

Digital Marketing for Home Services Providers

HVAC, Security, Plumbing, Renovations etc.

By Preston Kendig, Impression Marketing

When it comes to marketing any home services business, it's important to keep the end goal in mind. Whether you're talking about a plumbing, HVAC, security company or any other home services business, recurring revenue from annual inspections, regular service and upgrades allow steady growth over time— but almost all live or die by the flow of new customers.

Consistently staying on the consumer radar with a digital marketing strategy is a great way to keep that flow steady and predictable. Online marketing efforts are a slower burn, but they also tend to be **less expensive** and easier to track than TV, radio, billboard or print campaigns. We've worked with independent security alarm companies across Virginia and the Midwest, as well as HVAC, plumbing and other home service providers in the area, and are happy to share a few strategies we've found successful.

Set Your Sites on Generating New Business

You owe it to your clients to operate successfully so you can continue providing the great service they deserve. Don't feel uncomfortable or awkward about asking for referrals. "We'd love your feedback. And if you had a positive experience, please share it online on our Facebook page."

It's important to have a vision and mission that includes objectives like keeping people safe, educating the public and giving back to the community, but don't feel guilty if these objectives also further the goal of bringing in new business. It is possible for a company to do good in the world while bringing home a profit. This is called cause marketing and it benefits both the company and the community in which they live and work.

Build a Marketing Strategy That Pushes Everything Forward

Companies with a written marketing and content plan are two times more likely to succeed than those that jump in feet first with no clearly defined plan and objectives.

The first thing we recommend is to identify your target market or markets. Whether it's marketing to high-end homeowners, farmers, the government, manufacturers or small businesses, identify a clear and profitable market that you want to serve and focus all your energy marketing to those customers.

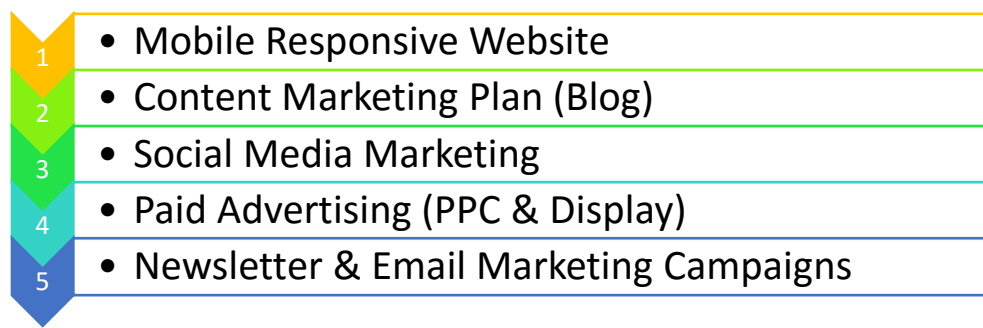
Building a marketing strategy may include many of the traditional marketing methods, but your competition will win out if your company doesn't have a strong online presence. Even

if a prospect sees a great TV ad or remembers a great billboard from earlier in the day, the first thing they'll do is go to their computer, smartphone, or tablet and check you out online.

Create a Digital Marketing Strategy That Appeals to Your Target

We've had success with content/inbound marketing, social media marketing, e-newsletters, Google ads (also known as pay-per-click or PPC & display ads) and email marketing campaigns, but there is no one formula that works for all security and home services clients.

It's important to try different things, track the results and adjust accordingly. To be successful, focus your energy on getting just one of these digital strategies right at a time. Many clients follow the natural progression we've listed below for best results.



Getting your Company's Digital Marketing Strategy Started

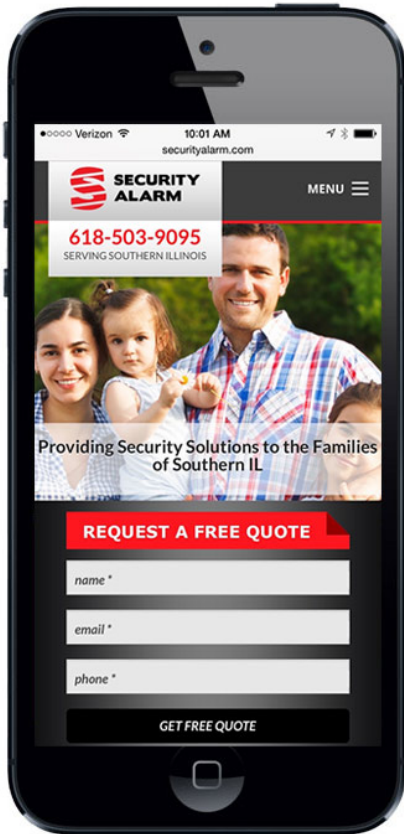
Right out of the gate, start collecting emails from all prospects and customers. Make gathering email addresses a companywide priority and an imperative element of your culture, even if you aren't ready to do email marketing just yet.

