



Digital marketing through disruption

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Bespoke Making sense of digital.



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Digital marketing through disruption

Whilst the experience is different for every company 2020 has given all of us an unprecedented mix of challenge and opportunity.

Many had to adapt with great speed and agility to running our businesses remotely.

Some saw demand for products and services grow whilst others were unable to deliver without premises or face-to-face contact.

I felt grateful that Bespoke is a digital business whose team can run web projects and marketing retainers from any location.

Our Digital Accelerator programme however, which brings marketing managers and executives together to build their digital strategy, obviously had to be postponed.

As we adapted our team went into "listening mode", speaking to over 100 clients and contacts during the first 14-days of remote-working.

This white paper brings together best-practice identified across those conversations. We hope it helps you further grow your focus around managing disruption successfully, to thrive in the long-term.

Steve Brennan

Founder & author



Making sense of digital

About Bespoke

Bespoke is a digital partner to businesses focused on generating leads and visibility online.

We are typically hired by companies with 10-100 staff that have somebody responsible for marketing.

Our key expertise is working closely with you to build websites and run marketing retainers that deliver on pre-agreed goals.

Bespoke has 20-years experience as a digital agency and has offices in the north-west and in London.

Free tools & resources:

www.bespokedigital.agency/test

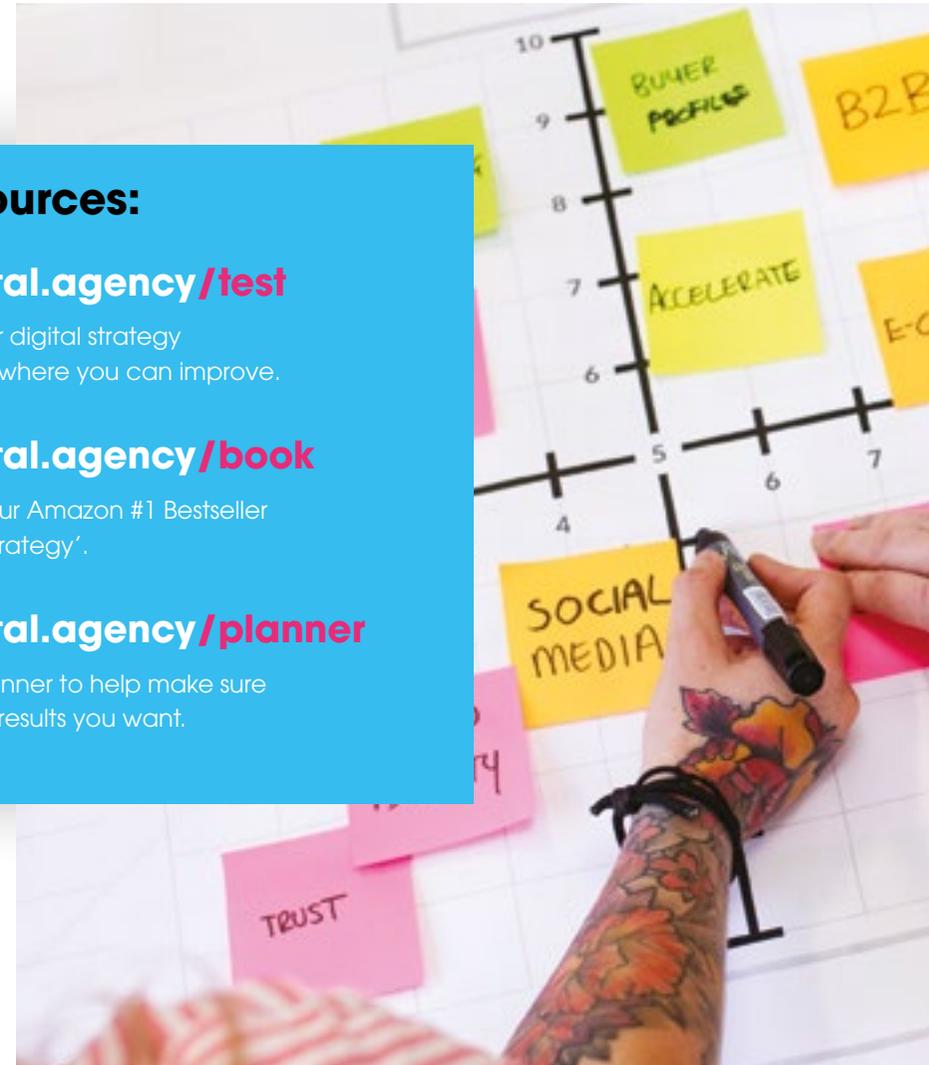
The 5-Minute Test assesses your digital strategy and provides a free report on where you can improve.

www.bespokedigital.agency/book

Download a free chapter of our Amazon #1 Bestseller 'Build Your Digital Marketing Strategy'.

www.bespokedigital.agency/planner

Download our free project planner to help make sure your new website delivers the results you want.

