How to manage an online business

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Table of contents:

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Partners involved:

Small Educational Projects (Romania) https://www.sep-ngo.eu/	**IED - Institute of Entrepreneurship Development** (Greece) http://www.ied.eu/
Inercia Digital (Spain) http://www.inerciadigital.com/	**Infolog** (Italy) http://www.infologsrl.it/

Online Sales Management

Introduction

In the development of the online market, the sales sector has experienced a period of real revolution in recent years. The entire sale and pre-sale phase has moved online, on the internet, bringing with it a wealth of commercial and management skills but making it totally digital. With the exponential growth of the sector, new rich and complex dynamics and new professional figures have been born, intermediaries between the online store and the customer, who deal with managing sales taking care of every aspect, from the purchase itself to the site design that has to be captivating, the so called customer experience! Shopping on some online platforms can turn into a very satisfying experience for buyers of the digital age. Between reviews, purchase advice, warranty and ease of purchase, the customer feels confident in his purchase, being able to count on very important things such as shipment traceability and payment guarantee.

When it comes to corporate companies, the management of online sales is necessarily requires managerial and entrepreneurial skills. Since the profit that the company obtains depends on the success of the sale, it is important for sector managers to know how to manage the internet sales system so that they are successful and that they do not present any problem.

Customer care

The online sales sector, which is constantly expanding, requires attention and management methods that are different from those of classic sales:

	Online sales	*Shop sales*
Customer	He/she is online	He/she is fisically there
Payment	By credit card, Paypal or similar	Cash or credit card
Timings	Awaiting shipment	Immediate purchase

In dealing with customers differently, due to the "distance" of online commerce, it is necessary to take into account what the online entails, such as SEO strategies to build customer loyalty. The goal in online sales is, precisely, conversion: the potential customer visits the site, finds what he is looking for and buys it. When the customer buys, the goal is achieved.

When the purchase occurs, the customer expects to receive what he has obtained in the shortest possible time, so we must carefully check that everything is done correctly and there are no hitches.

From an organizational point of view, the seller must know how to be in control of his business by managing his goods as if he were selling them in the shop and, to do this, he must keep stocks under control. If the customer buys online but the purchased product is absent in stock despite being available online, this will certainly penalize the store and the customer may not purchase anything in the future. To avoid this, it is necessary to rely on warehouse management programs to be able to keep the availability of the goods under control. In this regard, there are management software capable of carrying out these checks.

Customer assistance is also very important: at the time of purchase or at the time of simple request for information, the company must be able to show the customer that it is there and that for any need it will be able to help and solve the problem. There are many ways to do customer support. In online sales, the live chat system is very useful,

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giving the person the feeling of being able to have support immediately in case of need. Another interesting tool is the FAQ, the question-answer system. Before making a purchase, the customer can take a look at the questions on the specific product to get a certain type of information, for example on the quality of the object. In this way, through these sales media, the buyer has clear ideas and can proceed with the purchase without doubts and uncertainties.
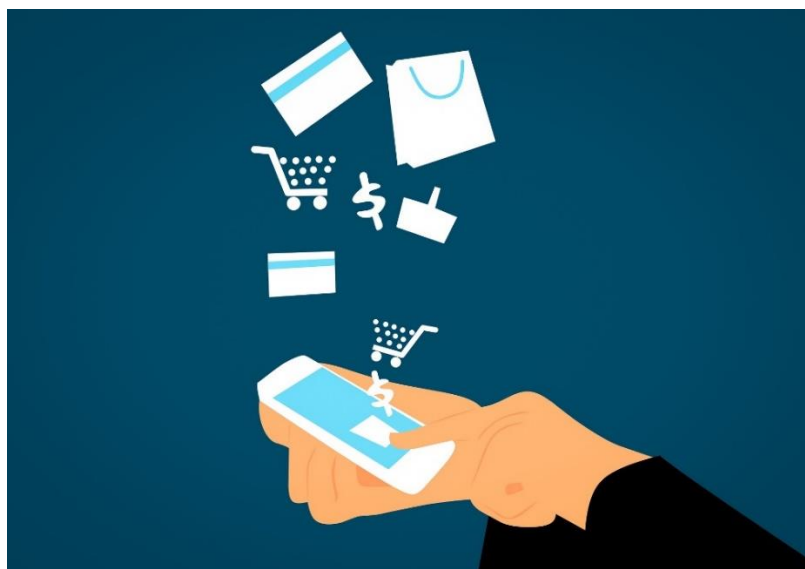
Communication

Online sales management intersects, as we have seen, some typical aspects of web marketing. In particular we can mention SEO, Web communication and Social Networks. Let's see in detail some key points of these three aspects:

- **SEO**: in the management of online sales it represents a very important component. Using analysis tools such as Google analytics we can have an overview of our site to deepen data such as the target. An unresponsive (i.e. non-mobile friendly) site, for

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example, can be a problem. If it's difficult to view the site via mobile so that the graphic part does not appear correctly, any purchase will clearly also be penalized. It would not be easy to buy online if, among the delicate steps that are carried out, the various operations are not very clear. Therefore, it is also important to take care of similar aspects, to guide the user towards conversion (For details see topic n. 2).

- **WEB COMMUNICATION**: in the world of sales it is important to know how to communicate. When a customer walks into the store, the salesperson will follow a set of rules of conduct to put that person at ease and follow them if they need advice. This argument would seem inapplicable online, as the customer is physically absent and is not inside a store but, basically, the online world is itself a store. The online sales manager will take this into account and treat the customer as well. How? Making sure that the platform contains everything the customer needs to buy safely, working together with the technical developers. From the various purchase operations to the return operations, the customer must be treated from the beginning to the end of the purchase (For details see topic n.4).

- **SOCIAL NETWORKS**: when we talk about online communication, we automatically end up talking about social media. They too are fundamental in the process of managing online sales. The goal of the shop is conversion, therefore adopting social campaign strategies to promote sales or last minute offers is certainly useful for the user to become a customer and the purchase objective is achieved (For details see topic n.4).

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Equally important, in order to have an effective management of online sales, is email marketing.

