



Complete Business Online

DIGITAL MARKETING FOR A FRANCHISE SYSTEM IN 2019



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INTRODUCTION

Franchise marketing, as with franchise systems themselves, is complex and intricate.

Franchise systems have goals, objectives and complications that are unique to their type of business—significantly more challenging than those of owner operated businesses.

Franchise systems are most often multi-location businesses, spread widely across different states and territories.

They are required to develop a impactful brand that resonates with end customers.

They must also take a microscope to each franchise; marketing locally, reporting to individual owners, and overseeing franchise owner's individual request for targeted campaigns.

Finally there is the task of attracting new franchisees.

With this in mind, franchise system marketing can be broken down into three core objectives:

- ✓ Brand
- ✓ Local
- ✓ Franchisee

This is the trio of challenges that franchise system marketing managers face. It sets them apart from their colleagues working with other business models and is something that most marketers are not asked to solve. In other words, marketing managers in franchise businesses tend to deal with bigger and more complex situations than marketers in other areas.

In this white paper, we discuss the different facets of digital marketing and how marketing managers can use them to meet Brand, Local and Franchisee objectives in 2019.

3 Core Objectives of Franchise System Marketing:



Brand



Local



Franchisee

THE MARKETING FUNNEL

While a marketing funnel can be complex and multi-staged, we will discuss it from a much simpler perspective. For each of the the three marketing objectives (Brand, Local and Franchisee), we will discuss three aspects of the funnel: **Awareness**, **Consideration**, and **Conversion**.



AWARENESS

Awareness is the activity that a business carries out to let potential customers know that they exist.



CONSIDERATION

Consideration is the middle of the marketing funnel, where customers are interested and they start to compare their options.



CONVERSION

Conversion is at the bottom of the marketing funnel, where the goal is to convince the potential customer to make a purchase.



AWARENESS

Awareness is the activity that a business carries out to let potential customers know that they exist.

You can think of this as **"top of the funnel"** activity. There will be a large audience of potential customers at this stage that are unqualified. It is likely the business does not have any information about individuals in this group.

Historically this would be accomplished with more traditional marketing campaigns, such as TV commercials, radio or print. The objective of this activity is to raise awareness, not to gain a conversion.

This is the step that guarantees public knowledge of the company—if potential customers do not know a business exists, then how can they purchase from it? All too often this stage is neglected in digital marketing campaigns.



CONSIDERATION

Consideration is the middle of the marketing funnel, where customers are interested and they start to compare their options.

Their research can often be comprehensive, as it is easier than ever to access information about competitors and alternatives.

With mobile and tablet now making up over [46% of Australian website traffic](#), not only is information widely available, but it is available anytime, anywhere.

So it is here that businesses should use marketing which aims to convince potential customers that they have the right product or service for their needs.



CONVERSION

Conversion is at the bottom of the marketing funnel, where the goal is to provide the last bit of information and push to convince the potential customer to make a purchase.

The potential customers who sit at the bottom of the funnel have been narrowed down via marketing to those that have a strong intent to purchase a product or service.

At this stage they know about the business, its products and whether they want the product. This is where it is vital

for companies to make the final push and convert potential customers into paying and loyal.

These three sections of the marketing funnel can be applied to each of the three objectives of franchise marketing. So below we will take a look at the funnel in the context of Brand, Local, and Franchisee marketing, the digital marketing tools that can be used during these stages, and the activities that should be carried out.



CORE OBJECTIVE 1: BRAND MARKETING

AWARENESS

The awareness stage of brand marketing is sometimes called ‘**National**’ or ‘**Head Office**’ marketing.

The goal is singular. Highlight the brand and its products in a way that will build an audience. This is accomplished by creating a memorable identity, imagery and personality for the brand.

