

Pets Etc. Digital Marketing Plan

Emma Messinger
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Executive Summary

Pets Etc. digital marketing plan will consist of recommendations to add and continuously revise the following tactics: Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Website Design, Digital Advertising, Email Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Track Metrics and Analytics, and create a Privacy Policy. These recommendations are to help Pets Etc. profit in sales from promoting their products and services in multiple digital marketing channels. The recommendations are considered for a beginner status but will allow the business the option to choose to more advanced methods if the business feels they are needed. Most of the channels are low budget but offer the option to grow depending on ROI. The digital marketing plan will also help Pets Etc. learn more about their audience and learn what channels provide the most ROI. The channels that do not provide enough ROI can be adjusted or must option to be discontinued. These methods are based on current digital marketing trends.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Pets Etc. is a pet store located in a shopping plaza in Plainfield, IL. This is the only location for this store currently. They sell a variety of pet food and supplies. Services include grooming and aquarium maintenance are offered. Pets Etc.'s target market includes multiple types of pet owners which includes dogs, cats, and fish. They offer in-store shopping, delivery, online shopping, and curbside pick-up. Their main product they market is premium pet food. Providing the services and selling the products they choose to sell, aims their target market towards the typical suburban pet owner vs farmers or exotic pets.

Pets Etc.'s website is basic and easy to navigate. The website could use some updating in looks and navigation. Links such as "Shop Online" and "Services" are at the top making it easy to make selections. Some of the links provide a drop-down, such as "Services" shows Beautiful Aquariums and Local Delivery, which is shown twice. At the top of the page, a link to their Facebook and a phone number are provided. The website also provides an option to chat with someone. The bottom half of each page provides the neighborhood names surrounding the store along with testimonials. On the very bottom of each page, the following is shown from left to right: address, phone number, shopping services, and a Google map of their location. Next the store hours are shown. Sitemap links are provided for convience. Lastly, the option to sign up for email offers, promotions, and updates is shown with a box for name and email address.

Pets Etc main social media used is Facebook. The Facebook has over 2K followers. Basic information such as address, phone number, email, and website are provided. The page is updated recently (last post August 17, 2022), and people reply to the posts made. However, the page admin does not seem to reply to the commenters. Photos are posted of customers pets, holidays, discounts, and events. A 4.8-star review is given along with 178 reviews.

Pets Etc Google My Business Listing shows a 4.9-star review and 83 Google reviews. The location is shown as Joliet, IL, which is a neighboring town. Some parts of Plainfield are in Joliet Township, and this could be the reason for the location listing. Services shown are In-Store Shopping, Curbside pick-up, and Delivery which matches with the information provided on the website. Address, phone number, store hours, the exact plaza name and website to order online are shown. The options to view the main website, directions, save, or call are at the top in gray boxes. Only two questions are asked but neither are answered by Pets Etc. The store's popular times is shown, as well as reviews from Facebook and Loc8NearMe, which both give a 4.8 out of 5 stars. Photos of both inside and outside the store are provided.

When searching Pets Etc. on Google, their main website comes up along with their Facebook page showing up as second. Searching "pet stores plainfield il" they come up as third on the Google My Business map and as the second listing on the first page of SERP. Now if "pet stores Joliet il" is put in, they show up as the eleventh on the Google My Business map listings and as the first listing on the fourth SERP. This is interesting, as their Google My Business location has

them listed as a “Pet Supply Store in Joliet, IL” under their star reviews at the top. If “pet stores” alone is searched, Pets Etc shows up as the first listing on the fifth page on the SERP. If they focused their location services on the towns around them vs the neighborhoods shown on their website, this may help increase their SEO. If they instead put ‘What Our Customers Are Saying”, instead of just “What Plainfield Customers Are Saying”, and list the surrounding towns such as Joliet, Naperville, Bolingbrook, Crest, Hill, Romeoville, Shorewood, Channahon, and Oswego, instead of the neighborhood names, this would better help them show up on more searches for “pet stores” or “pet supplies” as normally what and where are searched. They could also include the word “Chicagoland” on their website, as Plainfield is a suburb of a big city, and this would help them show up on more searches.

Off page SEO options would consist of Pets Etc.’s social media showing up on SERP. Having their social media pages show up on SERP will greatly help them get noticed. Another option would be included in blogs or on local news sites. The blogs could be from local pet enthusiasts or business owners who network with Pets Etc. or who possibly have purchased products from their store.

Website

Pets Etc.'s website provides an inviting feel and is easy to navigate. However, adding some extra elements to both the desktop and mobile version of the website could help the company gain more traffic and sales. By adding CTAs, reducing, and revising the menu options, reducing, and revising the homepage text and visuals, and adding some extra design elements can really help Pets Etc.'s website.