Through targeted strategies it is possible to both achieve a conversion and build customer loyalty once the purchase is made. When a user arrives on the site and signs up for the newsletter, receiving a welcome email that can help create a climate of understanding between the person and the company is very useful. It is equally useful to send an email with a purchase proposal if the user has visited the site but has not completed the purchase process by abandoning the cart. The right approach is the one that generates a great profit with the minimum effort, so the same email campaign must be conducted by sending the right emails to the right people and not producing a large number of emails that could have the opposite effect, that is to annoy the client.
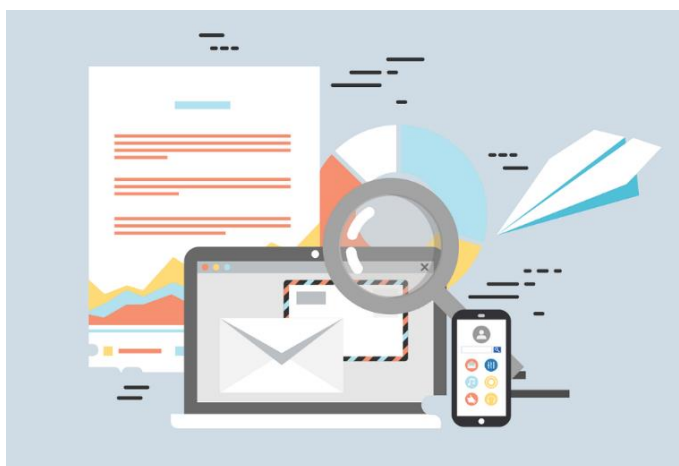
Conclusion

With the digital market revolution, every aspect of selling has radically changed. All stages of the purchase have gone digital, from the choice of the item to the payment and to the arrival at home. What traditional shopping represented, now the customer looks for it online, while not completely giving up the pleasure of going to the store in person but preferring, for convenience and speed, online shopping. More and more companies have switched to digital commerce to follow the market trend and have a significant economic advantage. And also many people rely on online platforms to buy

something. In this new relationship that is created between companies and customers, a totally new and innovative way of experiencing shopping is born and developed, which enriches the web browsing experience by bringing alternative solutions to the traditional aspect of everyday life.

Useful links

Below some websites selected for you to deepen the topic:

https://www.brightpearl.com/

https://www.magentosolutions.it/

https://www.shopify.com/plus/platform

SEO

Introduction

The digitalization of the activities, for many businesses in the modern world, represents a true revolution. The way the enterprises interact with the customers are without a doubt different if compared to the past, event to just some years ago. What we could not have foreseen was the great impact that the "digital" would have had in the management of the whole company activities, inevitably changing both the perception of one's work and, especially, the relationship with the customers.

They buyer, today, is online. And it's a resource. He is a person who spends a lot of time on the internet, collects informations and buys what he wants. The online audience is very large and varied and the increasingly prominent intent of companies is to reach more and more customers through the web in order to increase their presence on search engines results. Marketing has taken an increasingly digital form and has divided into different branches, with the aim of making the online experience as functional and modern as possible. One of these is **SEO**.
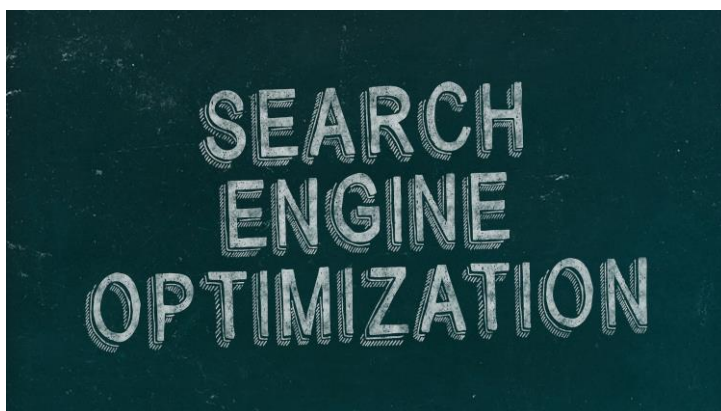
SEO

Search Engine Optimization. That is the definition of the SEO acronym, a set of activities that affect the positioning of a website in the results of a search engine.

But what are these activities and what do we mean when we talk about optimization?

Let's say we are doing a specific search on the internet. What we would expect to find is some content that is as relevant as possible to our research. For example, if we type on Google "dealer in Florence" what we would find is essentially a list of websites that respond in a relevant way to our research and provide us with specific informations.

But what do actually happen behind the scenes? When we type a keyword or an entire phrase (called a "long tail"), the Google algorithm, like any other search engine, returns a list of results that are links to websites that have a precise correspondence to the research we carried out.

We would not find a dealer in Berlin if we are looking for it in Florence.

This sort of invisible dance that connects the various steps of the research is what makes the research itself effective and in line with the user's intentions.

The tools and strategies used to index a site so that the search is effective are part of the optimization process within the search engines, that is the actual SEO.

Doing SEO nowadays, in a highly competitive and digitized world, is, as we can understand, a necessity to obtain greater results in terms of acquiring customers for your company and generating conversions, increasing the online visibility of a brand and business profits.

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On the other hand, website optimization is extremely advantageous even for the same user, as it certainly provides an effective and targeted and non-dispersive online browsing experience. In this way, in the ocean of online information, search engine search refinement tools lead to optimal results both for those who create content in synergy with the various SEO strategies and for those who receive them, satisfying the specific requests of users in a highly functional way.

SEM, SEO, SEA?

These three acronyms enclose, in three simple letters each, what today is important to know in order to do business online and invest in their success.

SEM (*Search engine marketing*) is, as we can get from the words themselves, a web marketing branch, which include all the useful activities in order to generate web traffic. It branches out in two different systems of online business management, so different from each other, which are SEO, that we've already talked about and **SEA.**

Unlike SEA (*Search Engine Advertising*), SEO represents a group of techniques that act on the so-called "organic" results of an online search, i.e. those that appear when any search is made.

The sponsored links, those that appear as the first results of a search, together with the word *adv.*, are the field of interest of the SEA which, indeed, concerns paid search results. It is managed through tools such as **Google Adwords**. By searching and paying for specific keywords chosen on the basis of how relevant they are to the site to be advertised, an advertising link is created and it appears at the top of the first page of the results of a search, before the organic ones.

Into the business projects the plan is made according to the set objectives and, so, choosing between paid and non-paid ads. However, for having good results and a good online positioning, a strategic planning is needed, within a constant monitoring. What all SEO activities revolve around is essentially based on the algorithms used by search engines. They work to analyze the contents of websites, deciding their positioning based on their consistency with respect to the search. How does it do it? By scanning the billions of web content in order to answer a user query by presenting a series of links to sites that satisfy the search. One of the basic elements of an algorithmic analysis, for example, is the words that appear in a user's request.

