

Monthly Newswire

Welcome to our monthly newswire. We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and find it useful.

May 2017

NEW TRENDS IN ONLINE SEARCH

The online world is constantly evolving. As such, the way that people use online search engines such as Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc. is changing all the time. Businesses need to keep up to date with these changes so that customers and potential customers can continue to find them online. Here are some of the big new trends that businesses need to be aware of.

Voice

People are now accessing their devices with their voice. People are using "digital assistants" such as Siri or Cortana to search for things online. This is becoming more common as voice recognition technology continues to improve.

Messaging apps

People are now spending more time using messaging apps than on social media. This includes apps such as WhatsApp, Snapchat, WeChat, etc. Usage levels of messaging services overtook social media in 2015. Since then, usage has continued to grow.

Mobile

Look around the next time you are on a train or standing in a queue. You will notice that most people are staring at their smartphone screen, surfing the web and searching for information online. Since the arrival of the smartphone a few years back, mobile has become the primary channel through which people access the internet. One of the most significant consequences of this shift has been that we access the web much more often but for shorter periods of time.

Connected devices

According to a recent survey, people now own an average of 3.64 connected devices. This is going to keep on growing, particularly with the rise of the "Internet of Things" (IOT) and online digital assistants such as the Amazon Echo, Siri, etc.

What should you do next?

How you choose to take advantage of these trends depends on the type of business that you have and the customers that you are targeting.

Perhaps you should consider setting up a Snapchat or WhatsApp account for your business so that you can tap into these marketing channels. If you haven't already done so, perhaps it is time for your company website to be redesigned with "responsive" technology so that it resizes appropriately for smartphone screens, tablets, etc. Maybe there are new ways for Siri or Cortana to access your firm's services? Now is the time to consider these trends and how leveraging them could be advantageous to your business.



OVERSEAS BUSINESS

In today's increasingly globalised world, more and more firms are doing business overseas. Where you do business dictates how you should manage your business etiquette and personal style.

Preparation time

It is good practice to spend some time preparing for your business trips and learning about a region's history, customs and culture. This will allow you to prepare appropriately and assemble a number of talking points, which could be useful when you meet with potential (and existing) clients.

Punctuality

Arriving late isn't a risk worth taking. Aim to be on time or slightly early. You cannot offend your host by being early to a meeting. In many countries it is considered rude to leave a meeting before it has fully concluded. Bear this in mind and build appropriate time between meetings into your schedule.

Communication

When conducting business in other countries, what you consider to be "normal" communication protocols may not be considered conventional in the region that you are visiting. It is best to read up on this before your trip. For example – in some countries, shaking hands at the start of a meeting is considered polite. However, in other countries the handshake may be replaced by a bow. It can be helpful to observe native business people first, and adapt your style accordingly so as not to offend your overseas business contacts during meetings.

Get some sleep

If you travel long distances on business, jet lag can be a real challenge. You don't want to be fighting to stay awake in your business meetings. Therefore, build in time for power naps, appropriate levels of sleep and ensure you drink plenty of water. If you find coffee helps, then pack some in your travel bag so that you have it to hand. Try to plan your trip so that you have time to adapt to the new time zone. This may mean arriving early and getting some sleep, or staying up all day in order to get an early night and allow your body to adapt to local time.

VENTING YOUR FRUSTRATIONS IN THE OFFICE

Most people experience frustrations at work from time to time. Whether it is due to constant pressure, last-minute demands or irritating colleagues, at some stage, most of us reach a point where we want to vent our frustrations in the office.

Frustrations happen, and venting is an easy way to blow off steam. However, just because it happens doesn't mean it's ok. Constantly venting can spread negativity and bring your colleagues down. It can also be disruptive and annoying to the rest of your team.

Minimise the impact

Before you decide to vent your frustration, pause and take a moment to think about how you would like others to think of you at work. Do you want to be seen as a competent, intelligent leader? Unless you want to be known as someone negative who complains a lot, it's probably best not to vent in the open office. If you really do need to talk to someone about the challenges you are currently facing, perhaps find a quiet room where you can close the door and discuss your issues with a trusted colleague or friend in the office.

Balance the positive and the negative

It is very easy to point out the things that are wrong. There is always something negative to focus on, no matter where you work. However, it is important to force yourself to notice the positive things too. If you challenge yourself to be a bit more observant, you will notice plenty of positive things happening around the office.

Write it down

Write down the things that are frustrating you so that you can better understand the problem. This can also help you to anticipate the issues that trigger your stress so that you can address them in future, before they become bigger problems. Writing things down can also help you to de-stress as the act of doing so is effectively venting your frustration (silently). This can also help you to arrange your thoughts and may even result in you coming up with a solution to the issue.

Invest time coming up with solutions

You can vent about things as much as you like but nothing will change unless you come up with some solutions. Try to spend some time thinking about how to solve the problem itself rather than focusing on the frustration caused by the symptoms of the problem.



MAKE THE MOST OF DEAD TIME

We have all been there before – stuck in a city with time to kill between meetings. Some of us head off for the nearest coffee shop at this time while others might make a few calls or go for a stroll in order to think about the next meeting. Perhaps there is a better way to make the most of this dead time.

Focus on a project

Long waits in the airport or sitting on a long-haul flight can be used as the ideal time to focus on a special project. It may or may not be related to the reason for your corporate trip. Perhaps it is a good time to go through the notes of a presentation or the final details of a big project. You should bear in mind that there may be some difficulties getting online (particularly on planes) so you should download the files you need in advance of boarding in order to work offline.

Plan an activity

The line between work and private life is becoming increasingly blurred. As a result, one notable trend in corporate travel is business-leisure travel. In other words, business travellers try to make the most of the time between professional appointments on a corporate trip to get to know their destination or stay a few days longer to sightsee.

Make progress with your work

Periods of dead time between journeys can be used to make progress with work. For instance, you can catch up on email or read through some documents. If you are on a business trip for a few days, it can be a good time to do your expenses, check into your return flight and so forth.

Relax

Business trips tend to be a bit stressful. Therefore, it is extremely important to make sure you get some downtime on your own. A good set of headphones can be your best friend when it comes to getting some rest on a plane. Audio books can also be a good way to relax and can even provide some inspiration for your work. Perhaps watching a bit of Netflix or Amazon Prime on your tablet can help to take your mind off work. If you are sporty, it can be good to hit the gym or go for a run (which is also a great way to see a city if you are visiting on business).