CTAs or Call to Actions help convert website traffic into consumers. They are placed in obvious places, often being noticed within three seconds or less. On the homepage of Pets Etc.'s homepage, there is only one CTA, and it is on a small purple button with white text near the middle-bottom of the homepage. This location will not catch attention. If they make the button a lighter green with white text and place them where the main image on the homepage is, it would be more noticeable. This way, they will stick to branding elements by taking color from the logo and color scheme of the website and will attract attention once the homepage is viewed. Since they have multiple products and service, the CTAs should be divided as: Shop Now under a banner that says Pet Food and Supplies, Learn More under a banner that show that they offer Grooming, Aquarium Maintenance, and Dog Walking (through a subsidiary company called Puppy Love Pet Care- this was found under the Services tab, otherwise it would have been lost information). By creating these CTAs, it will make it more clear to the customer where to take action.

Reducing the menu options will give the website a cleaner and simple feel. It will make it easier to maintain for the company and easier to navigate for the customer. Menu options that should be removed are Pets, Brands, Deals, and Events. The menu options that should stay but be revised are Shop Online, Services, About, and Contact. The choice to remove Pets is the fact that this option can be placed under the Shop Online tab as a filtered option. Brands should be removed and added under the Shop Online option since this is where the brands would be listed anyway. Deals explains the membership program and manufacturer and auto-order discounts. These should all be mentioned on the homepage with CTAs as having them placed under the Deals tab makes them unknown to the viewer. Events can be removed and should be added as an announcement on the homepage, in a blog, or on social media. The final menu options should be listed as follows- About: Our Mission (or Story), Join Our Team; Shop: Food, Supplies, Order Now; Services: Grooming, Aquarium Maintenance, Dog Walking (Puppy Love Pet Care); Contact Us (or just Contact): include address, phone number, email, and social media accounts.

The homepage is inviting but is a bit busy. The text should be reduced and simplified. Having a small introduction can entice the viewer and give them enough information to want to continue exploring the website. Also, editing the neighborhoods listed near the reviews and testimonials

would help SEO and would help surrounding neighborhoods feel included. The main photo of the chocolate lab puppy is cute, but not as attention grabbing as other pictures. This part of the homepage should have a banner that slides different announcements and CTAs. These would include the membership reward, discounts, events, shop online, and services. Each picture would go with the word or service and should have a CTA button placed on top of it. The option to let the viewer scroll back and forth between the banner should also be allowed. The bottom of the homepage is generic but works as all the contact information and hours are shown, the quick links would be reduced once the menu options are reduced, and another option to sign up for emails to receive offers, promotions, etc. is listed below. The option to sign up for the membership reward should also be listed along with the social media accounts. Lastly, the email address listed needs to be updated as it shows as temporary @ mail.com.

All the changes listed above should also be changed on the mobile version of the website. By adding CTAs, reducing the menu options, and revising the elements such as images, text, and colors to replicate the website, will make the experience relatable if the viewer has visited the website on a desktop or laptop, easier to navigate, and easier to maintain. The top of the mobile version homepage are the hours, location, and phone number. Below a hamburger style menu is shown next to the logo which also acts as a link to the homepage, and a shopping cart. Below here is where the maintenance is needed. Like on the website, a banner that slides different images with CTAs for membership reward, discounts, events, shop online, and services. The introduction text would be simplified, and the neighborhoods listed would be revised. The bottom of the page would also be revised to match the bottom of the website. The top and bottom should also list their social media accounts. A mobile app would not be needed as there is only one location for Pets Etc and apps are expensive to get up and running. All the information such as the membership program, rewards, discounts, etc. can be done through the website and through Third Party mobile solutions. Since services such as grooming, aquarium maintenance, and dog walking are provided, adding a text service reminding customers of their pet's appointments, discounts, events, or when an order or product is available in the store can help communicate to the customer better and help the company save money. The third-party texts would be sent once a customer sets up an appointment and would remind the customer a day prior of their upcoming appointment as a reminder. There should also be an option given to sign up or stop text message reminders, so customers are not being sent unwanted messages.

By adding CTAs, redesigning, and revising the homepage and menu, and adding third-party mobile solutions, Pets Etc.'s website could gain more traffic and have that traffic turn into long-term customers. The changes may seem like many, but the goal to help both the company and customer were kept in mind so both parties can maintain a lifelong relationship.

Digital Advertising

Digital Advertising is one of the most used and recognized forms of advertising today. Almost every person has more than one device and access to the internet every day and utilize it to find local deals, events, and shopping. Digital Advertising is the most efficient way to reach multiple target audiences and narrow them down to the most specific customer. For Pets Etc, the best suggested methods of digital advertising would be search ads through Google, social media ads, paid ads on other websites (preferably local news websites or blogs), and SMS (text) advertising.