In order to accomplish this, franchise systems can use a number of tools, including:

- ✓ **An amazing and engaging website:** The site should be enjoyable to look at and use. According to SRC, 40% of consumers leave a site if loading takes over 3 seconds to load. This mean website must be fast, responsive, and mobile-friendly.
- ✓ **Engaging social profiles:** Franchise systems should post interesting content and use targeted advertising campaigns to amplify their reach. When it comes to content, this means sharing information and tools that consumers not only find useful, but also find interesting or entertaining. When it comes to targeted advertising campaigns, this means taking full advantage of the detailed level of personalisation that Facebook, Twitter, and other social platforms can achieve.
- ✓ **How-to guides:** One of the best ways to increase your ranking on search engines is to be an industry thought-leader by writing and providing how-to guides. How-to guides can show consumers how they can accomplish something important to them--something that is related to the franchise’s product or service.
- ✓ **Blogs:** Blogs provide insight into a company’s values and culture. It shows off the franchise’s personality and helps consumers to connect with them. For example, a nail salon franchise might post blogs that create a benefit for their consumers and help to build a community around their business. For example, a nail salon franchise might post blogs on research around nail and skin health. A beauty franchise might post blogs about ongoing beauty regimes or makeup techniques.

CONSIDERATION

The consideration stage of brand marketing is where the marketer shifts to become more targeted and focused. It is about using the additional lead information that the company has managed to collect, whether that be leads' email addresses or social profiles. This information allows the company to more directly engage, as well as share more personalised information. It often includes:

- ✓ **Personalised customer journeys:** Franchise marketers can develop personalised workflows for the customer journey—if a lead does action A, respond with B. [Autopilot](#) is a great tool for achieving this.
- ✓ **Website remarketing:** This is the idea of following up with a website visitor after they have left. It is usually accomplished by email

or display banner ads on other websites. For example if a visitor comes to the site and visits a booking page, then abandons the process half way, the website may send a email reminding them to complete the booking by providing extra information or giving them an incentive to complete the process

- ✓ **Social media remarketing:** The idea behind social remarketing is similar to website remarketing. Various social platforms allow a company to specifically target consumers on social media after they have searched for products or services that they offer or concepts related to their brand. It is a way to quickly engage with a consumer that you know is interested in what you are offering.

CONVERSION

Conversion is the final step in transforming a lead into a customer. The marketer's job is to remove any hurdles the potential customer is still facing. If not handled correctly, these leads can also slip through the cracks. Some good tools to help guarantee the conversion include:

- ✓ **Review management:** A franchises' online reputation can encourage or deter a potential customer from converting. Customer reviews are all over the internet, from Google My Business to social media. Franchisors need to manage both positive and negative reviews and use them to identify problem areas in the business. [Moz has a good article](#) on how to manage reviews.

- ✓ **Booking/checkout/convertng:** Franchise systems need to perfect their conversion process process, whether it is a booking form, checkout or capturing payments. It should be simple, straightforward and easy. If it is not, customers are likely to go elsewhere. Google says that "[Reducing page load time boosts sales and conversion rates significantly](#)"
- ✓ **Personalised customer journeys:** Just as in the consideration phase, franchises should create personalised journeys for leads who are close to making a purchase. This is especially important in competitive markets or businesses with a long sales pipeline. This could include follow-up emails, customised website experiences or even triggering events in a sales CRM tool.



CORE OBJECTIVE 2: LOCAL MARKETING

AWARENESS

The awareness stage of local marketing is all about pointing potential customers to their local franchises. Rather than to educate about the brand, local awareness marketing is dedicated to showing customers that a branch is just down the street or across town. The tools used to accomplish this includes:

- ✓ **Local SEO and citations:** Franchise marketing managers should ensure that local branches have up-to-date information on tools like Google My Business and in citations, such as [Yellow Pages](#) and [True Local](#). It is also necessary to have a strong presence on social platforms and search engines.
- ✓ **Local social media profiles:** While not all franchises allow individual locations to have their own social profiles, the ones that do should take advantage of this. It grows the footprint of the brand and is great for local content, allowing franchises to post pictures from their own location, as well as local news and events. However, the franchise marketing team must closely oversee these profiles to ensure that they stay on brand and can use a Social Media Portal to help manage this process.
- ✓ **Central email lists:** This is one of the best ways to spread the news about newly opened franchises in a potential customer's area. There needs to be a unified approach to capture email to build this list and ensure that local data protection laws are adhered to.

