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Learn how to transform
your agency into a

Digital and Marketing Powerhouse

during and after the pandemic

As you know, businesses have made major adjustments to how they're conducting their day-to-day operations due to COVID-19. Consumer behavior has shifted, and the way businesses are responding is key to their future success.

The insurance industry is well-positioned to cope with the effects of the pandemic

Insurance companies and agencies are ready to be there for their customers when protection is needed most. But as an industry, we're facing many challenges, especially when the economy reopens. Traditional ways of marketing and selling won't work in the near-term. People will avoid coming into the office or letting producers into their homes. They may limit meetups at coffee shops and restaurants and are likely to avoid the in-person events that many agencies have used in the past to reach new customers. Digital and virtual tools can help agents succeed in this environment.

Transform into a Digital Powerhouse

How to leverage digital and marketing to help grow and retain more business

1 Build a pipeline of potential sales through digital marketing.

Events are going to continue to have fewer attendees than ever and will be held with more social distancing requirements. Large direct insurers are investing massive sums of money into finding customers during their online research phase and are encouraging them to utilize their direct writing capabilities. Agencies have an advantage in selecting specific geographies and can use affordable digital marketing techniques to ensure these customers make their way into agencies that can meet a wider range of their needs.

How can we help?

Nationwide offers training in partnership with the Association of National Advertisers to teach digital marketing skills to those within your agency. Ask us how we can help you transform now.

2 Optimize your marketing activities.

Rethink your marketing plans for 2020 and shift away from low-impact activities to cost-effective investments for digitally attracting new customers. For each part of your plan, align your marketing tactics to the goal you are trying to accomplish:

Website: Is your website optimized to have local consumers and businesses find you online?

Facebook and LinkedIn: Are you putting out a steady stream of relevant content through social media? Nationwide can help you by providing free, timely content.

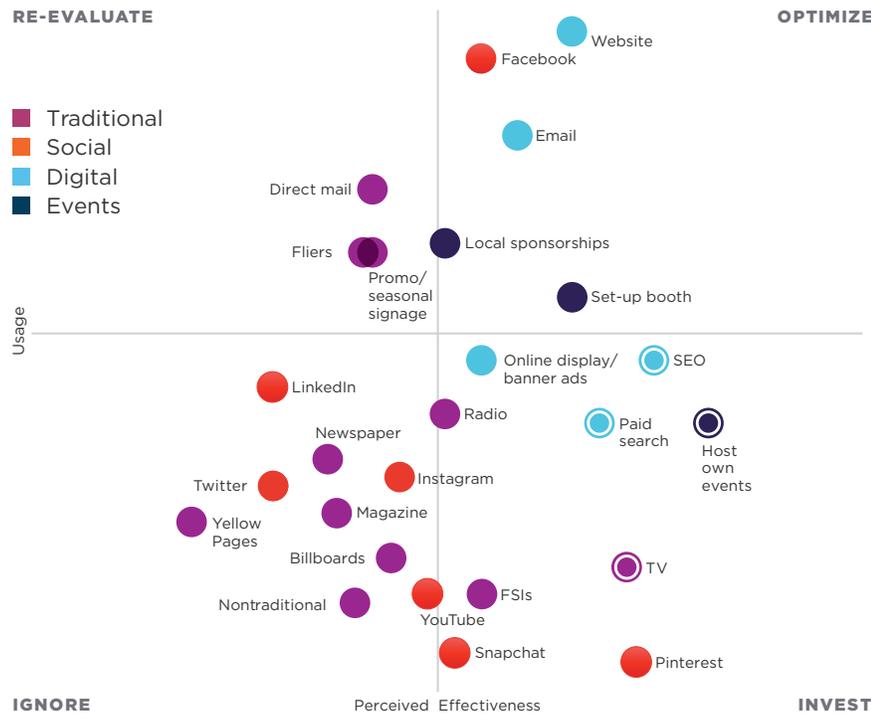
Email: Are you using email to reinforce connections with your existing customer base to increase the likelihood they will not shop around with competitors?

How can we help?

Nationwide can look at your marketing plan and may be able to help you shift priorities given these new times. Ask your sales manager how.

