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Hot Stuff for 2014

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Posted by [Neal Leavitt](#) on November 24th, 2013 at 4:44 pm



Yes, it's that time of the year again – Internet marketing pundits and prognosticators are popping up everywhere to opine about what they think will be hot trends in 2014.

Some of these trends seem interchangeable with 2013; others may have a significant impact for companies and customers as technologies continue to evolve and improve.

Here are a few that grabbed my attention:

Suraj Sondha, who founded UK-based consultancy [Internet Marketing Highway](#), says Search Engine Optimization (SEO) will not be a primary traffic generation tool albeit it will still be a factor in page ranking. Local search will continue to be important, but we'll see a rise in what Sondha calls Social Media Optimization (SMO).

“More people are turning to social media for research and information; they're relying on their peers and brands they connect with,” said Sondha. He adds that Internet marketers need to better capitalize on this growing trend.

And mobile will matter more than ever. [Forbes](#), for instance, recently reported that by 2017, 87 percent of connected devices sales (including desktop and laptop PCs) will be smart phones and tablets.

“The shift toward mobile is undeniable,” added Drew Hendricks, writing in [Tech Cocktail](#). “Next year's Internet marketing battlefield will play out largely on mobile devices, as a growing number of users expect to access products, services, apps, and information on smart phones and tablets. Your business needs to have a responsive design in place and online features catering to a mobile audience.”

Many online users are bombarded daily with a plethora of ads. No matter if banners, frame ads or other formats, what's critical for 2014 will be the need for smart image content; and by that, specifically, content that's easy on the eye and quickly digestible. As reported by Jayson DeMers in [Forbes](#), blog posts that garner the most social shares all weave in strategically placed visuals to break up content and to emphasize key points.

“Another example is infographics which combines images with a minimal amount of text to explain a topic and provide statistical information or data from research studies,” said DeMers.

Two more trends worth mentioning.

Expect ad retargeting (a cookie-based technology that uses Javascript code to anonymously follow your audience online) to go mainstream. San Francisco-based [ReTargeter](#) (see their visual illustrating how the technology works) provides one of the more cogent explanations on how/why ad retargeting can be effective as part of an overall Internet marketing strategy:

“Retargeting works best in conjunction with inbound and outbound marketing or demand generation. Strategies involving content marketing, AdWords and targeted display are great for driving traffic, but they don't help with conversion optimization. Conversely, retargeting can help increase conversions, but it can't drive people to your site. Your best chance of success is using one or more tools to drive traffic and retargeting to get the most out of that traffic.”

And my favorite trend – less will be more. Again, most of us are getting so overwhelmed by online digital clutter that it is becoming a real challenge for Internet marketers to capture our attention – and wallets. Instead of shouting at us, DeMers reported in [Forbes](#) that we'll see more simplistic marketing messages that are clean and offer minimalist aesthetics.

“Innovative marketers are now making efforts to tone-down their campaign messages and not overwhelm consumers with hype,” added DeMers.

I hope this particular 2014 trend does indeed come true.

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