

Candice Nigro's Digital Growth Story

FIRST ATLANTIC FCU HAD 'GOOD DIGITAL BONES' BUT DISCOVERED THEY COULD DO DIGITAL MARKETING BETTER TO GENERATE MORE LEADS

First Atlantic Federal Credit Union didn't have any significant "issues" when it came to its current marketing efforts. But its digital practices needed a definite boost to maintain and even enhance its relevancy in the marketplace, where many of its competitors were already headed. To compete effectively in today's highly disruptive arena, First Atlantic would need to call on outside digital marketing experts.

First Atlantic's marketing team, subsequently, enrolled in the Digital Growth Jumpstart Training Program. According to First Atlantic Senior Vice President of Marketing & eDelivery Candice Nigro, she felt that Digital Growth Institute was a great place to start learning how to enhance their digital marketing efforts.

When they started the training program and commenced with their digital audit, Nigro admitted, as a result, she had a much deeper understanding of areas that she and her team hadn't even considered problems before.

"When you stare at something or work so closely on something for so long, you sometimes forget to look at it from a different perspective," she says. "You forget what it looks like to someone who hasn't spent any real time with it."

The audit and conversations they had were truly eye opening and highly enlightening for the team. It made Nigro take a step back and look at the credit union's website, emails, and its entire digital presence. "It was then that I realized that we had some evolving to do," she says. "We have good bones, but we can do better."

Because digital has been so top of mind at First Atlantic, everyone involved in DGI's training program was excited to participate. Nigro, however, didn't realize how encompassing the program was or how much closer her team would grow through each session both inside and outside of the classroom.

"The program's structure makes it for me," Nigro says. "I have participated in and hosted a lot of different training sessions and this by far has been one of the best."

DGI's training program takes one hour each week and team members could take the classes from the comfort of their own offices. No one had to travel and no one had to make more of a commitment than a few hours a month.

Nigro adds that her team was able to manage their time well and get a ton of takeaways they could use practically the same day if they learned them – which is very different than attending a conference, taking a few notes, getting back to the office, and not making any real change.

Nigro also found that it was easier to pull her team together and recap the session or complete "homework" or execute on ways they could use the information learned to get something done. She wanted to provide her team with a learning experience that would impact them professionally but also bring real value to the organization.

"I truly feel that this program did that," she states. "As a leader, it was wonderful to see our team members' faces light up when things clicked."

Nigro and her team have made many changes since starting DGI's digital training program and she knows there are more on the horizon. "I cannot stress enough the amount of practical knowledge we have gained from participating in the program," she explains. "Sometimes the simplest things can make the biggest differences. And the added perspective of looking at our digital presence from a different angle or viewpoint, any of our marketing really, can take it to the next level."

One of the most amazing things Nigro has seen was how the program truly changed the way her team thought about digital, as well as so many other aspects of their jobs. For example, she says putting together personas was incredible because team members were saying, "You are describing me."

This exercise made it possible for her to ask such member-focused questions as:

- “How should we talk to you then?”
- “How should we be communicating solutions to you?”

She admits they definitely have a ways to go in how they present themselves both digitally and through traditional marketing efforts. But DGI’s program has been successful in showing them where they can go and how they can get there.

“It’s been a great way to change thinking,” Nigro says. “The program is designed to build on itself and I really think it has impacted my team and myself in a way that it stays top of mind as we make decisions and move forward with all aspects of our jobs.”

Overall, she recommends DGI’s digital training program to anyone. But she also believes it is important to build in time for weekly meetings with those involved to continue the discussion and reinforce the classroom sessions.

“It really needs to be an all-in team effort and brainstorming together is a big part of what makes the program work so well for so many different types of organizations,” she adds. “I also think that there is a lot of information built into the program for even the most digitally ‘unsavvy’ individuals. The program really changed how I look at a variety of marketing avenues – not just digital.”