core strategic business issues including digital transformation, AI & automation, digital marketing strategies, the future of work, and diversity in the workplace.

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