

Should You Hire An Agency or In-House for Your Marketing Campaigns?



As you are probably aware, a strong digital marketing strategy is critical as it will make or break the success of your business.

When you are thinking ahead to the next financial year, you might question whether your business plan should be outsourced to an experienced agency or use In House Marketing for your business. While both options can be quite beneficial, you should weigh both sides before making a decision.

Let's face it, a successful digital marketing campaign is a financial investment in your business, resources, and abilities to effectively use your time well.



Quality & Quantity

You might wonder why you should pay someone outside your business when you can use an in-house team and spend a certain amount of hours each week for your marketing strategy. By all rights, this makes perfect sense, but step back and consider what a digital marketing plan consists of:

There are many factors involved in digital marketing including, social media, SEO, PR, content management, channel management, PPC, and web development to name only a few. An agency, on the other hand, is not made up of just one person working on all avenues of a digital marketing plan. The agency is made up of a team of highly qualified, talented people who work as a team and come up with excellent ideas to develop the perfect solution that will benefit your campaign.

When there is an entire team in place, solutions can be found much more quickly than just a few people spreading themselves way too thin in order to cover all aspects of your marketing plan. You should stick with what you are good at and have others deal with things you are not good at. Keep in mind, it is not easy to find and hire the perfect candidate to head your digital marketing department. This person must have a commitment to push your campaign forward creatively, and must have the experience to analyse the collected data. This person must have good writing skills to cover all aspects of your copy, such as your blog



content, SEO content, social content, outreach content, web content, etc.. Overall, they must have the talent and ability to manage every single digital marketing issue that will arise on a daily basis.

There are many other questions your head of marketing must be able to address as well. Do they know how to set up a merchant centre data feed? Do they know how to implement a UA code on the backend of your website in order for Google Analytics to track properly and at full volume? This person will also need to have the skills to find the correct targeted audience and engage them on a daily basis through social media. Adding to this list, they must have the experience to get the right webmasters and negotiate the price and terms for outreach content placement.

You must ask yourself if you have the resources to get all of the above done correctly and successfully in order to justify your investment. When you use an agency for your digital marketing plan, you can assess how their service has worked for you and decide whether to continue with them at the end of their contract or not. Keep in mind, with an in-house staff, you have a responsibility to them which means if changes must be made, you will have to provide further training which is another investment. Also, this training and support is probably going to be outsourced to an agency anyway! Therefore, unless this was in your plan to begin with, it could take a very long time before you see the results of you are looking for.





Diversity Of Skills

Online marketers, as a general rule, have specific skills that they excel with. Some are excellent for paid research while another is skilled in social media, content marketing or conversion rate optimization. The bottom line, someone might be perfect in one area of digital advertising, but an online market plan is too complex for one person to do on their own because no one is an expert in all fields. You could hire someone in a specific field but realize your competition is getting greater results in another field, so now you have to hire someone with those skills. The problem is, most companies do not have endless money to throw around for their campaigns.

Keeping your marketing diversified is very hard to do. You must find the perfect team of in-house marketers for your campaign challenges. Investing in any new marketing avenue can be risky and what if you hire someone whose skills don't fit what you need? This leads to getting bogged down with only one marketing avenue and will probably not be the right strategy you should be using.

By narrowing your marketing to one area, such as web designing, might give you fantastic pages, but your ads are not getting the results you are looking for. You're bringing in the wrong traffic which means you are not going to get the results you need. Your web designer probably does not have the specific skills to turn that around.

In-House Vs Agency

Your company probably does not have the resources to hire a web designer, a PPC expert, a testing genius, etc. This is where a good marketing agency comes into play. It really is important and makes perfect sense to hire a team with highly diversified skills for your online marketing. At E360 we organize our account managers into marketing teams with a wide range of specialties. This includes, site testing, designing, Facebook, Adwords, etc. Each member of our team has the specific skills that are required for each avenue and area of marketing. These specialists are able to adapt to the various needs of each client they are working and thereby provides a higher value than any one person is not capable of doing.