CONSIDERATION

When it comes to consideration, the same objective applies to Local Marketing as it does for Brand Marketing. Move leads along the sales funnel in an encouraging way, while also removing barriers. While some of this will be covered by brand marketing efforts, there are some additional Local marketing steps that need to be taken:

- ✓ **Reviews:** Local franchises should be tasked with the responsibility of handling local complaints, as well as managing and monitoring online reviews as a whole. The marketing manager will need to have oversight and reporting to ensure that this is done on a timely basis.
- ✓ **Personalised customer journeys:** While these can be taken directly from the brand consideration marketing campaigns, they can be further tailored for location and customer type, which will address everything from variances in services offered to local competition.
- ✓ **Local social media campaigns:** Franchisees know their clientele. They know what will best resonate. To empower their voice, franchise systems can provide tools for franchisees to develop their own campaigns based on brand guidelines—a Social Media Portal is perfect for this.

CONVERSION

Local and brand conversion marketing have the same goal: Making the final push to encourage a purchase. While many of the tasks for this level of marketing is taken care of by the brand marketing campaigns, there are some specific measures that can make it more localised:

- ✓ **Search engine marketing:** Using pay-per-click advertising, franchises can pay for their local stores to appear when specific keywords are used in search engine queries (i.e. when someone in Perth searches for the term 'nail salon open late' or 'restaurant near me' the Perth franchise's website can come up as a paid result.)
- ✓ **Digitised booking process:** A centralised booking process will capture customer data, take payments, and intelligently allocate resources within each franchise location. This information can then be used within the personalised customer journeys and future marketing campaigns, as well to provide an unparalleled customer experience.



CORE OBJECTIVE 3: FRANCHISEE MARKETING

AWARENESS

As with local marketing, many of the same marketing goals and methods are shared between brand and franchisee marketing. However, with awareness, while the goal is to increase knowledge about the franchise, the target audience is different—investors rather than customers. In order to illustrate the franchise as an investment opportunity, marketers can use the following tools in new ways:

- ✓ **Strong website:** While the website for investors may be separate, it is equally important for it to uniformly represent the brand and do it with fast, responsive, and engaging content.
- ✓ **Social media targeting:** Franchise systems can use the various social platform's targeting tools to get a message to the investors who fit precise demographics. For example, a women-only gym franchise system could target the following demographics: Fitness instructor, 25-35 years old, female, Sydney.

CONSIDERATION

Franchisee consideration marketing is dedicated to painting a picture for investors of what it would be like to invest in the system.

The consideration phase for investors will take time and marketing to these individuals is very different from convincing a potential customer to book an appointment.

The following tools can help investors get a good look at every detail of the business so that they can make up their mind about whether it is right for their investment portfolio:

- ✓ **Reviews:** Investors want to join a business that has an impeccable reputation. Managing and monitoring online reviews is non-negotiable.
- ✓ **Personalized franchisee journeys:** This is similar to the personalized customer journeys, but adjusted for potential franchisees. The workflow for this journey could start with an application form that triggers a drip-campaign of educational emails about investing.
- ✓ **Remarketing:** Social and search remarketing techniques can be used on potential franchisees in the same way that they can be used on potential customers.

CONVERSION

In the final stage of franchisee marketing, the goal is to convince leads to take that last step and invest. Franchise systems can inspire confidence in them with the following digital marketing tools:

- ✓ **Online franchisee portal:** Franchises should create an online space where franchisees can log in, speak with each other, gain information from various resources, and get answers to questions. The availability of one is a strong signal to investors that the franchise system is committed to their success.
- ✓ **Detailed marketing spend reports:** While franchise systems must provide their franchisees with a report on marketing spend, they should improve on this by offering personalized location dashboards. These can show the marketing activities that are being pursued and their impact.
- ✓ **Social media portal:** Franchisees should have access to a social media portal where they can control local campaigns and advertising budget, as well as providing them with a central place for messaging and asset control.

SUMMARY

With the right marketing toolkit, franchisors and their marketing managers can impactfully engage with every potential customer and potential franchisee, no matter where they are in the marketing funnel.

While many of the tools will be used in various stages and at various levels of marketing, the end goal is unique. When this is taken into consideration, campaigns are customized for specific purposes, and the tools are harnessed effectively, a digital marketing strategy can transform a franchise system and all of the franchisees that exist under it.

Revenues can multiply, investors can flood in, and the franchise system will truly start operating at full capacity.

ABOUT CBO

Complete Business Online is a full service digital marketing agency.


We help franchisors improve revenue, attract more customers and grow their franchise network.


If you want help with your digital marketing strategy, contact us today to find out how we can help.



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