The algorithm will act in such a way as to compare and cross the search terms with those of the pages it analyzes and, depending on their greater or lesser frequency within the pages, it will respond adequately, returning the sites that contain those words and that are congruent. There are tools through which it is possible to do a keyword analysis by discovering, for example, which are the most "competitive" words. In this case, for arriving to the top of a search results, it'll be very helpful to know what words are to use and what words are not, avoiding competitions that are not profitable at all. In the case of the use of "long tails", on the other hand, being more precise as they are composed of a set of words and not a single generic word, the range of action is greater and this is likely to bring more advantages.

In short, the choice of a word (or a phrase) has a decisive importance in this process as the more they are specific and representative of one's business model, the more they are able to generate an interesting response in terms of achieving the research objectives (by the user) and conversions (by the company).

On page SEO, On site SEO, Off site SEO

There are other aspects, however, that those involved in SEO should consider because they are essential elements for an effective optimization.

For example, the structure of a website must meet precise selection criteria so that the site is well indexed by search engines: this procedure is part of the so-called **On page SEO**. Let's consider a website homepage. A logo positioned in a certain way, the organization of the various sections of the site (such as "Contacts") and related buttons and the choice of specific images are all important elements that, if taken care of, favor the site and its optimization. Even the fonts used in the text can be important to "catch the attention" of a search engine: by using, for example, bold for some specific words, the search engine detects that that word has more evidence than the others and therefore it will be more prominent, becoming a keyword to focus on to optimize the site.

Next to the On page SEO, we also find **On site SEO** and **Off site SEO**. On-site SEO concerns more technical aspects than those seen previously, such as site hosting, loading speed or correct viewing of the site from your mobile. Off-site SEO, on the other hand, as the name implies, is all that can be done to optimize the site but not by acting directly within it. It is therefore the set of "external" optimization activities to the site. One of these activities is that of the backlink which essentially consists in having a link to your site from an external source. This link and traffic that is generated is important because it generates a positive response in terms of SEO.

As regards the navigability of the site, it is necessary to consider the importance of navigating through mobile. The smartphone is a real miniature PC, through which the user carries out many of his activities, such as shopping. For this reason, a SEO operation of our website on mobile is essential to keep up with the times and invest in modern technologies to benefit from them. **Google search console** offers, for example, the possibility to monitor any usability problems of the site when viewed on mobile.
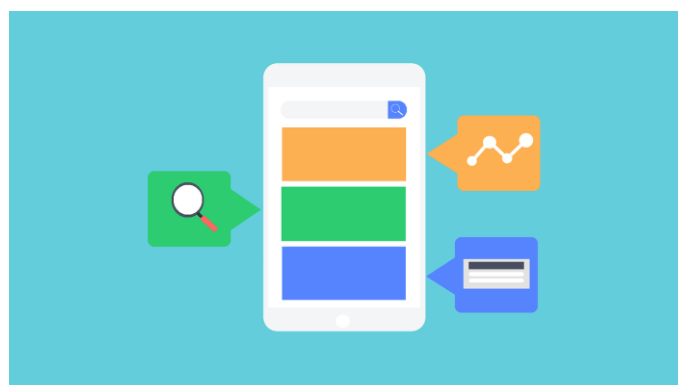
Can all this be done alone? Doing Seo requires specific knowledge and knowing where to take action directly to improve business performance requires a certain familiarity. But, essentially, SEO depends, by its very nature, on the optimization needs of companies. Ergo, big company, big SEO! In this case, for a structured and specialized business model it's always better to collaborate with a big operator, who knows how to respond to the needs of a complex management activity. But, on the contrary, in the case of small businesses, with the right knowledge it is possible to make targeted SEO strategies. Through Google search console, for example, you can perform the audit (a sort of general analysis of the performances of the site). In this way, you will be aware of all the technical problems of the site and how to improve its positioning.

Another known tool and reference point for web marketing operations is **Google Analytics**. This platform created by Google and usable for free provides site managers with very important data for analysis, such as the type of device used by users or their involvement based on the pages viewed. To carry out this type of control, a monitoring code must be installed on each page that you want to monitor: based on all the data

that can be studied, relating to user behavior and demographic data, a very specific target is created, which will direct the activities in a more systematic way. In addition, integrated with tools such as Google Adwords, online campaigns can also be analyzed, keeping an eye on conversions, or goals.

Again with Google Adwords, about keywords, we can use its Keywords planner to get information on the search volumes of specific words and let ourselves being advised by the tool itself to choose the most relevant ones for ourbusiness. Having a good command of this type of SEO tools and strategies helps in achieving business goals. At the same time, it is important to have a good insight and understand what are the points that can be improved based on a reactive and proactive reading of many small signals. And ask ourselves questions.

Eg. How do we intend to structure our website?

What is the target audience of our business?

How can we stand out among the various web offers related to our business?

Conclusions

SEO means first of all framing these situations and understanding if we can answer the questions without helping marketing tools. The tool itself, however highly technological and functional, can do nothing without a starting project, created thinking of a measurable and achievable goal. The most effective strategy for a company is to relate to SEO techniques by embracing both the technical aspect and the more communicative aspect, which is also accompanied by knowledge of web marketing. A 360° analysis of online business objectives and strategies guarantees, combined with a good SEO activity, growth and development that is able to completely innovate business dynamics and insert them into a whole new, global and interactive reality.

Useful links

Below some websites selected for you to deepen the topic:

- https://marketingplatform.google.com/intl/it/about/analytics/

- https://ads.google.com/intl/it_it/home/

- https://search.google.com/search-console/about?hl=it

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Collaborative Tools (Zoho, Trello, CRM)

Introduction

Working together with your team in the digital world means being able to use tools that did not exist until now and that have innovated and simplified work management. On the specialized platforms, work projects can be shared and updated so that an optimized and efficient work network is created, allowing business objectives to be achieved quickly and easily.

Collaborative tools are useful for processes such as:

- **Online meeting** – by providing platforms for web conferences, business calls or to simply collaborative team meetings, every communication is easy and quick.

- **Document Collaboration** – using these platforms, people can work together on a same document or file to achieve a single final version. People can share documents with the team, and the team change them directly, if it notices some mistakes, instead of asking the person who created them to change them. This type of solution can save a lot of time and energy.

- **Shared calendar** – as for the other examples, people can create and share a calendar so that the team can see it and change itself if something has to be changed.

Zoho, Trello

Among the main collaborative tools in use on the web we have:

- **ZOHO**

Zoho is a very useful management platform for businesses that want to implement their business and productivity. It allows you to plan and monitor projects, manage meetings and carry out company accounting.

The artificial intelligence of this software allows you to have a higher performance using fewer resources, making it practical to manage any job. Among the various apps included in Zoho you can find: spreadsheets, chats, emails, presentations and more. It is also possible to connect remotely with customers' computers and therefore easily offer assistance, significantly speeding up resolution times.

