

eMoney

THE FINANCIAL ADVISOR'S MARKETING GUIDE TO

Digital Content and Campaigns



How did everyone communicate before email? Is Generation Z currently asking the same, but about social media? The simple truth is life has gone digital. From the way we communicate, to the way we work, shop, or spend time with family and friends, today digital interactions permeate everyday life. The COVID-19 crisis may have sped up years of digital adoption¹, but digital interactions—including digital marketing—are here to stay.

Digital marketing helps you introduce yourself and your services to potential new clients who spend much of their time online, and it lets you connect with clients—current and prospective—when you can't meet them face-to-face. Digital marketing also harnesses time-saving technologies to drastically reduce the time and effort needed to create a robust marketing strategy—including content and scheduling. As a financial advisor, your business simply can't afford to not participate in digital marketing. Unlike traditional, one-way marketing channels such as print, television, and radio, digital marketing allows easy wins with two-way communication that invites engagement. So not only can you inspire your readers, as their trusted financial advisor you can listen and respond too.

>>> A 2020 eMoney study² shows that the majority of Americans (84 percent) feel personalized content is very important when working with a financial advisor. Moreover, 63 percent of clients surveyed said insightful and educational content, as well as personalization, would make an advisor's marketing stand out amongst competitors.



Staying Competitive in a Digital Marketplace

Focusing on digital marketing helps you and your business stay competitive in a quickly changing environment. The desire for personalized marketing comes at a time when advisors are largely unable to meet with clients in-person. In-person activities and events that have traditionally produced word-of-mouth referrals have dramatically decreased. As a result, the way in which prospective clients search for an advisor is changing.

Individuals are relying less on referrals from family and friends, and are turning to search engines instead with 42 percent of end-clients saying they start the process of finding an advisor online. Since the next step after searching online is usually visiting a website, the power of a professional-looking website is evident, with 98 percent of end-clients saying a financial advisor's website is important to them, while a third say that it is extremely important. The importance of social media is also growing with 37 percent of respondents saying they are more likely to choose an advisor who is active on social media.²

And while events like the COVID-19 pandemic may have been a catalyst in seeking alternatives to face-to-face contact, it's clear digital engagement will continue and evolve. And that has accelerated the need for service-based businesses, such as financial firms, to introduce or expand all digital tools, including marketing tools, in order to attract new clients and deliver engaging and impactful client experiences.

A photograph of an older couple, a woman with blonde hair and a man with grey hair and glasses, both smiling as they look at a laptop screen. The woman is wearing a white sweater and the man is wearing a blue shirt. The image is framed in a circular shape with a light blue background.

Website

Using Content to Adapt with Shifting Expectations

As traditional marketing strategies fade, digital marketing using the latest technology offers today's financial professionals the opportunity to be proactive in an online world. It lets you communicate regularly, scale up your messages, build authority, and share your value proposition with a wider audience.

The online world thrives on an information-hungry audience. A recent Celent report³ suggests the pandemic, along with market uncertainty, has created a widening knowledge gap among clients. Growing weary from constant political and economic insecurity, these clients are devoting more time than ever to knowledge consumption. This shift requires financial advisors to have a digital presence, not only to connect with prospects and clients, but to build credibility, relationships, and trust through showcasing expertise.

This is especially true among younger generations who tend to lean more heavily on digital channels and take, according to our study, longer to select an advisor.² Financial professionals can adapt to changing search behaviors by providing educational content that both improves the firm's visibility in search engines and nurtures relationships with prospects.

It's important to understand content marketing is a critical component of the modern financial professional's marketing strategy. Content marketing is a proven marketing method where useful, relevant, downloadable, written content and visual media are designed to reach and attract a defined target audience so they can learn about your brand, products, services, and expertise⁴—driving profitable client actions.

Now is the time to learn some basics about content marketing and campaigns, and discover the simple, yet powerful, action items to implement right now.



Building Content into Your Digital Marketing Strategy

Now that you've learned why digital channels and content marketing is important, it's also critical to review how to build a digital marketing strategy around content that will meet your objectives, like boosting your online presence and driving traffic that converts into new clients.

1. Identify your ideal client market or target

First, decide who you want to target. It is key to get a general understanding of who your ideal clients are, where you can find them, what they are interested in, how they make decisions, etc.

