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5 Essential Skills for the New Healthcare Marketer

What does it take to be a successful healthcare marketer in 2017? How important is creativity? Analytical Skills? Social Media Savvy? If you're looking to up your healthcare marketing game, take a look at this list of essential skills gathered from the Digital Marketing Institute, Mashable and Forbes.com.

#1. A Head for Data

Any successful healthcare marketer should have a deep understanding of what makes their customers tick. However, digital marketing success requires more than a knack for creating compelling customer personas. You need to dive deep into your customer data – not just once, but on an ongoing basis. Success in this area requires not only ability to interpret data, but also the knowledge to put that information to use.

Once you've mastered data analytics, you'll have a better understanding your customers buying behaviors, challenges and motivations, which will ultimately have a positive impact on your marketing budget.

Where do you start? Knowing your way around Google Analytics is important, but to truly shine, you'll need to take your skills a step further.

According to the [Digital Marketing Institute](#) the new healthcare marketer should:

- Know how to interpret and implement social media marketing analytics (using native platforms and tools like [Buzzsumo](#) and [SproutSocial](#))
- Be able to leverage data from email service providers and paid search campaigns
- Consider using [heat maps](#) and [real-time website analytics](#)

#2. Social Media Savvy

As a healthcare marketing professional, social media is probably already a major focus of your day. Success on social means not only engaging with customers through the channels you own, but also monitoring others to know what is being said about your organization online and responding accordingly.

In a recent [Mashable](#) post, Miles Jennings urged digital marketers to hone their skills in paid social media advertising. This includes: 1) Having the ability to understand and implement Facebook analytics and insights; 2) knowing how to create “lookalike” and custom audiences; and 3) understanding how to test creative campaigns and images.

The [Digital Marketing Institute](#) offered the following tips to help up your social media game:

- Learn how to use social listening tools to gain insights that will help you decide what content you should share and when.
- Be able to set up alerts and make use of advanced search functions, so that you can monitor relevant messages and respond quickly.
- Create and implement a crisis management plan so that you can react appropriately and protect your brand.

#3. SEO Skills

For the new healthcare marketer, search engine optimization might just be the most difficult skill to master. SEO best practices are constantly changing, as are search engine algorithms. As challenging as it may be, mastering SEO is essential if you want to drive more traffic and more conversions through your site.

As we discussed in a [previous post](#), consumers are searching for healthcare providers and facilities online, making Google the primary referral channel to your website. Showing up near the top of the results is important for visibility, so you must manage what you can to improve your ranking. Thankfully, much of the heavy lifting—putting html/markup and meta data in the right order and in the right context—can be done with the help of a good content management system.

Upping your SEO game also means upping both your creative and technical skills. [DMI](#) encourages digital marketers to:

- Know the importance of keyword research and implementation
- Understand the nuances of content (how much is too much, and what is relevant)

- Recognize the best methods for acquiring quality links

#4. Video Expertise

Video skills are becoming more valuable by the minute—mostly because the projected growth of video is staggering. [DMI](#) predicts that in 2017, video marketing will account for 69% of all consumer traffic, mobile video ads will grow 5 times faster than desktop, and landing pages with videos will lead to 800% more conversions. And according to [Forbes](#), “engaging videos are more likely to be shared than any other content”, which makes an even more compelling argument for mastering this skill.

Like SEO, becoming an online video expert can have a steep learning curve. A good place to start, according to [DMI](#), is by learning how to storyboard and execute videos that anticipate your target audience’s needs and interests while also conveying your brand in a creative, humanizing way. Also, don’t forget to use meta-descriptions and keyword tags to optimize your videos for search.

#5. Content Creativity

According to recent survey published by [Marketing Profs](#), Content Creation & Curation (38%) and Content Strategy (34%) are two of the most sought after digital marketing areas of expertise with employers. (Only digital advertising ranked higher at 46%.)

[Forbes](#) also reported that many organizations are still struggling with ways to create content that truly engages their audience. So, if you can help your organization plan an effective content strategy AND produce content that your audience views and shares, you are well on your way towards building a successful career in healthcare marketing.

As we discussed in this [recent post](#), successful content marketing requires a healthy combination of creative and analytical skills. Producing content without an understanding of your customers’ needs is wasted effort and noise. This is where you can draw upon your data skills to better understand your customer and use that information to create content that speaks to their challenges and motivations.

Share your thoughts

Today’s healthcare marketing professional must possess many skills, both creative and technical. This list is just the beginning. Is there an essential skill I didn’t mention? Let me know in the comments, and I’ll update the post with the best ideas (and a link crediting you).