Zoho 's apps are split in 7 groups:

Sales & Marketing

This group gives to the sales team a set of apps to help close more business deals in less time.

Email & Collaboration

It empowers the workforce with apps to collaborate and transform the way they work.

Finance

This group solves business accounting challenges using an efficient set of finance apps on the cloud.

Human Resources

It is very useful for human resources processes.

T & Help Desk

Group of apps to help customer requests

Business Intelligence

These apps empower businesses with deep insights in data, with analytics tools.

Custom Solutions

Simplify complex business processes with apps that will make the team's work easier.

Pricing of Zoho services:

- **TRELLO**

Through the management system with customizable cards, Trello allows you to manage and classify each work project. Within the tabs, you can upload your work and share it, as well as set deadlines and also add multimedia files.

Graphically, it is presented in a very simple and linear way, with an organization of the job cards in order to have everything under control.

As for how to use the software and pay for it, Trello comes in three packages:

- Free
- Business class ($ 9.99 per month)
- Enterprise ($ 17.50 per month)
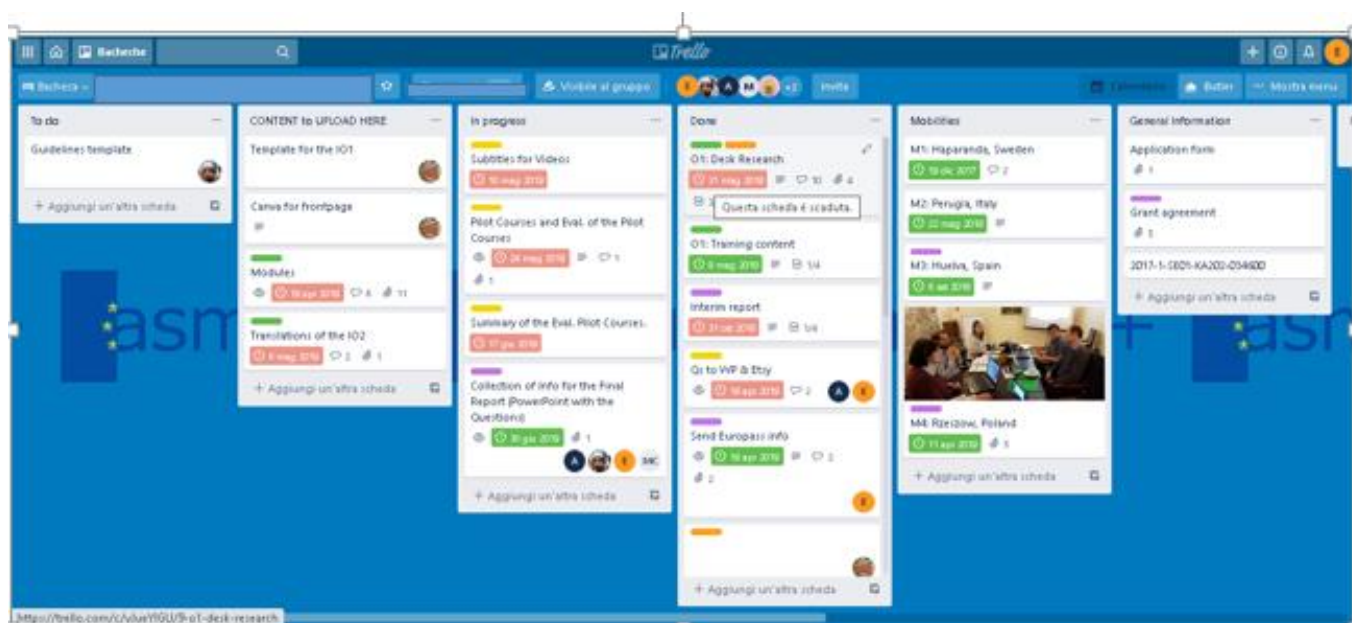
CRM

When it comes to online work, especially in regards to the relationship between company and customer, it is important to talk about CRM. CRM, or *Customer Relationship Management*, is a system for managing the interactions that a company has with its customers.
Specifically, it refers to tools that deal with managing contacts and online sales, managing customer data. Thanks to CRM tools, every aspect of the relationship between companies and customers or potential customers is recorded and analyzed to deepen the dynamics of interaction and understand how to make the business grow.
In addition to this, these tools are very useful for planning business activities and sharing files.

One of CRM tools is Salesforce:
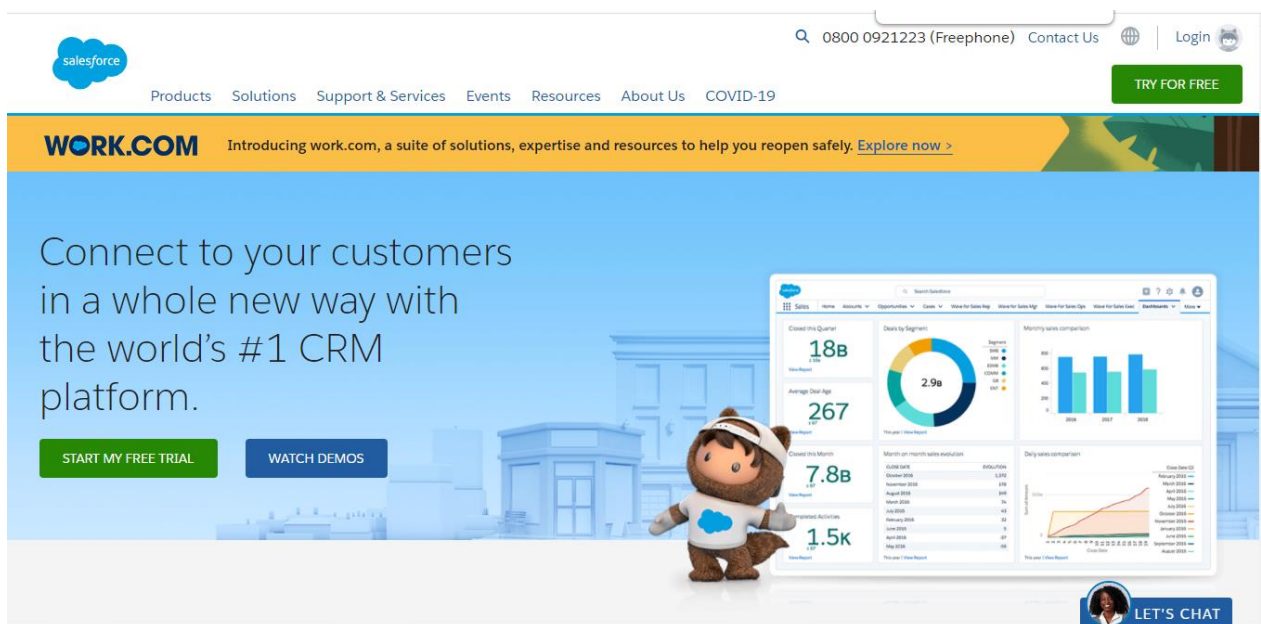
Salesforce is a very useful tool to connect companies and their customers, passing through the various phases of an online management of their business, for example Marketing, Ecommerce, Analytics etc.