A look at what's working and what's not in the digital landscape

Tactic Usage and Effectiveness



Effective tactics that require additional partnership, education, and/or funding at the local level to improve utilization.

The platforms that fall into the Ignore quadrant and rank on the low range for Effectiveness and Invest should not be viewed as a total loss. Each of these social platforms has an application that provides value to a particular audience. LinkedIn provides significant value for agents when prospecting for clients and maintaining relationships, and this is why Nationwide offers many trainings and resources to help our partners understand the platform and its capabilities.

Source: "The State of Local Marketing Report," Brandmuscle (2019).

Put co-op dollars to work

Depending on your 2019 sales with Nationwide or if you are a new appointment, you may be eligible for co-op dollars. Agencies whose businesses grew 10% or more attribute co-op as critical to the success of their business¹. Talk to your sales manager about how we can share marketing expenses during this turbulent time.

Studies show shared-spend co-op programs between the marketer and partner attain 20% better growth than those without a co-op program.¹

3 Make your website easy to find.

Review your website to ensure people can find it via search engines such as Google. When they get there, they can be easily led into a virtual selling path that leads to a new customer for you. Additionally, filling out more Google My Business fields yields a significant impact, even before customers reach your site.

When there are more than 30 fields completed in Google My Business, it leads to a 25% increase in searches and a 37% increase in views.²

How can we help?

Nationwide can connect you with a digital marketing firm, where we have already negotiated a low rate to help you optimize your website, helping you make sure that customers find it through search tools such as Google My Business. Nationwide's agency locator drives more than a million consumers to look for a local independent agent. Talk to your sales manager about your listing today.

4 Upgrade your social media content.

Content fuels the marketing engine. By consistently delivering quality content and personalized communications, an agent can demonstrate dependability and expertise. Your audience will grow to rely on and appreciate the insights you post. Here are some ideas you can implement:

- Establish a consistent cadence in your email marketing, social posting, and blog content to increase your touchpoints with clients and become a thought leader
- Make sure your organization has a LinkedIn page pointed at business clients and a Facebook page pointed at personal lines clients
- Actively engage with your community; those who are fully engaged by claiming their page, posting regularly, and advertising find it twice as effective as those who only claim their page or post regularly

5 Differentiate your sales team.

Making virtual communications more personal is where insurance agents have a chance to stand out. Think about this:

- More than a third of consumers prefer personalized messages³
- Between 40 and 50% of consumers think that the personalized messages they're receiving are not good enough³
- The risk associated with poor personalization is high, with more than 40% of U.S. consumers having dumped a company because of "poor personalization and lack of trust"⁴

Only those who understand how to build personal relationships virtually — leveraging tools such as advanced social media techniques, virtual appointment-setting, masterful use of video conferencing, and a consultative approach to fear-driven customers — will win.

How can we help?

Nationwide's Social Selling Program provides a platform of content and training to help your agency stand out in this space. Ask your sales manager about signing up to instantly get hundreds of relevant pieces of content that you can post right to your own social media pages.

Engaging with your community, whether through advertising, direct engagement or both, has shown to increase performance by an average of 33%.¹

How can we help?

Nationwide has had a virtual sales team working with agencies for more than a decade and has honed the skills needed to build real relationships virtually. We can help train your sales force for a new world.

LinkedIn is a great platform for reaching business customers, and Nationwide can help you tap into exclusive advanced capabilities that can help your salespeople find your next customer.

6 Streamline your approach to quoting and self-service.

To become a digital powerhouse, agencies must find new ways to digitize, thereby saving time and resources. This means you need to have quoting and binding capabilities available on your website, as well as the internal resources to quickly turn quotes around and get them to customers instantly.

As a recent client explained: “It saves countless hours of staff time automating the claims process in a way that gives customers the attention and follow-up they deserve.”⁸

How can we help?

With Nationwide Express, you can quote multiple products (auto, home and renters insurance) in as little as two minutes and complete the sale — bind, take payment, register for self-service — in a fraction of the time it used to take. Appointed agents can access Nationwide Express through Agent Center to start quoting.*

*May not be available in all states.