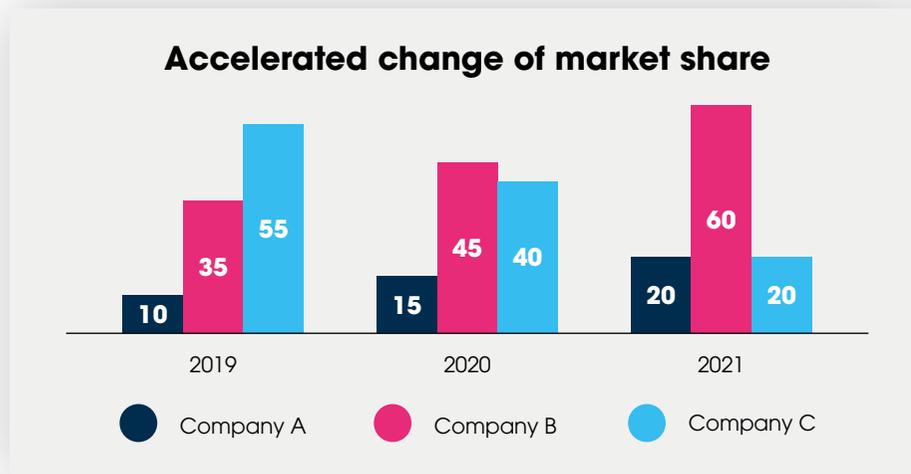


Managing market share

During disrupted times market share shifts more rapidly.

It changes more quickly because companies that have historically adopted similar strategies suddenly begin behaving differently.

For example, some take a short-term crisis management based approach, others take more of an opportunity based approach.



Marketing delivers results in the long-term and businesses are normally marketing today to build brand equity that will pay off in the future.

So brands that run strategies focused on the long-term during times of disruption grow market share over time.

When disruption ends they have bigger pipelines and an audience already loyal to them, and ready to buy from them.

In times of uncertainty, focus on what is certain

In times of uncertainty it's useful to focus on what is certain.

Being at the centre of a financial crisis, recession, or any sudden change of circumstances can feel overwhelming.

But in fact more things are always certain than uncertain.

There will always be a marketplace

For example, there is and always will be a marketplace in which businesses compete against one another for market share.

The size of the market changes over time, and conditions of the market change too, but the market always exists.

Even where a market appears to have slowed audiences are still building intent to buy with particular companies in the future.

Market share will always change over time

It's also certain that market share will always change over time.

It changes because in any given sector, some businesses are always getting smarter and stronger than others.



The 5 principles

- #1 - Block out noise**
- #2 - Address existing issues**
- #3 - Remember your value**
- #4 - Market for signals**
- #5 - Trade time wisely**

#1 - Block out noise

Competition for our attention becomes higher than ever during disruption.

There are four reasons why:

- We spend more time online which, as we know, is a distracting place to be
- Content providers have more time so are competing for our attention
- News & media are competing against one another for our attention too
- Whilst all this is occurring our “inner chimps” are looking for quick fixes or short-term options to deal with the disruption.

Whilst we might normally be fully focused on our long-term strategy, suddenly that becomes a whole lot more difficult.

Businesses arrive at sound strategies for dealing with disruption at different speeds and with differing levels of long-term focus.

And those that are able to adapt in line with their values and long-term goals are naturally the most successful over time.



#2 - Address existing issues

Strengths and weaknesses show during disruption

One of the effects of financial crisis, recession or other disruption is to show up strengths and weaknesses of already existing marketing strategies.

Disruption can feel like a leveller, as though everybody within a particular market suffers exactly the same from it and sees exactly the same opportunities as each other.

But of course no two companies arrive at disruption with the same mindset. A stable cash rich business for example will normally make different decisions during disruption than a counterpart that is suddenly concerned for its very survival.

Marketing influences decision making in just the same way.

A business that had a best-practice marketing strategy and only needed its foot 30% on the gas to achieve the leads it needed reacts differently to the business with a weaker strategy and marketing assets that was already operating at 110% just to keep its head above water.

In simple terms:

- A weak brand with weak messaging is the first to suffer in tough times
- An under-performing website becomes a liability rather than an annoyance
- Poorly optimised search campaigns enable competitors to outperform you

The disruption in 2020 is different to a financial crisis in that many people suddenly have lots of extra time, with lots less travel and appointments.

Some businesses immediately began using this time to begin renewing brand and website assets, and will expect to see busier pipelines later in the year as a result.



