Constant Contact outlines SME marketing predictions for 2013

~ Savvy SMEs set to employ social media marketing as measurement becomes more accessible ~

LONDON--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Digital marketing is maturing as a whole. 2012 saw some major improvements to social media tools available to small businesses, including Facebook Business Pages, the rise of Pinterest, and just recently, Instagram's launch of brand profiles.

In 2013, Constant Contact®, Inc. (NASDAQ: CTCT), the trusted marketing advisor to SMEs, expects to see a significant transition in how small businesses embrace social media marketing and recognise it as a business-critical daily activity.

Here the company outlines its top three predictions for how SMEs will use online marketing in 2013:

1. Integrated email and social media marketing

Email adoption is expected to continue to grow, which means more people will have an email address in 2013 than in 2012. It will remain the preferred method of communication among consumers, and continue as their preferred marketing channel.

Email will become more important for SMEs as they discover it is the key element driving social media marketing results. Using both together to support one another can boost a campaign and bring greater collective benefits, as opposed to using just one or the other.

2013 will usher in a greater awareness of where email and social sit within the customer journey, and how to use them both effectively to drive business growth.

2. Social media measurement

Over the past five years or so SME attitudes towards social media have evolved from dismissive passivity to cautious curiosity.

For most small business owners, social media marketing has been something to experiment with when they have a few extra minutes in their day. In 2013, the use of Facebook for Business and Twitter will increase as SMEs begin to understand the value these channels bring to their businesses, and how to measure it.

In line with this, SMEs are fortunate that there are now more intuitive measuring tools available, such as Facebook's new ROI measurement tool, so businesses can decide whether they ramp up, reduce or change their tactics, in order to build deeper relationships with customers and effectively measure the benefits they are getting out of their online marketing.

3. Mobile goes mainstream

The digital ecosystem is becoming increasingly mobile. As smartphone adoption continues to grow, 2013 will see the mobile channel go mainstream for small businesses.

More SMEs will seek guidance on what they can do to target mobile customers more effectively, and in an economic way.

The focus on location-based marketing is closely tied to mobile, so expect to see more small businesses using this to target customers and attract new ones.

With consumer use of smartphones continually rising, it will become easier for small businesses to target specific, local customers.

In 2013, it will be even more important for SMEs to not only have their information distributed across the most popular apps, but also to have mobile-optimised websites so that potential customers can view their local information easily. In turn, this will lead to mobile becoming a great revenue stream for SMEs, as they use the channel to engage with both existing and potential customers.

Tamsin Fox-Davies, UK Development Director at Constant Contact comments: “We speak with small businesses on a daily basis, and we know they are more time- and resource-starved than ever before. For them, 2013 will be the year that Engagement Marketing becomes accepted as an important strategy for boosting business revenue by engaging customers and prospects. Next year will see more easy-to-use, integrated online marketing tools become available, which SMEs can use to deliver and measure tangible results.”

About Constant Contact

Constant Contact wrote the book on Engagement Marketing™ – the new marketing success formula that helps small organisations create and grow customer relationships in today’s socially connected world. More than half a million small businesses, nonprofits and associations worldwide use the company’s online marketing tools to generate new customers, repeat business, and referrals through email marketing, social media marketing, event marketing, local deals, digital storefronts, and online surveys. Only Constant Contact offers the proven combination of affordable tools and free KnowHow, including local seminars, personal coaching and award-winning product support. The company further supports small organisations through its extensive network of consultants/resellers, technology providers, franchises and national associations.

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