7 Amp up your digital offerings.

Your customers expect you to offer them digital tools and online content that improves their situation. Digital-led experiences will continue to grow in popularity even after the pandemic is over. Companies that act quickly and adapt in their delivery model to help consumers navigate the pandemic safely and effectively will establish a strong advantage.⁵

One place where customers are searching for savings is in the telematics space. As insured cars sit idle, consumers have suddenly seen more potential value within telematics. Given the low confidence that driving will return to pre-COVID-19 levels soon, the value is becoming more evident each day, especially as consumers are showing a 20% increase over the past three weeks in price sensitivity when considering carriers.⁶ This new technology-based offer can be used not only to help customers save money, but also to help them see your agency as modern, cutting-edge and technologically advanced during these difficult times.

How can we help?

Nationwide offers two great ways for members to save right now through their usage-based insurance programs: SmartMiles[®] and SmartRide[®]. SmartMiles is car insurance for low-mileage drivers. It's the same coverage as a traditional Nationwide auto policy, but with a flexible monthly rate that's based on the number of miles driven. SmartRide can help safe drivers save up to 40%. To help customers save, SmartRide can be added to an existing policy with either SmartMiles or traditional auto. Ask your sales manager how you can sell SmartMiles and SmartRide.

8 Create a virtual fence around your current relationships.

Recent research shows that 68% of consumers are motivated to be loyal if they know that a brand shares their values. Take this opportunity to prove to your existing customers that you align with their beliefs in order to form a strong community of customers with a sense of belonging.⁶

Customers who aren't contacted at this critical time — with the expectation that they should be — are almost twice as likely to switch carriers.⁷ With a mix of virtual and digital touchpoints, you can make sure they know you are on their side during this time. To keep in contact, you should:

- Plan a cadence for each of your top customers to include a phone call, a personal email touch, and social media content with their needs in mind
- Focus on digital touches that feel personal for your next level of customers; for example, you can send mass emails that are written colloquially and based on providing helpful tips and tools for their current situation

How can we help?

Nationwide offers a website to customize marketing materials that allow you to lead with your local brand while leveraging our brand awareness and credibility, making it easier for you to sell. Talk to your sales manager to learn more.

Additional resources

ITC: [COVID-19 Resources for Insurance Agents](#)

Agency Revolution | Nationwide: [Resources](#)

Nationwide Business Solutions Center:

[Keep your small business running smoothly - from a distance](#)

[Cyberattacks are on the rise](#)

[Relief is now available for small businesses impacted by COVID-19](#)

¹ "State of Local Marketing Report," BrandMuscle (2019).

² "Helping Your Business Through COVID-19," BrandMuscle (March 26, 2020).

³ "Digital Advertising Report 2017," www.slideshare.net/adobe/digital-advertising-report-2017 (March 13, 2017).

⁴ "U.S. Consumers Turn Off Personal Data Tap as Companies Struggle to Deliver the Experiences They Crave, Accenture Study Finds," newsroom.accenture.com/news/us-consumers-turn-off-personal-data-tap-as-companies-struggle-to-deliver-the-experiences-they-crave-accenture-study-finds.htm (Dec. 5, 2017).

⁵ "Adapting customer experience in the time of coronavirus," McKinsey (April 2020).

⁶ "Loyalty: Up close and personal," LoyaltyLion (accessed April 30, 2020).

⁷ "Financial Services COVID-19 Pulse Survey," J.D. Power (April 2020).

⁸ <https://www.agencyrevolution.com/blog/2020/04/14/leverage-automation-to-optimize-operations/>



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Availability varies; program criteria differ in California. Stated discounts are approximations. Discounts do not apply to all coverage elements; actual savings vary by state, coverage selections, rating factors and policy changes. The enrollment discount applies during data collection; the final discount is calculated according to driving behavior and could be zero. The final discount applies at the next policy renewal and is subject to change based on actuarial support at subsequent renewals or with changes in drivers or vehicles on the policy.

Availability varies. SmartMiles includes a base premium plus a variable premium based on the coverages in force and the days and miles driven.

Products are underwritten by Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company and affiliated companies, Columbus, Ohio, and are subject to underwriting guidelines, review and approval. Availability varies. Home office: One Nationwide Plaza, Columbus, OH 43215-2220. Nationwide, the Nationwide N and Eagle, Nationwide is on your side, SmartRide and SmartMiles are service marks of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company. NPO-1058AO.1 (05/20)