Growing Your Business During COVID-19
Lance Leifert  
CEO, Conquest

Lance brings over 20 years of experience in technology oriented marketing and development. He graduated from the University of Connecticut in 1993 with a degree in Engineering and Computer Science. He pursued his graduate degree with Rensselaer Polytechnic Institution. His work career path led him to work with many aspects of technology and apply them to digital marketing and computer sciences. In addition, Lance has been an adjunct professor at the University of Connecticut for over ten years and sits on various boards.

Lance formed Conquest in 1997 as a digital agency. Conquest saw the changes in marketing trends and converted to an integrated marketing agency in 2015 offering both traditional and digital marketing services with strong digital capabilities. As pioneers in this new style of marketing agencies, Conquest has grown to be recognized as an industry leader and has helped clients of all sizes with strategizing and the implementation of cutting edge integrated marketing programs. Under Lance’s leadership, Conquest has worked with clients such as Hartford HealthCare, Aetna, Athena Healthcare, Hooker & Holcombe, United Technologies, MidState Medical Center, Connecticut Orthopedic Associates and 100’s more. Conquest continues to grow and help companies across the United States implement effective marketing campaigns that are custom tailored to each of its clients.
Strategies to Grow Your Business During the Pandemic
Most small businesses rely on a steady stream of new customers to keep the business financially solvent.

When sales dry up overnight, panic can set in and a reaction is to focus too heavily on obtaining new sales than to focus on retaining your existing customer base.
As most of us work from home, it is easy to feel isolated. However, we have previously formed business relationships with others that are in the same position and are as equally eager to connect with others as you. Leverage these relationships to network and prospect new customers.

Remember to help others as you seek their help.
This is not a time for “business as usual”. Trying to ride out the pandemic is not the right course for most businesses. This is a time to “think outside the box” to accommodate for the limitations on your business during this period.

Many innovative ideas of today will become the “norm” of tomorrow.
People’s lives and habits have changed. The majority of people are working remotely from a home office and tied to a desktop computer.

The majority of an average day is spent on Zoom (or equivalent) meetings. In-person meetings/interactions are at an all-time low.

How do you attract NEW customers in this environment? Marketing strategies that may have worked in the past might not work today or in our near future.
Communications technology has exponentially advanced for all of us over the last 15 years … more-so than it has in the last 200 years. Many businesses “dabble” in digital marketing strategies, however, now is the time to become fully vested in understanding and implementing strategies that can help grow your business.

Today we are going to focus on some of the core strategies that businesses should be considering during this time…
• Improving Your Online Visibility Through:
  • Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
  • Search Engine Marketing (SEM)
  • Local SEO

• Acquiring New Customers Through Hyper-Targeting Strategies and Data Analysis
  • Social Media
  • Retargeting
  • Marketing/Sales Automation

• Understanding Your Online Reputation
Improving Your Online Visibility
During COVID-19, most people are working in front a computer all day and will use **online searches** to seek out products and services. The more visible you are when a prospect performs a search, the higher the chance you have of gaining that customer. The core strategies that can help increase your online visibility include:

- Organic Search Engine Optimization
- Optimized Geo-targeted Landing Pages
- Local SEO
- Search Engine Marketing Programs (e.g. Google Ads)
SEO stands for **Search Engine Optimization**, which is the practice of making changes to a website’s structure and content to increase its search rankings without using an ad budget.

It also entails the practice of engaging activity off-site to increase a website’s PageRank (e.g. quality backlinks, reviews, social media, PR, etc).
Local SEO allows you to target individuals searching for your products or services with location intent. There are three primary location-based indexes that you should be listed in:

1) Google My Business

2) Apple Maps Connect

3) Bing Places for Business (can be synchronized with Google My Business)

Businesses need to ensure they capture and manage their listings in these global databases. It should also be noted that both Apple Maps Connect and Bing use Yelp, Trip Advisor & Facebook for reviews and images.
Google My Business (Local SEO)

- PCB assembly Litchfield County

About 101,000 results (0.60 seconds)

- Altek Electronics Inc
  - Rating: 4.9 ★★★★★ (11)
  - Electronics manufacturer
  - Torrington, CT
  - Closes soon - 5PM: (860) 482-7626

- Imperial Electronic Assembly
  - Rating: 1.0 ★★★★★ (1)
  - Electronic parts supplier
  - Brookfield, CT
  - Open now - (203) 740-8425

- Imperial Electronic Assembly
  - No reviews
  - Electronic parts supplier
  - Brookfield, CT
  - (203) 740-8454

More places
Apple is actively building its own maps and business database similar to GMB.