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As for customer support, even with Salesforce it is possible to work remotely, quickly solving any problem. The assistance is also carried out in other ways, for example by using social media, so as to be able to answer questions also on these channels.

There are 4 payment methods:
- 25 euros per month (for use up to a maximum of 10 users)
- 75 euros per month (for teams of any size)
- 150 euros per month (fully customizable)
- 300 euros per month (full functionality)

Conclusion:

The digital organizational tools presented in this lesson are functional to the complete management of the online business. It would be difficult to conceive, in the modern era, for a company that wants to operate digitally, a traditional work management rejecting the advantages of digital tools which we talked about, whose multiple functions adequately respond to most of the internal work dynamics.

Useful links

Below some websites selected for you to deepen the topic:

https://www.zoho.com/it/

https://trello.com/it

https://www.salesforce.com/it/

Online reputation management. Brand identity and social communication

Introduction

Like, stories, tweet. Let's think to the enormous communicative weight of those little words. It's sufficient that one of them appear in a conversation and it would be enough to understand and more importantly to perceive, on a cognitive level, an entire hidden world that connects billions of people. Obviously we are talking about social media.

In the context of mass media, a type of communications that embraces a large number of people at the same time, social channels as Facebook, LinkedIn or Instagram are among the preferred ways by which people interact with the community. The impact they have is very strong (if we take into account, for example, that Facebook has over two billion subscribers) and continues to influence clearly every aspect of sociality. But questions arise.

If we think about those considerations, we would ask ourselves if a person, today, is defined on the basis of social media or not. What weight does someone have in the community if he does not have a social media channel? Is he excluded? Paradoxically, if you are not registered in a social website, you almost have the feeling you are not part of reality because the things of your life seems to have to pass through that filter. Same for human relationships. Not being interconnected gives us the impression of being alone. That could be important especially if the discussion is moved from a personal level to the level of big working realities.

Access to social media is now a must for business activities because it represents a great opportunity to increase one's success factor. Thanks to that, the number of customers or potential customers could increase in an explosive way and, at the same time, mechanisms could arise such that one can feel very close even if distant.

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But if a company does not have an online presence, what is the effect on its business activities? And if it does have an online presence but it is such that the feedbacks are minimal or negative, what are the consequences? From this it is clear that, today, corporate activities, which have also entered the digital and social world, need a series of strategies so that they can actively participate in new interactive realities and have greater business opportunities. Let's think, for example, of building a brand identity.

Web reputation and brand identity

When we talk about brand identity we are referring, specifically, to a communication campaign composed of precise elements that will identify a brand and convey a certain image and sensation. Let's just think of a logo, a slogan: the impact that something as small as a word can have on an audience, so much that it influences it, is witness to how essential is the care of every aspect of the company presentation. The graphic projects that will be developed by figures such as the Brand Specialist will have to take into account that the customer will have, first of all, a visual experience of the brand and therefore will be more or less attracted by components that, apparently, seem marginal such as, for example, typefaces.

These aspects must also be considered in order to manage an online business project with accuracy, to communicate efficiently, and to grow. If, however, the company is unable to optimally manage online communication, this could lead to consequences that will adversely affect the goals. For this reason, in addition to the concept of brand identity, the concept of web reputation is also a key in digital communication contexts. The Web-Reputation (defined, in this case, as the set of information, judgments, comments and anything else on the web related to business realities) is a fundamental lever for every company that has the ambition to make itself credible and operate in both local and international contexts. Despite being an intangible asset, it plays an extraordinary role in the global digital economic scenario: in the era of web 2.0, where everything is reviewed, the customer turns to digital knowledge tools and usually

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chooses products and services based on reputation and the opinion that other consumers put on the net through blogs, forums and social networks.

A good web reputation, connected to digital services such as web advertising and e-commerce, allow even the smallest companies to be present and compete in a global market without excessive management costs. It increases the company's visibility on search engines, it causes a virtuous cycle to be established which allows, on the one hand, to keep a strong relationship with customers and consumers and, on the other, to create new customers, thus leading to growth results. By using appropriate analysis tools as well as the main social media analytics tools, it is possible to improve the online image of the company, product or service, both in terms of existing customers and in terms of getting new ones. It is also possible to analyze and manage the reputation of the company and its products and services on the web as much as managing the digital identity on social networking platforms, blogs and online opinion portals. At the same time, the notoriety of the corporate brand could be examined through the management of the website contents and through web and social media marketing actions, so evaluating the benefits of the taken actions.
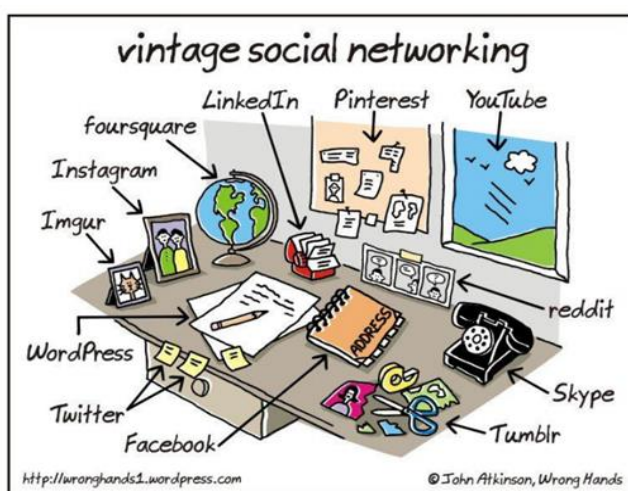
How to communicate on social media

And so, how to act on social networks?

When a company approaches social platforms or wishes to enhance its online identity through these channels, it must have in mind the objectives and, above all the techniques, to communicate efficiently. To do this, it's important to understand what is the target or, in other words, the audience, the recipients of the communication.

This is because, by defining our audience, we can create a communicative style that would be consistent with it, and understand, almost foreseeing it, the need that particular customer may have. In this way, we'll be able to meet their needs. Social networks are an ocean of potential customers and information and the more you have a target audience, the more you will have an idea of how to behave.

