



ECLIPSE COMMUNICATIONS  
**TREND TALK**  
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# BRAND REINVENTION IN THE AGE OF

## DIGITAL DISRUPTION

The shrinking media landscape and greater amount of time consumers are spending online has forced brands to rethink how to better use their digital platforms and become content creators in their own right.

There are several ways for brands to increase visibility, attract and retain clients, and improve online ranking against competitors. This is especially important today as increasingly more websites and social media platforms are transformed into e-commerce sites.



## OWN YOUR SPACE

Owned media is a cost-effective way to build relationships with existing and potential clients. When supported by strong search engine optimisation (SEO) and paid media strategies, owned media can ensure higher visibility of content, broader reach, greater lead generation and enhanced competitor differentiation.

## LOOKS TO MATCH

Websites are the window into brands' online presence, and according to *WebFX*, investing time and effort in either building a website or redeveloping one to meet business objectives is essential to success.

**94%**

of first impressions relate to a brand's website design

**89%**

of consumers shop with a competitor after a poor user experience

**75%**

of website credibility comes from design

**74%**

of users are more likely to return to mobile-friendly websites

Good websites improve conversation rates, primarily through calls-to-action and landing pages. They also increase site traffic and decrease bounce rates.

The key to successfully building or redesigning a website's homepage lies in simplicity. In addition to using targeted keywords, today's SEO algorithms judge the quality and relevance of content as key drivers for "top of search" placement.

## TOP SEO TRENDS FOR 2020

A strong SEO strategy is critical for driving and increasing website exposure and capitalising on emerging trends. While it is important to be aware of all search engines, to win big, brands need to play by the rules of the most used search engine, Google. Here are some of the SEO trends that need to be on brands' radars in 2020:

### UNDERSTANDING BERT



Artificial Intelligence (AI), deep learning and machine learning have advanced search engine capabilities and Google's Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers (BERT) is transforming how search engines work, compelling brands to focus more strongly on quality and relevance of content as opposed to merely keywords to get noticed.

### GETTING TO GRIPS WITH FEATURED SNIPPETS



Using bite-sized summaries of articles that appear at the top of a search, Google provides quick answers or summaries with a content snippet from a relevant website. These featured snippets are most likely to show up when a user's search is in the form of a question. Achieving a featured snippet involves directly answering users' questions within the first 55 to 70 words of an article. While there are no guarantees, getting this right can enable Google to use a direct quote to appear in the form of a snippet.

### SPEAKING THE RIGHT LANGUAGE



Voice search capabilities have enjoyed a surge in popularity as mobile device technologies evolve and users turn to their devices for information on-the-go. As such, SEOs need to optimise search results for how users speak and not only how they type. Keywords are no longer enough. SEOs need to include long-tail questions that users may ask.



## MOBILE SEO FIRST

Earlier this year, Google announced its switch to mobile-first indexing for all websites, commencing in September 2020. This means Google will now analyse a website's mobile content to determine its ranking across all device types, whereas in the past this was indexed according to how content rendered on desktop devices alone. SEOs now need to consider how a website's mobile content reads, appears and renders on mobile platforms before focusing on desktop renderings.

## THE ROLE OF VIDEO



*Forrester Research* reports that video is 50 times more likely to show up on the first page of a search page as opposed to a site consisting of content solely made up of static text and images. Although not always a guarantee of landing the top spot, creating embedded videos that support existing content can drive an increase in organic traffic from search engine results pages (SERPs).



Looking to increase your brand's online visibility? Send an email to [info@eclipsepr.co.za](mailto:info@eclipsepr.co.za) and one of our experts will be in touch.

## TOP SEM TRENDS FOR 2020

Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is key to expanding website exposure and increasing visibility for brands. While trends such as voice search and video advertising are making headlines in SEM strategy, *Digital Excellence* outlines additional trends that digital marketers need to consider:



### AI AND AUTOMATION DRIVING PPC

Pay-per-click (PPC) automation using AI and machine learning will assist in automating labour-intensive tasks associated with ads on various search engine platforms.



### SEO AND SEM JOINT USAGE

In the competitive landscape, SEO and SEM are the perfect pair. The data collected from paid campaigns can inform SEO on the most effective keywords to help boost organic rankings, while organic SEO can identify keywords worth bidding for.



### RESPONSIVE ADS

Expected to be increasingly relevant as they develop and become even more intuitive, responsive ads will save both time and money that would otherwise be used to test ad copy on search engine ads.



### CRO NOW A MUST RATHER THAN A MAYBE

Conversion rate optimisation (CRO) is a no-brainer in today's digital landscape. CRO should address and fix any leaks in the conversion funnel, thereby converting maximum traffic from search engines and promoting better ROI from search engine ads.

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