Apple has been relying on third party databases for business information and reviews (e.g. Yelp / Trip Advisor). It has become more reliant on its own information in recent years, and with the wide use of Siri to search for local businesses, it is more important to ensure your listing is accurate.
Bing Places for Business (Local SEO)

Altek Electronics
B2B
Address: 89 Commercial Blvd, Torrington, CT 06790
Phone: (860) 482-7626
Website: altkelectroncs.com
Hours: Closed in 11 mins

Reviews
***** (19)
Facebook - Oct 12, 2018 09:52 AM
Worked at Altek as incoming inspector for a short period of time. Professional and curteous really enjoyed the work and people I worked with. Full review

***** Facebook - Sep 03, 2017 07:07 PM
Treated me outstanding while I worked there. Someday I hope to be able to work again, and just stop by to say hello. Full review

***** Facebook - Apr 17, 2017 02:46 AM
happy to know this company,and wish to make some
Google recently released a program called Google Guaranteed that vets companies and allows them to advertise a “badge”. Google will guarantee their work up to $2,000 (in total).

Guaranteed companies are allowed to advertise in Google Local Service ads and get top listing on a search.
Geo targeted landing pages are pages that websites offer to show users WHERE they offer their products and services. They are unique for each location and they give businesses an advantage when users are searching for services or goods that they need or want locally.

Here, Standard Oil took a first place position for this search even though they are physically located in Bridgeport, CT.
SEM stands for **Search Engine Marketing**, which is the practice of paying for traffic leads to your website. The most popular form of SEM is through the use of Google Ads.
Using Social Media to Acquire Customers
Boost Your Social Media Advertising

With people stuck at home, we are seeing social media engagement increasing. July of 2020 saw a rise of 10.5% in social media engagement compared with July 2019.

Generally, social media is not the strongest lead generator. However, we find people browsing social media more often during their downtime and interacting with ads more influencing purchasing habits.

If you are not taking advantage of social media marketing, now is the time.
Coming into 2020, the most popular social media platforms are:

With so many options, How do we choose?
Facebook and Instagram offer the highest level of engagement for most businesses.
Many businesses continue to engage in organic only social media (e.g. posting to their Facebook/Instagram business page). For most businesses, organic posts have very low engagement and will not offer many opportunities to gain new customers.

Some businesses attempt to boost their posts for additional engagement. However, the true power of marketing on Facebook/Instagram is using the Facebook Ad Manager. The ad manager allows Facebook to run special algorithms to help you achieve specific campaign objectives.
### Ads Manager - Campaign Objectives (Ad Goals)

**Campaign:** Choose your objective.

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In addition to location, gender & age, Facebook allows you to fine tune your audience through **detailed targeting**.
Always use Manual Placements and turn off Audience Network. It provides very poor traffic and wastes ad budget.

**Tip: Avoid Audience Network**

- **Automatic placements (recommended)**
  Use automatic placements to maximise your budget and help show your ads to more people. Facebook's delivery system will allocate your ad set's budget across multiple placements based on where they're likely to perform best. [Learn more](#)

- **Edit placements**
  Manually choose the places to show your ad. The more placements you select, the more opportunities you'll have to reach your target audience and achieve your business goals. [Learn more](#)
Install the Facebook Pixel on your website.

Tracks Facebook users on your website.

Allows you to use conversion-based campaign objectives.

Allows you to build custom audiences that match the people coming to your website now.

Retargeting
Upload Your Existing Customer List To Facebook

Market differently to your existing customers. Create look-alike audiences.

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What about LinkedIn?
LinkedIn is a great resource for individuals with a niche business or talent.

Sales professionals can use LinkedIn to source prospects with tools such as Sales Navigator, LinkedIn Helper, and Seemless.ai.
Retargeting
Retargeting, also known as remarketing, is a form of online advertising that can help you keep your brand in front of bounced traffic after they leave your website.

For most websites, only 2% of web traffic converts on the first visit. Retargeting is a strategy allowing companies to reach the 98% of users who don’t convert right away.

The two most common methods of remarking are done through Google Ads (Display Network) and on Social Media (e.g. Facebook).
Example of Retargeting
Marketing/Sales Automation Tools
What is Marketing Automation

**Marketing automation tools** are platforms that marketers use to **plan, coordinate, manage** and **measure** all of their marketing campaigns, both online and offline.

Detailed tracking of traffic on your website at an individual level.

