

Seasonality in Advertising

Is your business affected by seasonality? Many businesses struggle with the “feast or famine” effect of seasonality, and the unpredictability that comes with having a business built on conditions during a particular season. Construction, landscaping, retail; many of these businesses rely on sales during just one quarter, or even a small portion of one quarter, to put their businesses back in the black. If the customers aren't there because the weather is bad, or there is just less seasonal spending these businesses can be in trouble. Carefully planning your marketing tactics throughout the entire year can help reduce unpredictability and increase profits when the season finally rolls around.

How to Tell When Your Business Starts to Get Hot

Identifying when your season actually starts for your buyer is extremely important for timing your seasonal marketing. Google Trends provides a great free tool to watch trends in search terms. Try out a few common terms in your industry and you should notice it correlates pretty well to your busiest seasons. If your marketing efforts begin after the frequency starts to rise, you're starting too late. For example, flower sellers who get their big bumps on Valentine's Day and Mother's Day start spiking in search traffic in early January and late March respectively, signifying the beginning of the buying cycle for many prepared shoppers. Though they may not make their orders until much later, this education and evaluation stage is key in a customer's buying cycle, and a perfect opportunity to get in front of them.

The Sales Cycle Extends Beyond the Season

The off season is a time for building and cultivating leads and laying the groundwork for when sales really start coming in. Take landscaping for example. Conventional wisdom says not to plant before frost isn't an issue, and many landscaping companies do not ramp up their efforts until May. However, internet searches for landscaping begin to rise as early as late January and actually peak around May 5. Data shows that there were 1,651 impressions in the “Landscaping Contractor” category on February 1, by May 5, there were 12,787 impressions in the same category. By waiting to begin marketing until too late, many companies could end up entirely missing the beginning of the buying process. To make sure they don't miss the beginning of their customer's buying cycles, landscapers should begin to ramp up their marketing efforts when the plows are still out. Try to time your marketing efforts to hit when the early birds first start searching. That way, by the time they're ready to make that purchase, they're aware of your business.

Convert Them Early

If you can identify a moment early in the buying cycle when your customers are starting their yearly shop and put an offer in front of them to convert them early, you'll get the jump on your competition and increase your cash flow when you need it to augment your other marketing efforts. Running a click-to-call campaign on a social media platform, like Facebook, is a good way to get in front of your customers at the right time. Your business can start running targeted seasonal ads when searches begin to spike for your product or service. BIA/Kelsey reported that there was a 133% increase of mobile calls to businesses from 2011-2013. Much of this is accredited to successful mobile ads, which convert five times more than comparable click-to-buy ads.

Adapted from www.leadson.com

Ex. 1 Find the words or expressions in the text which mean the following:

- 1) to be influenced by sth: _____
- 2) a situation when it is impossible to say that sth will definitely happen:

- 3) one of four parts of a year: _____
- 4) to have a connection with or to sth: _____
- 5) to increase: _____
- 6) the time of lower customer activity: _____
- 7) knowledge: _____
- 8) to reach the highest value: _____
- 9) to play commercials: _____
- 10) focused on one group: _____
- 11) money passing through your company: _____
- 12) an assessment: _____

Ex. 2 Match the expressions from the two columns into logical collocations:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1) feast | up your efforts |
| 2) to rely | efforts |
| 3) to put your business | missing sth |
| 4) seasonal | or famine |
| 5) to roll | in the black |
| 6) to time | buying cycle |
| 7) marketing | around |
| 8) customers' | spending |
| 9) to ramp | on sth |
| 10)to end up | seasonal marketing |

Ex. 3 Provide English equivalents of these expressions:

1) budownictwo	7) ranny ptaszek
2) ogrodnictwo	8) przekabacić klienta
3) handel detaliczny	9) uzyskać przewagę nad konkurencją
4) wzrost	10)być przypisanym czemuś
5) oznaczać coś	11)prowadzić kampanię
6) położyć fundamenty pod coś	12)wziąć coś

Grammar corner...

Word formation is rather problematic in English, because there don't seem to be any clear rules about how, for example, to make nouns from other words. Usually you use some kind of an ending, but which one precisely is quite vague. Today we'll focus on three of them, -ity (e.g. unpredictability, seasonality), -ing (e.g. landscaping, building), and -ion (e.g. inflation, correlation).

Ex. 4 Make new words (nouns) from the clues provided.

- 1) There is a strong _____ (correlate) between your income and your customer confidence level.
- 2) There seems to be market _____ (saturate) in the tablet segment.
- 3) Working for a long time means _____ (gain) valuable experience.
- 4) In some industries _____ (seasonal) can make or break a business.
- 5) The new iPhone comes with many useful _____ (functional).
- 6) There's a high _____ (probable) of their stock prices to increase dramatically.
- 7) If _____ (inflate) continues to increase at this rate, our currency will soon be totally worthless.
- 8) What is of great importance to us is _____ (maintain) production at all cost.
- 9) In the _____ (landscape) business all you need is a few satisfied customers to do the word of mouth marketing for you.
- 10) The thing that worries me about starting my own company is _____ (unpredictable).

GLOSSARY	
to be affected by sth	być pod wpływem czegoś
unpredictability	nieprzewidywalność
a quarter	kwartał
to correlate with	być w korelacji z
to spike	wzrastać
the off-season	poza sezonem
wisdom	mądrość
to peak	osiągać najwyższą wartość
to run an ad / a campaign	nadawać reklamy / prowadzić kampanię
targeted	skierowany do konkretnej grupy
cash flow	przepływ gotówki
an evaluation	ocena
feast or famine	tłuste lub chude lata
in the black	na plusie
seasonal spending	wydatki sezonowe
to roll around	rozpocząć się na dobre
to time sth	dobrze coś zaplanować w czasie
marketing efforts	działania marketingowe
customers' buying cycle	cykl konsumpcyjny
to ramp up your efforts	zintensyfikować działania
to end up missing sth	ostatecznie przegapić coś
construction	budownictwo
landscaping	ogrodnictwo
retail	handel detaliczny
a bump	wzrost
to signify sth	oznaczać coś
to lay the groundwork for sth	położyć fundamenty pod coś
an early bird	ranny ptaszek

to convert a customer	przekabacić klienta
to be accredited to sth	być przypisanym czemuś
to augment sth	zwiększyć coś
to get a jump on competition	uzyskać przewagę nad konkurencją
market saturation	nasycenie rynku

ANSWER KEY:

Ex. 1

- 1) to be affected by sth
- 2) unpredictability
- 3) a quarter
- 4) to correlate with sth
- 5) to spike
- 6) the off-season
- 7) wisdom
- 8) to peak
- 9) to run ads
- 10) targeted
- 11) cash flow
- 12) an evaluation

Ex. 2

- 1) feast or famine
- 2) to rely on sth
- 3) to put your business in the black
- 4) seasonal spending
- 5) to roll around
- 6) to time seasonal marketing
- 7) marketing efforts
- 8) customers' buying cycle
- 9) to ramp up your efforts
- 10) to end up missing sth

Ex. 3

- 1) construction
- 2) landscaping
- 3) retail
- 4) a bump
- 5) to signify sth
- 6) to lay the groundwork for sth
- 7) an early bird
- 8) to convert a customer
- 9) to get a jump on your competition
- 10) to be accredited to sth
- 11) to run a campaign
- 12) to augment sth

Ex. 4

- 1) correlation
- 2) saturation
- 3) gaining
- 4) seasonality
- 5) functionalities
- 6) probability
- 7) inflation
- 8) maintaining
- 9) landscaping
- 10) unpredictability