By advertising on Google, Pets Etc can gain a higher spot on SERP which will help them become more recognized. If they start with a small budget and use relevant keywords to help reach their target audience, they can learn what ads are weak and which ones are strong. The best way to achieve this is to create “phrase” and [exact] matches for their keywords in “Expert Mode” on the Google Ads website. This will help better reach their specific target audience. Search ads are the best way to reach an audience, but social media ads can attract more attention.

Social media is known best for getting attention from anyone and everyone. Posting to social media can help reach a local audience and create a bond with them by posting colorful photos of pets inside the shop or products sold at the shop. Ads on social media are not always as obvious as pop-up ads, as they sometimes are simple posts but will show #Ad with a description below the photo. A suggestion would be to partner with a local dog trainer having the trainer state they buy their training treats from Pets Etc with a picture and a link in the description to Pet Etc’s online shop. Partnering with other pet related businesses through social media would not be the only exception, as many social media business accounts also have websites or blogs that are commonly updated.

Posting ads to local news website and blogs would be another great way for Pets Etc to advertise their name. For example, a pet daycare or dog trainer that does not offer grooming services can let Pets Etc have a banner or pop-up ad that leads directly to their grooming services page. The same idea can go for their brand food, aquarium maintenance, and dog walking services. When another well-known local let’s another local advertise their products or services, it can help that business as well.

The last advertising suggestion would be text advertising. The option to sign up for text messages and receive discounts can be shown on their website. They also can send text messages that provide discounts and announce events to local customers. Members could

receive special discount texts that show their total rewards points at the end of each text message.

All these digital advertising methods have their own way of working but can help reach both specific and broad target audiences. Search ads can reach anyone, while social media ads will reach younger pet owners and possibly other pet owned businesses. Advertising on local news or other pet business related websites and blogs can help reach a more specific audience but can also help with networking. Lastly, text message advertising can help reach to new and prospective customers with a simple text.

Email Marketing

Email marketing is still one of the most popular marketing methods still used today. Surprisingly, email marketing is one of the highest ROI in marketing but knowing how to be successful is the tricky part. Pets Etc. currently does provide the option to sign up for emails that send offers and promotions. However, after observing some of their emails, there are suggestions to help gain more customers and sales. By using an automated email tool, Pets Etc. can design and personalize emails to build relationships with their customers, sending email notifications for their services, and providing a newsletter with tips and advice on pet related topics.

When a customer signs up for emails, Pets Etc. sends an email to confirm. This is known as “Opting In”, and it is the standard when customers sign up for emails. The only problem is that there is no “Welcome” message sent. Sending a warm welcoming message to clients can help build a relationship with them. Pets Etc should also include this with their membership program. Currently, their membership program only allows customers to sign up in store, yet they are promoting the option to shop online, provide curbside pickup, and delivering products to the customer. By allowing the option to sign up for the membership program through email, customers can receive emails on special promotions and keep track of their rewards points. Promotion emails for members of the program should be sent at least twice a week, and rewards can be sent every other week to keep the member updated on their points. These offers will draw in more customers, and it will be more convenient for them. The emails can also be personalized to the specific client whether they are a dog, cat, or fish owner. They can also include the customer (or even the pet’s name) to make the email more personalized to that client.

Emails should also be sent to notify customers of their appointments for grooming, aquarium maintenance, or dog walking. When these emails are sent, they can also include a deal on their next service appointment. These emails should be sent when the customer sets up the appointment and a day prior to the appointment to remind the customer. Like with the membership emails, they should include the client (pet’s name) to make the email more personal. These emails should provide an option to sign up for email reminders.

The last type of emails that Pets Etc. should consider sending are newsletters. Since they are not a big company and do not have a big staff, they could start by doing a monthly newsletter with tips and advice on pet health from a local veterinarian or tips on dog training supplies from a local dog trainer. By doing this, they are connecting with other pet locals who could in turn help promote their business, especially if that specific vet or trainer purchases products from them. This also will help them by providing advice from a professional source. If they do not decide to go this route, they can send a monthly newsletter with the products that are best

sellers and why. This may help promote certain products and get customers to decide to purchase them as well.

There are many reasons why Pets Etc. should consider using email marketing. It will help them create and build relationships with customers by sending personalized emails, promote their products and services, and network with other local pet themed businesses and pet owners.

Social Media Marketing

Social media is one of the most useful ways to post news, products, services, or share fun content with your audience. There are many reasons social media can be useful to a company but keeping up with posting on all the accounts can be time consuming. Therefore, Pets Etc should only use Facebook and Instagram to post new products, promotions, events, and other content to connect with their audience and customers. The objectives for doing this are to gain sales, build their brand, and engage with customers in multiple platforms.