Ideally you're starting with a good digital foundation, so be sure to have an easily navigable website with mobile responsive and blogging capabilities. When we say mobile responsive, we are referring to a site that "stacks up" and automatically resizes to fit phone screens so the consumer doesn't have to "pinch around" to see your website. Although we recommend picking an attractive and custom design that puts what customers are looking for front and center, there's no need to spend \$30,000 or more. Figure \$10,000-20,000 for average sized websites (20-30 pages).

Next, we recommend developing an effective strategy for producing content, landing pages and simple call-to-action buttons. Providing potential clients with a continual supply of educational, relevant and interesting content is the first step to creating an impactful online presence. Content can include helpful and educational articles on your site (blog posts) to videos explaining how something works. Coming up with content can be a challenge, so create a content marketing plan that involves regular and relevant content creation based on **actual questions and issues you and your sales team have encountered** in the past. If

they are asking you, they are typing that same phrase into the Google search bar. Having these answers available on your website helps you build trust and educate your target market. Publish consistently and Google will reward you with higher search rankings.

Driving More Traffic to Your Company Website



You've got this beautiful website and all this great content, but not enough people are finding you.

Now it's time to find readers for your content by promoting it. Social Media is an easy and very cost effective way to get your content in front of your target market. Identify the social media platforms your target markets use and give them what they want, but do so with consistency that they can come to expect. For B2C home services, Facebook is a great platform. Why? Because when someone is looking for a new air conditioner or security system, they ask their friends on Facebook.

Paid Facebook advertising and "boosting" posts are a great way to reach homeowners, but LinkedIn and Twitter are sometimes better paths for reaching businesses and decision makers. This isn't Field of Dreams, so don't just sit back and wait for people to find you.

Be proactive, interact with people, other companies and organizations and be sure to comment, like, share, to truly become part of this online community. Don't be

afraid to upset a few people along the way, because you aren't going to make an impact without ruffling a few feathers.

In short, start with one social platform and stick to it. Consistency is the key.

Using Paid Digital Advertising to Drive Traffic

We recommend testing, experimenting, tracking results and adjusting any paid campaigns (Google PPC, Display ads, Facebook, etc.) at least monthly. Although paid advertising is a great way to drive traffic interested in a specific topic, this arena can be a bit more challenging.

Paid digital campaigns that work for one home services company may not work for another due to differences in location, target markets and services offered. With the right combination of trial and error, it's possible to narrow down a campaign and budget that reaches the customers you want within a desirable range, so don't give up! We see the most

success with campaigns about specials, discounts and home ownership, as well as those that have video.

Despite the frequent adjustments needed, don't forget to stay in touch with platform changes that may impact a campaign. Google is famous for making huge backend changes that alter how PPC ads are distributed without providing much guidance or warning to advertisers.

Email Marketing Strategies for Home Services Companies

The last piece of the digital puzzle is being able to reach clients by email seamlessly, while bridging the gap between sales and marketing.

Our clients have used email marketing strategies to unveil new offerings, update customers about breaking news, alarm product or manufacturing changes and to keep them abreast of unique situations like the removal of the 2G cellular towers and how this could impact their monitoring service.

While email marketing can help a company stay in touch with customers, build trust and create raving fans, email can also be used to stay in front of new potential customers when they are ready to make a purchase. Arming your sales team with automatically generated emails saves time, helps close leads and educates potential customers, helping to generate more business and shorten the sales cycle.

Not new or sexy, email still has the highest open and click through rates. So not having email addresses is hurting your bottom line. Email allows you to keep a steady flow of customers in the pipeline. Remember to keep it short and focused on one topic. Those questions you are answering on your blog are perfect email topics and you can add a read more button that links to your website if they want more information.