Consider the demographics of your potential clients and current client base, as well as their preferred online social platforms and communication methods. Of the 59 percent of those surveyed in our study that said they'd be open to hearing from a financial advisor on social media, 78 percent of those respondents are aged 18-24.²

Understand how this target audience will find you. That might be through an online search that lands them on your website, or they could find you via their favorite social media platform. Whether clients are coming from an online search or a referral, they will likely spend time to research you. In our survey, the majority of respondents (43 percent) would take one to two weeks to research an advisor.²

Pro Tip: Keep the target profile narrow, for example choose a demographic or a life stage that resonates with your target market.

2. Create your value proposition

What value do you bring to clients? Keep in mind your target market when you answer the question: How can you save them time, money, and stress when it comes to planning for their financial future?

Planning as part of your value proposition can have a huge impact. We know that the amount of uncertainty facing clients today has created challenges; for some, COVID-19 has even sped up certain life transitions affecting their retirement, career, marital status, or health condition, and is driving their need beyond one-size-fits-all financial advice.

As an advisor you have an opportunity to position your services to address the current situation and need for financial planning. If you aren't letting clients and prospects know this is part of your business—do so now!

Pro Tip: Attach a CTA "call-to-action" to ensure you can validate your value proposition.

Building Content into Your Digital Marketing Strategy (CONT.)

3. Define and choose the appropriate tactics and tools

Determine your needs for personalizing your digital content to reflect your style and voice with social media posts, email blasts, and ads, and define the best tools to deliver your message. For example, do you need an email service provider, social media scheduling, and analytic capabilities? What about website content such as blog posts or videos?

Whichever digital avenue you choose, you'll need content they can connect with, such as social media updates, blog posts, or even videos.

Pro Tip: Looking for another option to broaden your digital content marketing reach? Additional ideas include creating Google Ads or social media ads for your financial planning services.



4. Develop a plan to address and evaluate measured results

For example, set your key performance indicators (KPI). You already set KPIs for business and sales performance, and marketing is no different. Simply identify which of your digital marketing efforts you want to measure, set a target, identify your data source, and set a schedule for checking your indicators.

Pro Tip: Whether it's a short-term or long-term goal, create a plan with a start and end.

Content Highlights Your Value

When you're ready to further expand your digital marketing strategy, consider how content—articles, videos, white papers, podcasts—can be a tool to engage your audience and build relationships with clients. And just as there are many content formats, you can also narrow your marketing strategy to include different types of content applicable to financial services:



**economic and
market conditions**



**financial
planning**



**life
event**



**market or product
performance**

Focus on the role content plays in your clients' journeys—are you aiming to educate, excite, or nurture your audience? For example, timely content, speaks to the breaking economic and market news, that your audience may be seeking out on their own. As their financial advisor, you have the opportunity to curate what you feel is important and that can distract them away from the “noise” of Wall Street and mainstream media. While this approach can be accomplished through a LinkedIn post, a monthly e-newsletter, or whichever format you choose, sharing content that aligns to their situation, not the market, helps to shift their focus towards the impact to their long-term financial situation.




Content that is specific to personal finance and financial wellness can also be extremely helpful in showing the value of financial planning services. There is no shortage of topic content that focuses on life stages or milestones like retirement and education planning. You can capitalize on what is out there by personalizing it to your target audience. Not only will you showcase your expertise and credibility, but you will also help satisfy the knowledge gap of how each client or prospective client can begin to make their future plans or goals a reality.



Email

Let's Talk Tactics

Keep your first foray into digital marketing simple. Start small to see quick wins. If you have a little more time and want to make a bigger impact online, experiment with long-form content, creating an email nurture sequence, writing a blog post for your website, or crafting your own messages on Facebook or LinkedIn, instead of sharing statistics, reports, or posts from others. Sharing long-form content for a gated offer is an effective way to turn prospects into leads and open up a two-way digital communication channel. Depending on how much time and effort you have, see our suggestions in the chart below:

	Content Marketing in Minutes	Increase Your Effort, Increase Your Results	Maximize Your Market Opportunity
 Website	Review your website for outdated content, starting with your 'About' and value proposition.	Commit to a brand audit and refresh every quarter to ensure your website is relevant to the audience.	Create a landing page / form to give prospects gated content on your website that will generate targeted leads.
 Email	News to share with all your clients? Send one mass email to start relationship-building with your email list. Invite responses with: "How will this impact you? I'd love to hear your questions and concerns. Hit 'reply' and let me know."	Creating an email nurture sequence. Draft three to five emails that inform, educate, and entertain your readers while establishing your authority as a financial planning expert.	Segment your list and set up highly targeted email sequences personalized for each segment.
 Social Media	<p>Expand your network by adding connections or searching for clubs/affiliations, and join!</p> <p>Start posting to LinkedIn or your Facebook page.</p> <p>Share links to relevant news articles, recent reports or statistics that could impact your audience.</p>	<p>With your audience assembled (and growing), start by sharing a pain point you know clients may struggle with and a brief solution.</p> <p>Get into a regular cadence of sharing articles. Schedule a month of social media content including financial quotes, infographics, videos, or recent statistics.</p>	Consider playing an active role on your favorite social media platform by chairing a group / club / discussion that can showcase content you've generated.

Pro Tip: Not confident in your writing skills to produce a guide or ebook for gated content? No time to post to social media? Hire a freelance writer, content producer, or social media manager. Better yet, tap into the resources available through Bamboo, eMoney's marketing solution.

How to Use Digital Marketing Automation

The idea of creating content to fuel your digital marketing campaign for your advisor business could sound exhausting and time-consuming. Between all the decisions to make, posting and sending schedules to fill out, and content to create, it's no surprise you might feel too overwhelmed to even get started. And it is—that is, if you try to build it from the ground up, or patch together services and content from various sources.

The good news is, you don't have to. Digital marketing integrations and automated campaigns can help. Choosing your content and not feeling like you need to generate everything on your own will simplify any of these marketing tactics, and make them less daunting.

One of the key benefits of going digital is the opportunity to automate your marketing. It lets you develop timesaving workflows, align your digital lead generation with the digital marketing funnel, and share the content best suited to your audience. This lets you streamline manual tasks to scale up your marketing efforts, saving time, money, and headaches.

Implemented correctly, marketing automation utilizes the latest tools and technology to turn what seems like a massive marketing endeavor into efficient, actionable, easy-to-launch, and easy-to-analyze marketing tasks. For example, automate tasks such as:



Scheduling social media posts and email marketing campaigns



Delivering email auto-responder messages



Total Sales prospecting/alerts



Social media engagement



Messaging and chatbots

Automating these tasks removes the need for you or a member of your office to interrupt your day, evening, or weekend and manually post to LinkedIn. You don't need to review your email activity reports daily to determine which of your subscribers could be potential leads and send them a follow-up email. Instead, follow-up, segmenting, and sequencing happens automatically, based on the characteristics you set once.

Pro Tip: You don't have to build it—find a provider that works and fits your budget. Bamboo, eMoney's marketing solution, helps attract prospects by providing content for financial professionals to use and share in blog posts, newsletters, and on social media.

Tying It All Together in a Campaign

Automated campaigns let users schedule and launch targeted content to generate and nurture leads through digital channels. With the help of automation, prospects move through the digital marketing funnel while you focus on financial planning.

This is how it works. An idea to generate new leads would be to communicate the value of a financial advisor. Choose pieces of content that align with that value proposition and select the digital channels you would like to use to promote your campaign. By sharing and connecting with prospects through your website, social media, and via your email you can maximize the impact of this message, since some people will consume it from only one platform or others may need to see the message repeatedly for it to become actionable to them.

It takes a multi-channel effort to create an effective digital marketing strategy because today people connect through various online platforms. To increase visibility and earn your audience's attention promote your desired message (campaign) through multiple digital channels such as your website, social media, and email.

And that campaign can have specific measures of response or results you want to achieve. Yet as a busy financial advisor, your day is already full. If you prefer to spend your time analyzing clients' financial data over crunching marketing numbers, take a look at the marketing analytics available through Bamboo, eMoney's marketing solution.



Social Media

Take Action Today

Don't get left behind by the advisors who are already building out their digital marketing programs. Recent events have accelerated the move to a digitally-based world, and to stay competitive as a financial professional you need to adjust your marketing strategy to connect with new clients and engage with your existing clients. However, to optimize your digital marketing strategy, use content effectively to personalize the experience, and make sense of your marketing automation efforts, you need to invest in the right tools.

>>> Learn more about Bamboo, eMoney's marketing solution, a comprehensive digital marketing toolkit that gives you access to content marketing to launch digital campaigns immediately, not next month or next quarter

www.eMoneyAdvisor.com/marketing



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