Obviously, to do this, the company must have a specific idea of what are the goals. A well defined corporate project is the first step to understand where to go. If the company, or whoever works for it, doesn't have a clear idea of how to make sure that the presence on social media is not just a presence but it is active, it's essential to understand where to go. The organizational agenda of a social management could be insidious if not led with a purpose: certainly being there is important but if, in addition to it, the attention is not kept alive by updating the informations regularly and with an attractive style (in line with the specific social network), being there is like not being there at all. Increase the visibility of the brand and strengthen it more and more: that must be the leitmotiv of a company that wants to see the social media as an important ally to establish itself.

Characteristics of social networks

Let's make an example using **Instagram**, one the most used social networks (there are almost one billion members). This network mainly consists of photos. A social media management operation will have to consider this aspect for acting in line with it.

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What do we need? Certainly we'd need photos taken with the utmost care and edited with photo editing softwares such as Photoshop: since the public's attention is addressed to images, it's clear how a graphically uninteresting profile, with low quality pictures, can give an idea of neglect which doesn't help a brand to emerge. If, on the other hand, the graphic part is great and the updating of the posts is constant, perhaps using *stories*, then the situation is reversed and the company will have a highly positive brand image.

This example shows that a social media management project is made of many individual interconnected parts that, if neglected, don't carry on the activities but end to block them. Taking care of the contents of the publications, making sure that they're frequent and that they reach the right target is the guideline of a profitable social campaign.
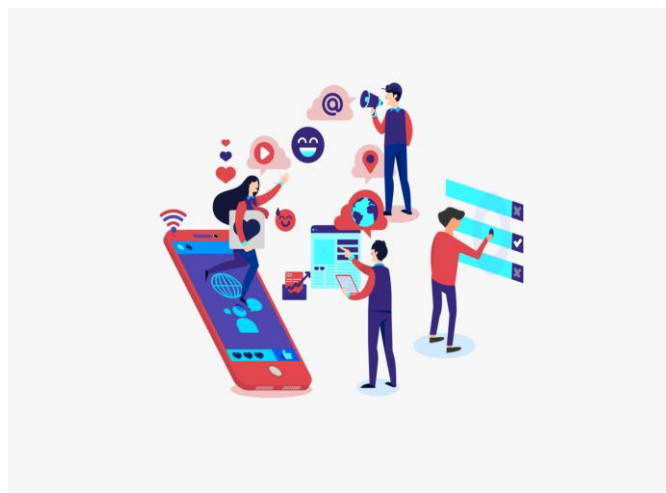
Can we do the same exact operations if the social networks in question were **LinkedIn** or **Youtube**?

The answer is: it depends. The current situation, to 2020, of the social media is enormously vast. There are many networks and each of them is different from the others, in terms of characteristics and communicative properties. Let's just think about the two examples above, LinkedIn and Youtube. LinkedIn is a platform that gathers millions of professionals (about 500 millions in 2020), connected on the basis of

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interests that mostly embrace the professional sector. Youtube, the long-time video sharing platform founded in 2005, shows, on the contrary, multimedia contents.

The character and the purpose of these two social networks are, as we can understand, clearly different. A well targeted social communication must be, therefore, congruent to type of network that we're using. The language has the power to be specific, by its nature, according to the contexts. The purpose, on the part of the company must be to manage the message by giving it the most suited aspect possible for the choosen tool. It's not helpful, continuing with another example, to use the same type of "code" on two platforms such as Facebook or LinkedIn: for a communication that works, we should need to take into consideration two different styles for two different social networks, keeping the focus on the business objects and work, consequently, just on the expressive style.

Sometimes, on the other hand, it also happens that we could find elements in common between two different social networks. We already know that, on Facebook, we have "like" reactions: every action is made up to reach that goal! Then, other reactions came, such as: crying faces, laugh faces, surprised faces and others. The emotional aspect has become more influent, so that the user can feel able to express every emotions within the reading. This thing is so powerful that also LinkedIn has added some reactions too. For example, we can find the "curious" reaction, which means that we would like to know more about what we've read, and the "insight" reaction, which expresses the user's interest in the post. All these things will help to understand better the impact, on the users, of everything we posted so we could have a better view of what is good and what is not about our activities.

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Facebook reactions and LinkedIn reactions in comparison:
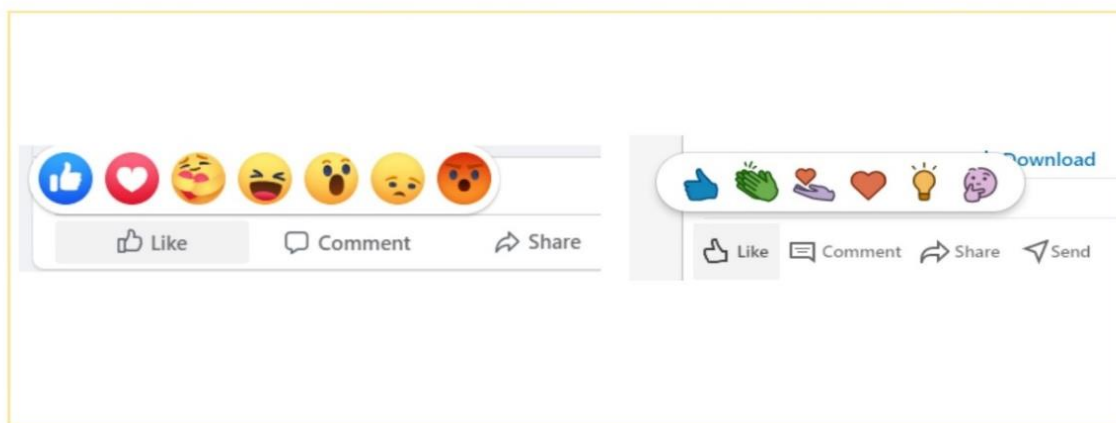
An interesting word, when we talk about social media management, is the so called *call to action.* This term refers to a particular expedient of the web marketing, which leads the user to continue reading a post or an article by clicking on a specific button, like "More".

Even in this case, it's important to point out that for having a positive feedback and, so, get a *call to action*, we need to take care of the details. With **Facebook Business**, for example, the ad that will include the button will have to be taken care of both in the text and in the image to create a captivating effect and the user is encouraged to discover more. As in the example above, about Instagram, even here, if we don't take advantage of an opportunity in the right way, that post or that ad could be just a waste of time.