“Many people blame circumstances for their issues, when in fact circumstances normally only bring existing issues to the surface.”



#3 - Remember your value

Focus on what you do best

Reactive (Short-term thinking)

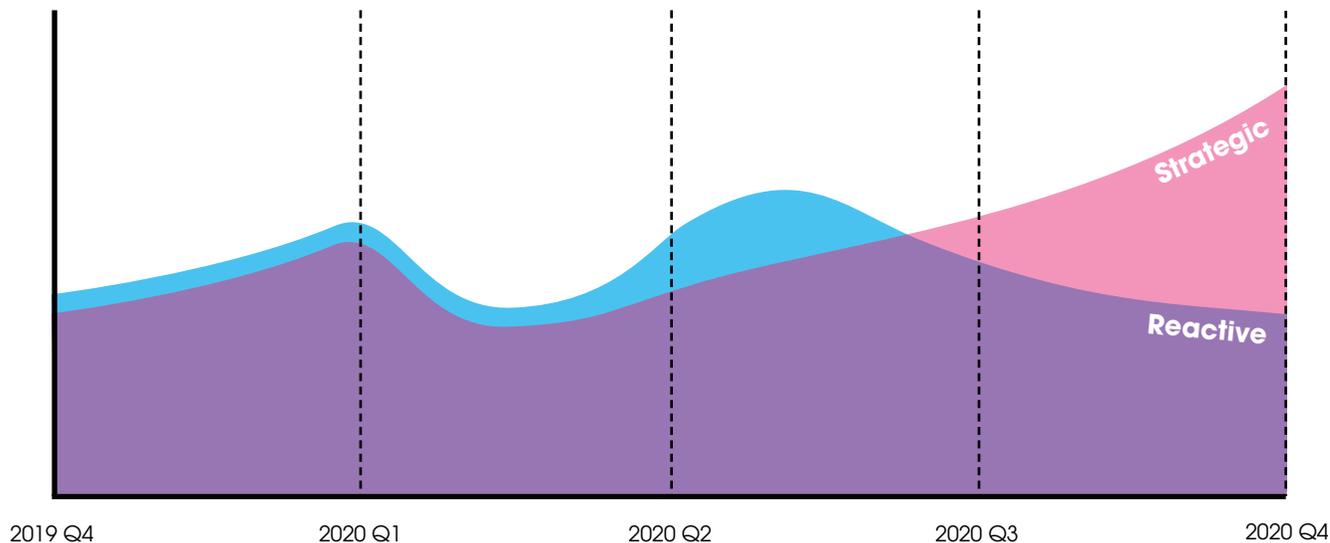
When disruption hits it can feel comforting to begin implementing a significant pivot in your business or marketing strategy to combat it.

But disruption is temporary and investing energy in potential short-term wins is often at the expense of long-term success.

Strategic (Long-term thinking)

More strategic businesses maintain focus on their vision for the long-term and what they are best at.

Even during disruption they continue to take decisions for the future, and they are the first to capitalise when the upturn comes.



Strategy traps

Online delivery

A business whose main strengths are offline rarely succeeds suddenly taking delivery online. Others already own the space, and the pivot distracts from the business building long-term demand for what it does best.

The pivot

A successful business that pivots suddenly during disruption rarely succeeds. Disruption passes and the business is neither the master of its old model nor its new one.

