

Digital Marketing

Contemporary times leave us with no choice than to sharpen our knowledge and awaken to the reality of present times. Digital marketing has come to stay and it is only wise for organisations to acquaint themselves with its elements, merits and know-hows. These insights were shared during the open space session facilitated by Rita Ezenwa-Okoro of Street Project Foundation at the second Linking and Learning event. Key questions raised included 'How visible are you online'? How effective is your SEO? Digital Marketing is synonymous with online marketing and it is pertinent to understand how Marketing, Advertising and Branding differ from one another in this context. Marketing is the promotion of products and services - it means all buttons pushed to activate and conclude sales. The key elements of marketing are the product, place, promotion and price. When payment has to be made to enhance the promotion of a product or service, it becomes advertisement also known as 'advert' for short. Branding simply refers to how an organisation wants to be perceived by the public and target consumers. Marketing takes a lot of effort and the end goal is that all marketing activities culminate to increased sales and thereafter, profits. It is so important that marketing activities are strategically planned for to attract the highest returns. Firstly, an

organization that wants to have marketing success stories must have an objective, goal and focus. Secondly, the organization must be able to identify with a story that is connected to the reason for its establishment. This organisational story can be a common problem in the society which it seeks to solve, an invention to be promoted or even a strategy to address an age long issue. For example, the organization, Youth Hub Africa started because they wanted to provide opportunities for young people at no cost such that youths who pass through their platform could get facilitated scholarships, girl child education opportunities through advocacy, free sexual and reproductive health knowledge and products and so on. Likewise, Street Project Foundation (SPF) started because many young people's course of study in school were not aligning with their jobs and passions hence the inspiration to create an avenue where people could express their passion creatively and earn a living from creative endeavours. The third element of successful Marketing is for an organisation to identify 'who they are selling to' i.e., their target market. For example, SPF has the policy makers one of their target markets and so they tailor specific strategies and communication tools to fit this audience. Lastly, it is vital to ask the question, 'what makes your organization unique?' In responding to this prompt, each participant shared what they felt to be a unique feature of their organization for instance, SPF uses creative arts to build capacity while Integriti tecchnologies keeps promises and sustains projects even when funding is over. Another key question raised was - can marketing efforts be unfruitful? Yes, they can. This gives rise to what can be termed as 'Pain Points' which refers to the specific areas of challenge being experienced by organizations, which when addressed, will lead to better outcomes. 'Pain points' that require digital marketing were also discussed and a participant disclosed that their organization's pain point is that 'fundraising' geared towards teaching digital skills to boys has not been fruitful. The presenter stated that a strategic fundraiser must be visible online. Search engine optimization (SEO), depicts how visible is your organization to the public via internet searches. This will determine how fast a donor can locate you online. Of great essence is ensuring that prominent and visible media houses cover your event. Being visible on LinkedIn can also not be over-emphasized as regular articles and updates about what you do, tagging people and organizations you work with, can go a long way in increasing your visibility and credibility. A constructive way to handle pain points and get results is to pay attention to branding. Branding has 3 delicate features that when adhered to, is capable of yielding great results. First feature is 'sense of meaning'. An organization must be clear on their identity, their purpose, their value and personality. In communicating their personality to the public, they must be clear and single-eyed so that potential targets can identify and buy into their cause. The second is that there must also be a 'sense of direction'. This points to vision, and mission of an organization, for instance, Center for Ability, Rehabilitation and Empowerment (CARE), has a vision of disability inclusion in the Aviation industry in Nigeria while their mission is how People with Disabilities (PWDs) can access air travel without difficulty. Lastly there must be a 'storehouse of trust'. An organization, must always strive to consistently deliver on promises made. Final things to consider is to be careful what is posted online so that the organization is well represented in line with its branding guide and ensure that content shared are a showstopper!

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