Constant Contact Predicts Big Data Insights Help Small Businesses Market Like Giants in 2014

Mobile payments and social media expansion will add to marketing strategies for small businesses on par with large brands

WALTHAM, Mass.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--As 2013 ticks away, Constant Contact®, Inc. (NASDAQ: CTCT) is looking toward 2014 and making its predictions for what's to come for small businesses. At the top of the list is this: 2014 will be the year small businesses take what they have learned from experimenting with social media and mobile strategies and make the move to executing multi-channel marketing initiatives.

"Single channel marketing actions will transform to integrated marketing campaigns for small businesses," said Gail Goodman, CEO of Constant Contact. "This move to cross-channel marketing will allow small businesses to connect more effectively with their customers – and the positive impact on their bottom line will forever change how they approach their marketing efforts."

As small businesses look to progress toward multi-channel marketing in the coming year, here are Constant Contact's top three small business marketing predictions for 2014:

#1 - Small businesses will benefit from Big Data insights

Small businesses have access to plenty of data, from sales receipts, to Facebook Insights, to Google Analytics, and much more. 2014 is the year when there will be new understanding on how this data can help their business, as they did with mobile two years ago and social media five years ago. Small businesses will find more insights they can quickly use to their benefit, such as what time of day is best to send out their email marketing campaigns and what types of social media content sparks the most engagement for their business. And the importance of mobile will come into sharp perspective as small businesses learn how many of their email marketing opens occur on mobile devices. With these insights, small businesses will run smarter, more affordable, and more successful marketing campaigns.

"Understandably, small businesses don't often have dedicated teams to leverage Big Data assets - but there will be greater attention given to how insights can be leveraged in 2014," said Jesse Harriott, chief analytics officer of Constant Contact. "Small businesses will benefit from the practical insights companies like Constant Contact pull from data, helping small businesses to see around the corners. And that will be a game-changer."

#2 – With strong consumer demand, mobile commerce becomes the norm, not the exception, for small businesses

In 2013, small businesses started experimenting with mobile business practices to target a rapidly growing consumer base of users that, according to ABI Research, is expected to reach 1.4 billion by the start of 2014. With 66 percent of small businesses currently using a mobile device, small businesses in the coming year will need to quickly react to growing consumer mobile expectations and implement mobile payment processes. The point-of-sale (POS) will benefit most from mobile payments, becoming mainstream for small businesses. A Constant Contact survey found that just over half (52 percent) of small businesses used a mobile POS last year, and that number should rise significantly as mobile payments become commonplace.

"2014 is the year the mobile commerce becomes standard for small businesses," said Andy Miller, director of innovation at Constant Contact. "Small businesses will need to react quickly to the shift in consumer expectations, as consumers will demand mobile POS and payments in droves from businesses large and small. The good news for small businesses is that the technology driving mobile POS has come a long way in the past few years, and 'going mobile' with POS is not a behemoth task to accomplish."

#3 –Small businesses will show, not tell, on social media

Over the last few years, social media marketing for small businesses has continued to trend upward. In a recent Constant Contact survey, small businesses continued to rate the "big three" social media channels (Facebook®, Twitter, and LinkedIn) most effective for their organization. That said, a variety of newer, more visually focused channels, like Pinterest and YouTube,

also experienced growth in effectiveness ratings from small businesses users, suggesting that the way small businesses engage with their customers on social channels will shift. With consumer attention spans getting shorter, sharable and visual content will play an increasingly important role in a small business marketing strategy. A powerful image or video will carry much more weight across social networks with small businesses creating more visually inspired marketing campaigns with fewer words.

“Earlier this year, we saw a rise in visual social media platforms like YouTube and Pinterest coming in just behind the big three in adoption growth among small businesses,” said Mark Schmulen, general manager of social media at Constant Contact. “In 2014, a picture truly will be worth a thousand words as small businesses increase their adoption of visual-based social networks like Pinterest, YouTube, Instagram, Tumblr, and Slideshare.”

For information on the latest trends and tips on small business marketing follow the Constant Contact blog: http://blogs.constantcontact.com/.

About Constant Contact®, Inc.

Constant Contact wrote the book on Engagement Marketing™ – the new marketing success formula that helps small organizations 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 organizations through its extensive network of consultants/resellers, technology providers, franchises and national associations.

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