Each team member is actively working on a number of accounts allowing them the depth and breadth of experience to apply to a new campaign quickly and easily. So, you might ask yourself if diversity comes with a high price tag? Let's face it, if you cannot hire more people, in-house, for diversity, can you afford to pay an agency to do it for you? In order to answer this question, you need to take a closer look at the situation. Most companies do not need a full-time designer, Facebook manager or AdWords expert, but they benefit from these services.

For in-house, hiring experts in any of these fields who are willing to work only a few hours a week is going to be very tough to do. On the other



hand, agencies have experts to take care of multiple accounts, providing them with enough work to justify their full-time status. In turn, their given skills will provide you with a variety of high-level experts without having them on your payroll full-time. Not only does this make common sense but is a great deal more economical for you and your business. In the long run, it's a question of an agency vs in-house and which is the better choice for your business? Large companies have the resources to hire in-house teams for diversity in their marketing plans. Therefore, the question is, do you have the resources to hire in-house?

If you have the resources and your marketing needs are significant to justify hiring your own team of experts that will give you great results on a full-time basis then go for it. However, if your company doesn't have the financial ability to make this happen, you will get a great deal more diversity, for less, by hiring an agency.

Keep in mind, online marketers are extremely creative but this trait makes them terrified of boredom! At some point, you must take the side of the marketers! Can you possibly image looking at the same keywords over and over, day after day and being expected to make them interesting? How boring does that get? This is why many mid-level to junior marketers change jobs every few years. Even though this is not a good outcome for a business, the marketers are looking to move on to more creative avenues!

At E360 we have experienced clients leaving to form their own in-house team, only to turn around and come back because their marketers are



leaving. That said, the turnover of online marketers within an agency isn't that bad. Our online marketers are working on a variety of projects that keep them challenged and allows them to increase their creativity. With a good agency, even if your direct contact does leave, you will still have a number of people involved with your account. The bottom line, your online marketing plan will not feel the effects of waiting for someone else to come on board and replace your contact.

With an agency vs an in-house team, you do not have to worry about the turnover of online marketers or even spending countless hours trying to hire a team of markets. Large businesses also experience this kind of turnover and face many challenges but they provide opportunities for employees to stick around. Smaller businesses do not have that luxury and therefore experience higher levels of employees leaving. In some cases, employees are looking for better compensation and various benefits that smaller businesses cannot provide. Oldest story in the book, do not put all your eggs into one basket it's just not good business sense. In all reality, you are better off hiring an agency to ensure your online marketing plan goes forward without a glitch.

The majority of businesses do not spend enough money on advertising in order to gain attention. Even businesses that spend over \$200,00 a year on AdWords might not show up on Google's radar! Ad agencies manage millions of dollars on a monthly basis from ads spent on Goggle AdWords, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Bing Ads, and the list goes on. That said, these advertising avenues (such as Facebook) have a vested interest in the success of an agency and are more than willing to help



agencies deliver the very best results to clients. Let's face it, if we decided that AdWords was a waste of time and money, we would advise our clients to stop doing it. Google would have a great deal to lose and obviously does not want our clients to walk away.

This is why ad agencies will often get many great perks that businesses are not offered but the agency can pass these perks on to their clients. Here are some of the perks you will get working with an agency:

Great support and faster response. You know if you have ever attempted to talk with someone at Google or Facebook, it's like talking to a wall. An agency can immediately get people on the phone to help with problems with an account, policy concerns, and any number of support requirements.

Agencies also provide higher levels of account supervision.

Again, all these ad platforms (Google, Facebook) want agencies to succeed. To make this happen, they will provide their own top people to watch over an agency managing accounts to ensure the accounts are getting the correct amount of attention. Also, these representatives will provide their own insight and ideas they get from internal data that is not available to the general public.