Have the Answers Your Customers Seek

When a potential customer looks up your business, you have to be there to catch them at this critical moment. Something has driven them to this action. It may be a pain point, like a recent break-in in the neighborhood, or it may just be a question about how to operate a particular alarm keypad. If you provide the answer, clients will see you as the authority in your field and may elect to do business with your security company over a competitor. Seventy percent of the decision making process has already been made when a potential customer contacts you, so help them get to this point with content and be ready to close the deal.

Disqualifying Customers with Website Content

Don't be afraid to educate people with content that could drive away those that don't fall in your target market. That helps you qualify leads and get more of the customers you want. If you only want high-end homes that are 3,500+ square feet, don't be afraid to tell first-time

home buyers to consider getting quotes from a trusted competitor or trying a specific DIY system in your content.

That customer might remember you as an expert someday if they find themselves in your target market or come across someone that falls in your target market. Dissuading undesirable clients from contacting you can save everyone's time, increase close rates and improve profit margins.

Remind Me Again – Where Do I Get Started with Marketing my Home Services Business?

The first two things to consider in your digital strategy are:

- Is my business easy to find and my website simple to navigate?
- Do I have the information people are seeking and am I capturing this person for future follow up communication (newsletter)?

Like any marketing or business plan, a digital strategy needs to be reviewed and updated regularly.

Digital Marketing Strategies Are Evolving

Be wary of marketing companies offering promises to push your business up in the Google rankings with SEO and keywords, because, according to Google, their programmers are working around the clock to perfect algorithms that will see past these artificial inflation tactics.

Instead, focus on a slow and steady approach of answering your customer's questions. Be wary about how much money you sink into PPC campaigns, because much of the search traffic is never going to click on paid advertising. Don't be afraid to experiment with different approaches to find out what drives the largest number of desirable clients to your sales funnel.

Encourage Customers to Invite You into Their Home and Circle of Friends

It takes an incredible amount of trust to invite a company into your home and allow them to help watch over the safety of your family. When a loved one recommends your alarm company, you've just bridged this enormous gap in mere seconds.

We've found that a thoughtful content plan is a great way to stay in



A screenshot of a Facebook post from Richmond Alarm Company. The post is dated July 19 at 8:38am. The text of the post reads: "I have to share this - How many of you announce I am going on vacation or away for the weekend? Remember, friends of friends could be the next person who breaks into your home while you are away. Richmond Alarm has been in business for many years. Call them & insure you're home or business is safe, while you are away. Great Company!!". Below the text is a yellow-bordered card with the text: "THANK YOU For announcing your vacation on Facebook! Sincerely, Bob A Breaking-and-Entering Professional". At the bottom of the post, there is a caption: "Thank You Cards from Your Friendly Neighborhood Burglar What if an affable neighborhood burglar sent you a 'Thank You Card' after breaking into your home? We have come up with a few... RICHMONDALARM.COM".

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touch with those customers and continue building their trust. Interacting with a customer that trusts you and your company breaks down barriers and makes your sales team's job that much easier.

Face It - Your Customers Are Online

Like it or not, the majority of people are online in some capacity. In the security industry, Boomers, Generation X and now millennials are pretty much the market for security systems. We see a bit of an older crowd in the B2B market, but believe it or not, many are tech savvy. When a 70-year-old business owner Googles about security cameras streaming to his mobile phone, you know it's time to build a smart online presence for your security company. For steady growth and year-after-year results, maintain an active digital presence, make an impact on your community and serve your target market the content *they want*.

Out of all the venues for advertising, digital is one of the most cost effective, highest return on investment, easiest to track, monitor and maintain and is gaining momentum and influence every day. Better than that, it gives you consistency and keeps you top of mind.

Being there for your customers in the digital space with answers to their questions is the best way to generate more business, leads and trust and stay in contact with potential customers throughout the entire buying process.

[Contact us](#) today if you'd like help developing an effective digital marketing strategy for your home services company.

About the author:



Preston Kendig is a client account coordinator with Impression Marketing, a full-service, results-oriented marketing agency. With nearly a decade of marketing and client management experience, Preston brings a passion for helping B2B clients create content that drives leads, improves SEO and helps convert leads into sales.

As an active member of the [Chesterfield Chamber of Commerce](#) and the [American Marketing Association](#), Preston is passionate about sharing with prospective clients the positive impact that digital marketing can have on their business and helps find those that would benefit most from Impression Marketing's services. Find Preston on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), or Instagram @impression_marketing, or call Preston at 804.349.8523.