The content that Pets Etc. should consider posting is photos, videos, and articles. Since Facebook and Instagram are under the same company, the same post can be made on both platforms. This will help reduce the time spent posting content, especially if multiple posts are being made. They can use both created and curated content. The created content can consist of photos of products that are popular or on sale, promotions for services (20% off grooming), behind the scenes, events, and photos or videos of customers visiting the store. The curated content can consist of articles posted on blogs consisting of pet food related topics such as recalls, top foods, etc. as well as tips or advice from local trainers or vets. They can also share photos that customer's post of their pets with the products purchased from their store. Pets Etc's target audience is very broad, consisting of any pet owner 18+, as people of any race, gender, or household income can be a customer. This is another reason posting to both Facebook and Instagram will help. 50% of people ages 65+ and 70% of people ages 18-29 use Facebook, while 13% of people ages 65+ and 71% of people ages 18-29 use Instagram (Auxier & Anderson, 2021).

Content should be posted at least three times a week to start. Since majority of the content can be shared on two platforms at one time, starting out with at least three posts a week should be reasonable. If the posts are getting a response and sales are increasing, Pets Etc can decide to post more often. Once this content is posted, Pets Etc should keep up with responding to their customers. 76% of customers expect a response within 24 hours (Barnhart, SproutSocial). Responding to customers will make them feel recognized. Liking and commenting on even a simple post, such as "My dog loves to visit your store!" should be acknowledged as this customer is a clear supporter of the business and responding to them in a positive manner will help build a relationship. This may seem very time consuming, but it can all be done through the mobile phone. 80% of social media usage is on a mobile device (BroadBand Search). Most of the customers will be viewing and responding to Pets Etc.'s content through a mobile device.

Posting to social media can improve Pets Etc.'s sales, help build their brand, and build relationships with customers. If Pets Etc continues to promote sales, post engaging content, and respond to customers in a timely manner, Pets Etc should see the benefits of posting to social media.

Metrics and Analytics

Pets Etc. should track and measure the data from their SEO, website, emails, and social media. By doing this, Pets Etc. can find out which channels and campaigns are working. There are many free platforms that can be used and that are easy to use for beginners. Google Search Console will track SEO, Google Analytics will track website traffic, MailChimp will track email marketing metrics, and Hootsuite will track social media metrics.

Google Analytics is very well-known and user friendly. Many companies rely on Google Analytics to help measure their website traffic. Pets Etc. will get detailed reports on how their site is found by visitors, which pages people visit, products that are bought, and which page the visitors abandon the site. Google Analytics can also track Google Ads, which was recommended earlier under the Advertising section of the Digital Marketing plan.

Google Search Console is also very well-known and user friendly as it is another tool provided by Google, free of charge. Google Search Console will help with managing Pets Etc.'s website in Google's search results. The tool provides metrics on search engine traffic, keyword ranks, and finding and resolving indexing errors. By measuring these metrics, Pets Etc. can better track their search results on Google.

MailChimp is an email marketing platform that helps track email marketing metrics. MailChimp provides the option to send automated emails, which is part of the email marketing plan discussed earlier. The ability to send specific targeted messages to customers on the email list and allows up to 2,000 contacts. Scheduling emails such as the monthly newsletter will help Pets Etc. plan and write content in advance. The option to sign up for a paid plan is available but starting out with the free plan will better suit Pets Etc. so extra funds are not spent right away.

Hootsuite is one of the most popular tools to track social media metrics. Users can schedule a post on both platforms but can edit the post for each platform. This will work well as Pets Etc. will only be utilizing Facebook and Instagram. Using this option will help save time and will still provide the user to adjust the post depending on the platform. Promoted posts that include paid advertising are also included in the free plan. Being able to track the metrics on activity, content, and trends will help Pets Etc. figure out which posts gain the most activity and which posts do not work out at all.

Privacy Policy

Pets Etc. should include a privacy policy on the bottom of each page on their website. The policy should have a general statement about the policy and that it adheres to the PHPA, “Protecting Household Privacy Act” and the PIPA, “Personal Information Privacy Act”, both privacy laws in Illinois. The privacy policy should also include information on the use of cookies, third party analytics (Google Analytics), and information on personal information. The personal information section will include how personal information is used, the option to opt-out, and security of personal information. The privacy act that does not need to be long, but it does need to include the right information as data and digital information are known to be a big issue due to technology constantly growing and personal information being easier and easier to gather. This information will make people aware but will also protect Pets Etc. and their clients.

Conclusion

Pets Etc.'s digital marketing plan was created to help succeed in gaining new customers, boost sales, and build the brand of Pets Etc. All parts of the digital marketing plan are based on a lower budget that has an option to grow based on profits. The digital marketing plan is for beginners and offers the current most popular digital marketing trends.

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