These perks are barely scratching the surface as good agencies have many advantages that the general public will not get. In turn, these perks can give you a leg up on your competition. Adding to these perks,

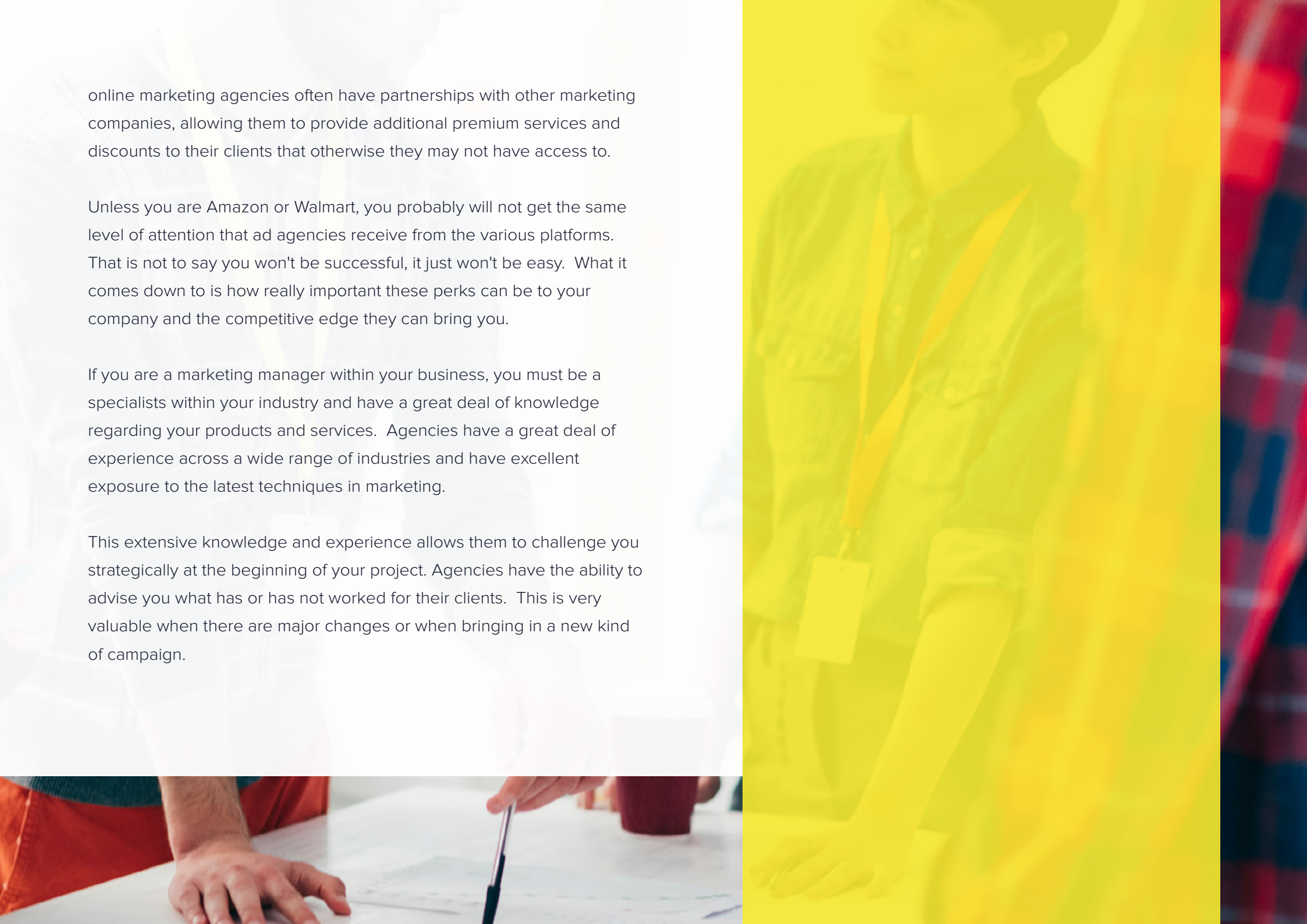


online marketing agencies often have partnerships with other marketing companies, allowing them to provide additional premium services and discounts to their clients that otherwise they may not have access to.