To monitor the progress on social media management and figure out how it's going, we need to use analytical tools such as Facebook Insights, if we consider Facebook. Thanks to them we'd be able to extract specific data that relate to the degree of interaction with the customers, such as:

. likes (for both organic and paid traffic)

. page views

. people who follow the page

The following is an example of an analysis of datas on Facebook.
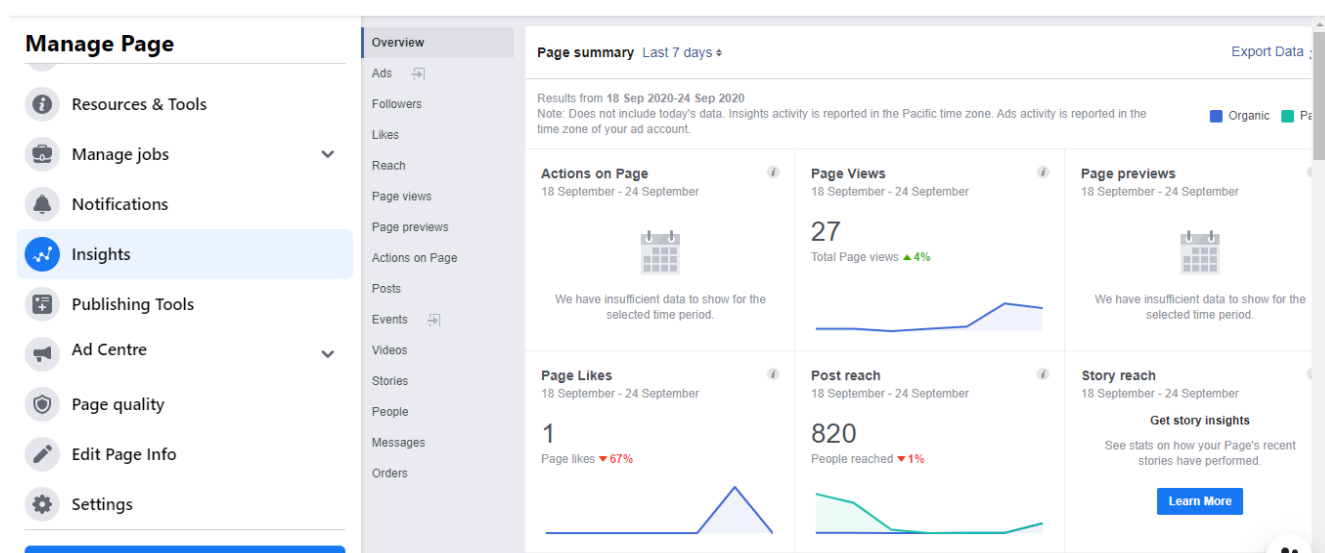
This type of approach, made of analysis and activities monitoring, must be led periodically, to have the time to rethink business strategies whenever it has to be done. The world of social media is a world in costant evolution and, therefore, every single data extracted from the analysis is important to understand what changes are taking place and how to manage them. The audience and its behaviors are the most evident manifestation of what is going and what is not with the management of our activities and knowing how to read and interpret them allows to acquire more informations to refine the approach to digital.

Having digital skills and knowing how to use the right analytical tools to improve an online communication is, obviously, significant but equally significant is the human dimension behind the tools themselves.

As in many situations, in order to have an overall picture it is useful to consider both the technical and the more purely psychological aspects, that are, especially about social networks, the primary aspects. Without them any discussion would be incomplete.

The basic idea is that even a structured body such as the corporate one is made up of individuals with thoughts and arguments that may be different from those of their customers. What does unite them, then? The need. The company offers a service and the audience receives it. No one expects to have, among hundreds of followers, people with the same kind of thinking, perfectly in harmony with that of who writes for them. But this doesn't mean that we can act, while managing social campaigns, almost if we know everyone, including what they need. How can we do it? Let's give an example.

A bookstore wants to sponsor, on its Facebook page, a presentation event for a newly published book. The question is: who would be more interested in going there? We need to define the target audience.

Let's suppose that the book presented is a science fiction novel set in the 1980s, that talks about aliens visiting Earth. Then, when thinking about the appropriate audience, we would consider both a young one (because the literary genre could be of interest to a young public) and a less young one, who lived in the 1980s and may have seen E.T. or, perhaps, is a science fiction fan of that time. Making so, we would have united, in a fairly homogeneous group by interests, people who are maybe totally different from each other in thought and lifestyle.

This example is useful to really understand how a precise choice can make a difference. Editorial design must meet certain requirements for it to be truly functional. But before thinking about how to do it, it is essential to understand what we intend to do and why we want to do it, to know the company and the mission and to set business objectives. Through this type of approach, the next step, i.e. online communication will be managed with greater awareness and with a more targeted focus. Every aspect of social communication and the construction of a business identity requires a communion between one's business skills and the ability to communicate them, creating an indissoluble bond that in the era of social media and the digitization of activities, cannot not be considered of primary importance.

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Useful links

Below some websites selected for you to deepen the topic:

- https://business.facebook.com/
- https://business.linkedin.com/it-it/marketing-solutions/ads
- https://www.marketo.com/software/marketing-automation/

Payment methods

Introduction

Nowadays paying online is getting more and more popular and people are increasingly comfortable with paying online. Websites that don't support online payment yet can be considered as being out of step, that's why you should consider this kind of payment for your product or service.

What are the **advantages** of online payment over a manual one:

- It's faster – so it's improves a cash flow for your organization
- You receive almost immediate confirmation of transactions
- You will know right away if the person making the online payment has sufficient funds to cover the transaction

-
                                                            -

A. Types of payment tools

There are lot of payment methods you can use depend on your billing country. Whenever you client will want to pay for your product or service online he will go to checkout page and chose his preferable paying method. The most common ones are:

1. **Using a credit or debit card -** it is an easy way to pay in any country. You can decide which card types you will support. Usually there can be an option to get an invoice and pay it by the card.
2. **Wire Transfer, Direct Bank Deposit (ACH) or Local Bank Transfer** – this way your client is usually paying by invoice, and confirming his billing details.

3. **PayPal and other online payment tools** – it is one of the most popular online payment tool. To choose that payment method, your client will have to select **PayPal** on the checkout page and fill in his billing info. He'll be redirected to PayPal to complete payment.

If you want, you can register your current account or cards, so that they are kept in memory: so you can make all the online transactions you want thanks to a special widget, avoiding the insertion of forms created ad hoc.

For those who do not want to pay online with a credit card, Paypal is an excellent solution, also because it offers a truly valid protection program for buyers. In the event that, for example, items are bought that do not reach their destination, the refund of the money paid is guaranteed; and the same happens if the goods arrive damaged.