Track and measure the performance of your online campaigns.

Engage potential leads with custom email campaigns.

Much more.
Most marketing automation platforms have a robust CRM (customer relationship manager) to help you manage existing customers and track new leads as they enter the marketing automation system.
Email drip campaigns are a common component of marketing automation where a prospect that either fills out a form on your website or engages with an email you send, they are sent a series of emails based on their profile and product or service of interest.
**Sales automation** is included many marketing automation platforms that automates sales activities (e.g. creating opportunities in your CRM, changing pipeline stages based on the lead’s interaction with the sales automation content, etc.

1) Susie visits your website and fills out a lead form.

2) Her information is sync’d to your CRM and the sales rep for her area is automatically notified.

3) Susie receives a series of emails designed to qualify her and nurture her interest in your product.

4) One of those emails invites her to self-schedule a phone consultation based on her sales rep’s availability.

5) As a result of that conversation her needs are defined and a deal is created.

6) After moving through the sales pipeline, you win the deal and Susie becomes a customer.
Lead scoring is a methodology used to rank prospects using a numeric scale to determine the value of the lead to your business.

You can increase the lead score through custom factors you decide on. For example, if the lead visits your price page on your website, you can increase the lead score by 10 and if the lead has stopped looking at your emails after two months, you can decrease the lead score by 5.
Marketing Automation platforms can track the **life of your lead**. In this view, you can look at any lead that is being tracked by the platform to analyze every interaction the lead had with your marketing content and sales team.
You can create custom **landing pages** and stand-alone **forms** for your website that is used to specifically capture and track leads from specific campaigns. This gives you greater insight and control in managing and analyzing the performance of these campaigns.
Online Reputation
Online Reputation

During COVID-19, people are shopping for products and services online more and are spending less time visiting brick and mortar locations.

Even if we do everything right and prospects find us, we could easily lose them all if our online reputation tells a negative story.

Karen W.
Richmond, CA

I am so disappointed. I feel like I was just held up. I got a $10 caesar salad to go - What a rip. Terrible, boring dressing. 4 boring, no flavor croutons, powder cheese. I had to go home and use my own lemon wedge and anchovies, and find some dressing to put on the dreadful thing. There is no service there, but he has the tip jar pretty dang prominent. He definitely convinced me to not try anything else there.

Was this review ...?

Useful 13 | Funny 6 | Cool 2
Online Reputation Management includes strategies that help businesses improve and respond to online reviews that customers leave about their business on popular review sites like Google My Business, Yelp, Facebook and others. Online reputation management typically involves, at a minimum:

- Being aware of your online presence - daily monitoring / alert systems.

- Proactively asking customers to leave online reviews (7 out of 10 customers will leave a review if they’re just asked to by the business).

- Establishing and adhering to policies on how to respond to online comments / review.
Buying Based on Reviews is Natural

Our online habits have been naturally make us aware of online reviews.

HP
2018 Newest HP Premium 15.6" Laptop, AMD A6-9220 Dual-Core Processor 2.50GHz, 4GB RAM, 500GB HDD, AMD Radeon R4 Graphics, DVD-RW, HDMI, Bluetooth, HDMI, Webcam, Windows 10 (Newest Model)
708 customer reviews
478 answered questions
#1 New Release in Traditional Laptop Computers

Price: $287.99
Get $40 off instantly: Pay $247.99 upon approval for the Amazon.com Store Card.

In Stock.
Want it Monday, March 26? Order within 10 hrs 31 mins and choose Two-Day Shipping at checkout. Details
Sold by amazing topdeal and Fulfilled by Amazon. Gift-wrap available.

Size: A6-9220
Google utilizes quality review sites in online searches.

Examine the search results for: “sports medicine waterbury ct” - reviews are favored by Google…
It is VERY easy to find a place to complain about your business. A search on your business name followed by “reviews” will literally provide a clickable index of locations to leave a review for you.

Understand that if you are a business, you are listed on the majority of the review sites already and you may not be aware.
Pay attention to industry specific review websites that can rank equally as strong if not stronger than reviews from Google/Facebook/Yelp. For example, doctors typically are reviewed on Vitals, Healthgrades, Web MD, etc.
Software available to assist with online reviews

There are many online options available to help you gather online reviews.

- Gradeus
- Reputation Loop
- Social Climb
- Podium
- TrackStreet
You don’t have to spend money to get reviews.

Do NOT be afraid to ask for reviews by customers/clients that have had a good experience with you.
If you have questions for me after the seminar, please feel free to contact me at:

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