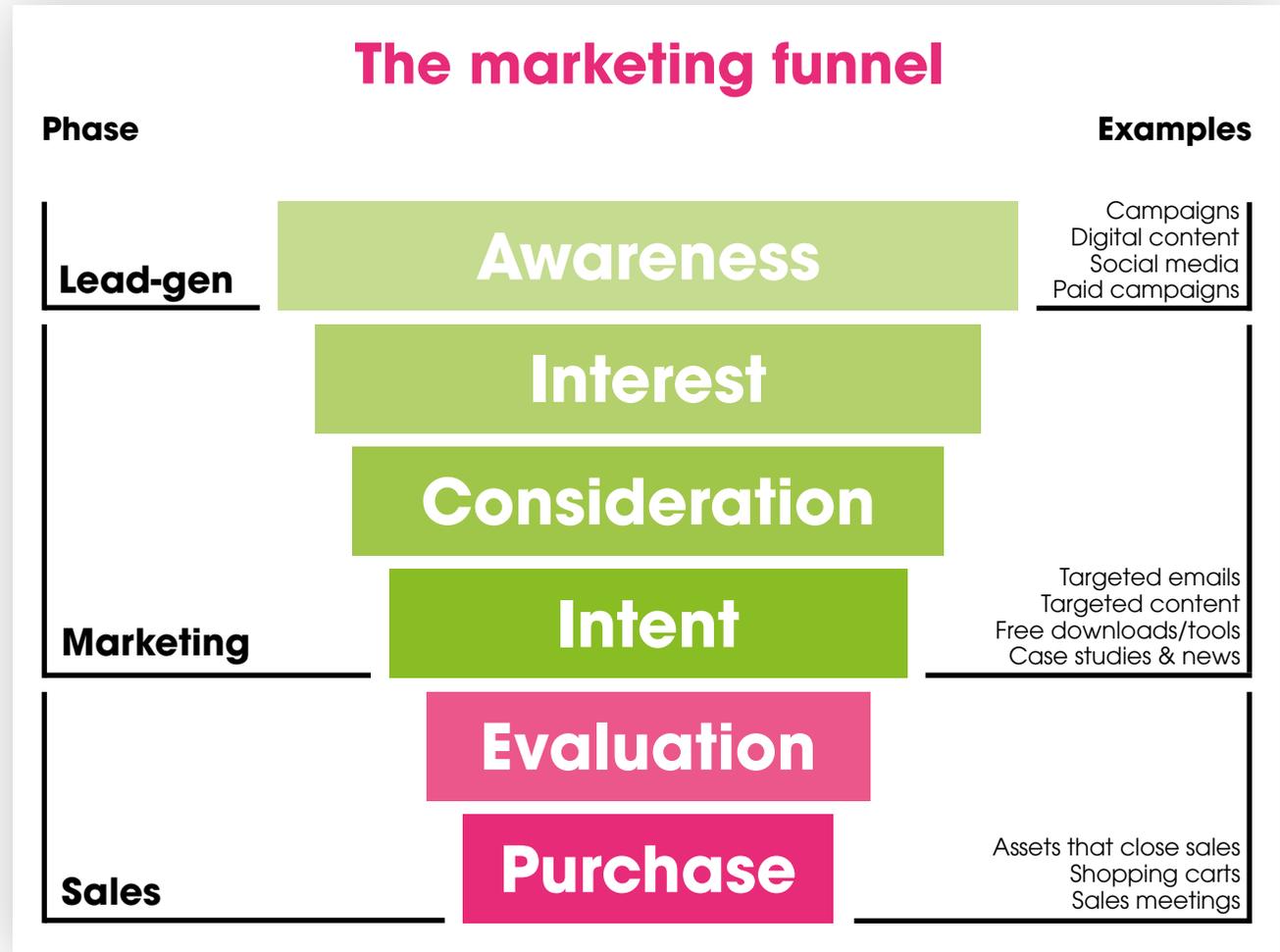
Mothballing

A business that reduces its profile during disruption is less likely to succeed long-term. Intent to buy still builds but when the upturn comes prospects are warned to buy with somebody else.

#4 - Market for signals

Build intent for future sales

- Prospects move slowly through the phases, for example in most sectors, awareness and interest today means purchases in 3-12 months
- Digital marketing directly supports lead-gen and marketing.
- In some cases it's the dominant or sole way in which buyer intent builds
- The aim of marketing is to build buyer intent in as many people as possible.
- Digital marketing achieves this by marketing for signals, giving people an opportunity to show interest.
- This may also be referred to as a "full pipeline" or a "busy pipeline"
- Later in the process it is the job of sales, or shopping baskets to close purchases.
- Building good marketing assets now supports the sales process later.



#5 - Trade time wisely

- The most common issue business owners and marketers share with us is lack of time.
- They often have projects they want to do but can't organise schedules to get them moving.
- When working remotely that turns upside down. Suddenly there is lots of time and it is easier to liase with colleagues.
- Some businesses will capitalise on extra time available by completing projects that are hard to do when everybody is travelling and busy.
- The businesses that do well in 2020 and 2021 will be the ones that used home-working time effectively.



“For many, the disruption in 2020 is the only time there will ever be several weeks to work exclusively on the business rather than in it.”

Faster / easier

- ✓ Rebrand project
- ✓ Website project
- ✓ Campaign optimisation
- ✓ Building lead magnets
- ✓ Content production

Harder / not possible

- ✗ Exhibitions
- ✗ Conferences
- ✗ Events
- ✗ Postal campaigns
- ✗ Networking

Time traps

There are countless webinars and online events ready to eat up time that is available for executing tasks and projects that will benefit you for months or years.

Take the 5-Minute Test

Where are the gaps in your digital marketing strategy?



5-Minute Test:

bespokedigital.agency/test

Project planner

Start your journey towards a successful website project.

bespokedigital.agency/planner

Bestselling book

Have you read the Amazon #1 Bestseller on digital strategy yet?

bespokedigital.agency/book

Strategy call

Would you like a free call to review your current website & campaigns?

bespokedigital.agency/call

Let's talk

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