In order to take advantage of the convenience of Paypal it is necessary to create an account and register for the service with an e-mail address and a password. It must be said that some retailers do not allow customers to pay with Paypal due to the rather high fees that are applied. So e-commerce managers must think carefully to understand whether or not it is worthwhile to include Paypal in the list of allowed payment methods.

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While PayPal is most popular online payment tool in Europe, there are also other useful tools you might be interested in. For example:

1. **Due** -an useful payment tool for freelancers and small business owners. Due accepts global payments, has digital wallet to send or receive money to any place in the world instantly. Due also quickly generates professional invoices.
2. **E-bank** where you can store your cash online.
3. **Dwolla**, which has similar features to PayPal when it comes to transferring funds, but thanks to its API, it focuses more on bank transfers.
4.

There are lot more tools you can find on the Internet- each one has a unique features, and you can choose the best one for you to use.

Nowadays you don't have to use a „Real Money" to pay, you can also pay using virtual currency lit Bitcoin. If you have a **Bitcoin** and want to pay by it you will have to refer the purchaser to your signature, which is a long line of security code encrypted with 16 distinct symbols. He will decodes the code with his smartphone to get your **cryptocurrency.**

In other words in this particular case you are paying by exchange of digital information. This method was invited in 2008 and gained its popularity in 2017 when the exchange course of a Bitcoin went extremely high. In that moment people started to buy some Bitcoins, while years ago they could gain them online – it was called "digging the Bitcoin", not being sure if they will ever have any real value.

When it comes to online invoicing – you can create your invoice online using a web-page like:

- **Invoicely.com**
- **Onlineinvoices.com**

Using that tool we can create an professional estimates and invoices in any language or currency and easily deliver them to your clients and to customize them. It is free to use, and helps you to take control of your invoicing and accounting needs with ease. It also allows you to recurring invoice profiles, and send automatic payment reminders to secure a steady cashflow for your business.

Another method of paying is paying by your phone by using **mobile wallet** or **E-commerce apps.**

Here are 2 most popular ones in Europe:

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1. **Square Cash** – it's "Auto Cash Out" option ensures your money will go straight to your account instead of just sitting in the app.
2. **Google Wallet** - works the same as Square Cash, but you send people money to their emails or phone numbers.

There are several popular online invoicing tools – like Sighted, FreshBooks, Zoho, Invoicera etc., which allows you to create an automated payment reminders, offer free invoicing templates, view which payments are overdue, see your invoicing history and have a lots other useful functions.

Another way to make that allows you to make your site accept payments, and make invoicing less time-consuming is to use an invoice plug in – like for example a WooCommerce plugin which generates PDF invoices and PDF packing slips, attaches it to WooCommerce email types of your choice and sends invoices to your customers' Dropbox, Google Drive, OneDrive or Egnyte, or the most popular and flexible plugin for WordPress - WP-Invoice 4.0.

C. Tips for managing your online store and payment process:

For managing sales online, you have to follow some rules.

You can use the check list below:

1. Apply the first-in, first-out - Always take care of customers who were first to order to make sure they get their goods in a timely manner. It's easy to skip over your oldest orders and focus on the lasts' ones. Before you know it, an order can get forgotten and lost, which in order will bring you a bad reputation.

2. Filter your orders -You May want to check Online Store filter options, which were created to help you organize and manage the orders for shipping and processing. They are incredibly useful, especially if you have a large number of orders. Instead of analyzing each order separately, you can use filters like payment status or order date (which will help you with previous rule).

3. Keep an eye on inventory - Avoid losing your track on your inventory while putting all your attention on customer and marketing. Make sure that you always have in stack product you are selling.

4. Ship efficiently -Everyone wants their order delivered in a reliable, affordable and timely manner.

5. Attach a tracking number - A shipping/tracking number is a reliable way for customers to follow up on the status of their order without having to contact you directly.

Suggestions to improve your processes of selling and payment:

1. Bear in mind that our eCommerce store can be connected to your inventory. This way, if something is out of stock, it can be reflected on your site so customers aren't misled about the availability of your product.

2. Payment authorizations can be automated and integrated with your shipping services.

3. Provide reports to your customers about their order's shipping status.

4. Products and materials can be automatically restocked once they dip below a certain threshold.

5. Refund and returns can be automatically processed by your OMS.

6. Try a cloud-based OMS, which you will be able to use from any place and at any time

7. Treat your inventory as cash you can't spend - Inventory is often the largest current asset of businesses. To keep the money moving, be sure that you are checking the stock on your shelves. You need to focus on smart buying decisions and how you can best forecast what will sell. There are several cloud software tools that can help you make smarter decisions when it comes to purchasing, so that you're not left with large stock quantities.

8. Remember that you have a limited quantity of inventory

9. Analyze your order history - With software tools, you can easily view what products are selling best through your multiple channels. This data will help you keep an eye on seasonal shifts in various purchasing trends.

Security

After the advantages already mentioned it is very important don't forget at least one of the risks of online payment methods: the issues related to guarantee the best security standards.

The credit card and the debit card are the best known and consequently most popular payment methods among those who shop on the Internet. It is important, however, to

enable users to take advantage of these methods with the most modern security standards, such as Norton Secured or Mastercard, but also Verified by Visa and SecureCode.

In these cases, to pay online with your credit card it is necessary to use temporary passwords that are linked with e-mail or with the telephone number, so that an effective control is guaranteed that the payment is being carried out.

Among the most used online payment methods there are, then, the prepaid cards, which guarantee very high levels of security and which make versatility their strong point. In fact, they can also be used by those who do not have a current account in the post office or in the bank and consequently do not have the possibility of using a credit card.

A valid alternative can be found in Paypal, which is one of the fastest and most comfortable online payment methods among all those available.

In the meantime, however, it is better not to underestimate the more traditional alternatives, which must be identified in cash on delivery and bank transfer: the first provides that the money is delivered in cash when the goods that have been bought are received, while the second cannot ignore the possession of a current account, which can possibly be managed with home banking.

Conclusion

Online shopping has now become part of the habits of millions of people all over the word.

The mobile payment system is becoming increasingly popular, by means of which transactions can be carried out from the phone: in practice, the smartphone, connected to the current account, is used as a credit card.

Sometimes the shopkeepers do not have the right platforms: therefore to obtain a competitive advantage of no small importance it is advisable to put your customers in the conditions to take advantage of this payment system, which makes speed and simplicity its peculiar characteristics at the base of each mobile friendly site.

Useful links

Below some websites selected for you to deepen the topic:

https://www.paypal.com/

https://due.com/ebank/

https://www.dwolla.com/

https://blockgeeks.com/guides/what-is-cryptocurrency/

https://invoicely.com/

https://www.onlineinvoices.com/