Unless you are Amazon or Walmart, you probably will not get the same level of attention that ad agencies receive from the various platforms. That is not to say you won't be successful, it just won't be easy. What it comes down to is how really important these perks can be to your company and the competitive edge they can bring you.

If you are a marketing manager within your business, you must be a specialists within your industry and have a great deal of knowledge regarding your products and services. Agencies have a great deal of experience across a wide range of industries and have excellent exposure to the latest techniques in marketing.

This extensive knowledge and experience allows them to challenge you strategically at the beginning of your project. Agencies have the ability to advise you what has or has not worked for their clients. This is very valuable when there are major changes or when bringing in a new kind of campaign.





The Cost For A Marketing Campaign

The average salary for a graphic designer or web developer is approximately £25,000-35,000 per year, depending on where you live in the UK. This might seem reasonable to you for a full-time employee, but you could spend a great deal less with an agency. You would not have to find a replacement during the holidays or if your employee has called in sick. You would be able to scale up or down without worrying about internal implications. An agency will give you the flexibility to invest in what you need, when you need it. One critical aspect you should never overlook is the specialist's knowledge!

When hiring in-house, it's better to hire someone year round, especially if you have a small team. The problem is, it's virtually impossible to get someone who has all the skills you will need throughout the entire marketing year. Using an agency will give you access to specialists with years of experience in graphic designing, web designers, copywriters, web developers, SEO experts, and strategists to name only a few.

Also, using an agency, you will have reduced lead time compared to an in-house approach. You will have the scale and quality of resources that only agencies have available to them. Agencies also are able to think outside the box and push many boundaries that will not happen in-house. They come prepared with fresh eyes and bring in a level of creativity that might not be possible otherwise. It will be a great deal less expensive than developing and maintaining an in-house team to create a strategic and purposeful marketing campaign. You will have access to a huge range of specialists who will give you creative, outside the box thinking.

In Conclusion

There are literally thousands of small aspects and details involved in digital marketing. Without the training or experience needed, it can be very difficult to comprehend and foresee what must be done. That's not to say that hiring an in-house team is a bad idea if your business is doing well and you wish to have an assistant in a specific area and could also work with an agency serving as the middle guy. For a SME, this could be expensive and time consuming with less than great results, lacking in creativity and the knowledge needed to implement various ideas from beginning to end. All aspects will be reflected in the end result of the digital marketing plan and the ongoing ROI.

If you have a large marketing team, you might wish to keep your strategic planning in-house while using the creative services of an agency. On the other hand, if you are a managing director of a small company or start up, you might want to use an agency for all aspects of your marketing plan from the beginning. At some point, as your business grows, you might want to hire an in-house team.

One aspect you must consider is your time. How much time will have to be committed to work with a marketing agency on a day by day basis for approving documents and collaborating with the agency. Then ask how much time it will take to hire, train, and manage an in-house team or individual? There are agencies available for all types and sizes of businesses if you wish to use them for all or a portion of your marketing. It is not difficult to find an agency that will be a perfect match for your business and marketing plan.

There are many reasons for either choosing an agency to work with or implementing an in-house team. Whichever avenue you choose will depend on what your priorities are. If

you are looking for high-end skills, diversity, dependability, and partner perks, you should use an agency to help your business grow.

Now it's time for you to ask yourself important questions:

Do you prefer to use an agency or do it yourself in-house?

What are your main reasons for your decision?

Are there advantages and disadvantages for using an agency?

Just like all major business decisions, you should explore all avenues then weigh the good and the bad before making your final decision.





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