



12 HABITS OF EFFECTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETERS IN 2020

Part One



The time for social media to grow up and become a mature marketing channel is long overdue, and those who see the shifts as an opportunity to shine, rather than an obstacle will end up benefiting from social media more than they ever have.

In this three-part series of eBooks, we explore the top 12 things social media marketers need to embrace in 2020.

We begin with:

1. Social selling
2. TikToking
3. Pinterest

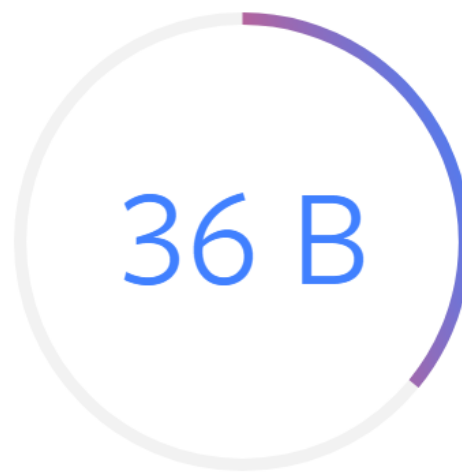


1

SOCIAL SELLING

There's no doubt social media has influenced consumers' purchase journey: Consumers now routinely use social networks to inform their purchases, eg, looking to influencers for ideas, checking out product reviews and discover promotional offerings.

Social referral to retail ecommerce sites has **grown 110%** since 2017, outpacing all other referral channels, and **30% of online shoppers** say they would be likely to make a purchase from a social media network like Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, Twitter or Snapchat.



36 billion GBP is the opportunity cost of ecommerce friction in the UK in 2019.

Sources: "40 Cart Abandonment Rate Statistics," Baymard Institute, Jun 2018. "Retail Ecommerce Sales in UK, Germany, France, Italy and Spain," eMarketer, Oct - Dec 2018. Exchange rate of USD 1 = EUR 0.87, Oanda.com, Mar 1, 2019.

But referrals to your website aren't the only way to drive sales through social media: social commerce is big business.



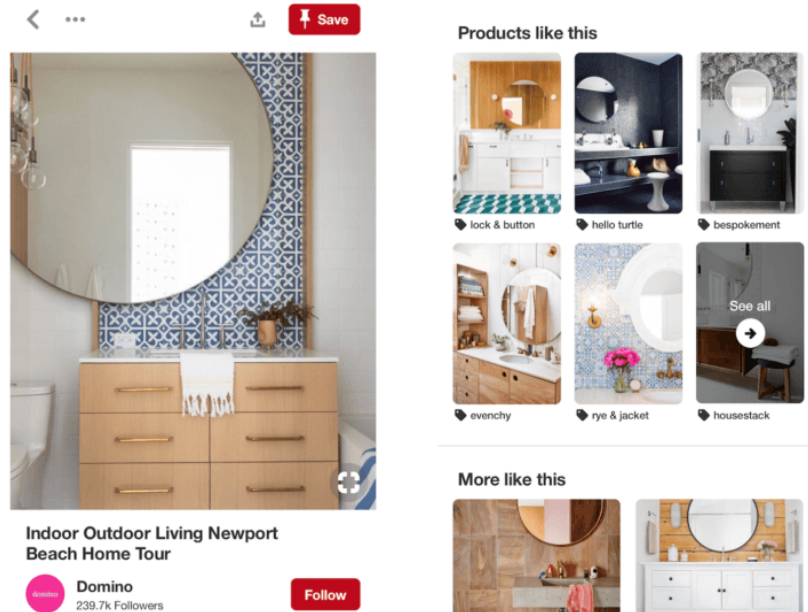
The increasing adoption of social commerce functionality enables consumers to purchase products without leaving their social apps, supporting the holy grail of online shopping: a frictionless eCommerce experience.

Consumers expect fast, straightforward and convenient – they want things now and if you're not giving it to them, someone else (ie, your competitor) will.

Here are the top platforms to go from product to purchase/discovery to checkout:

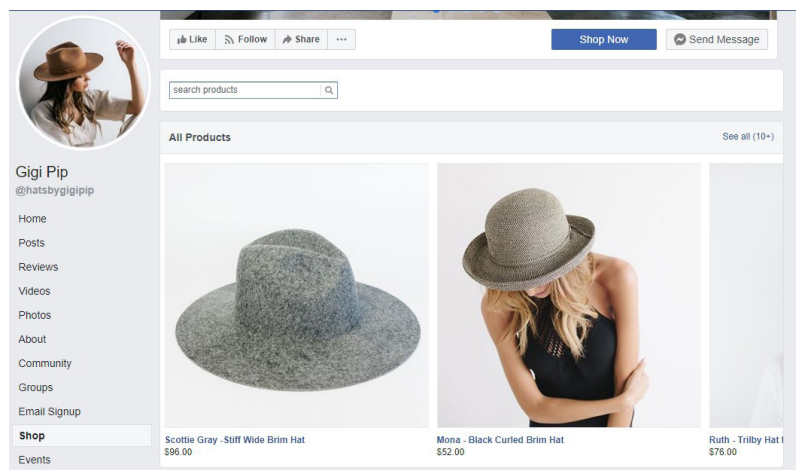
Pinterest

The discovery platform was a pioneer in in-app shopping with Buyable Pins (now known as Product Pins), which allow retailers to show up-to-date pricing and stock availability. This channel is often overlooked, but it's extremely effective as Pinterest users pay more per order than many other social media networks. (We go into more depth on this subject in Point 3).



Facebook

With more than nearly 2.5bn active users on Facebook every single month, it's a lucrative marketplace for social commerce. To enable this, Facebook allows you to create a Facebook Store, list products, and set up a shopping cart to connect payments without leaving the app. You do this by adding a 'Facebook Shop' tab on your Business Page.



Taking ‘Commerce’ one step further (but currently only available in the US) Facebook is rolling out a monetised ‘**Commerce Manager**’, which lets people discover, browse and buy your products directly on Facebook and Instagram. It also allows you to manage orders, see insights and track transactions in the platform, as well as offers tools for inventory management and order fulfilment. It even remembers your customers payment information so they don’t need to re-enter it each time, and customers don’t need to create any new accounts to complete a purchase.

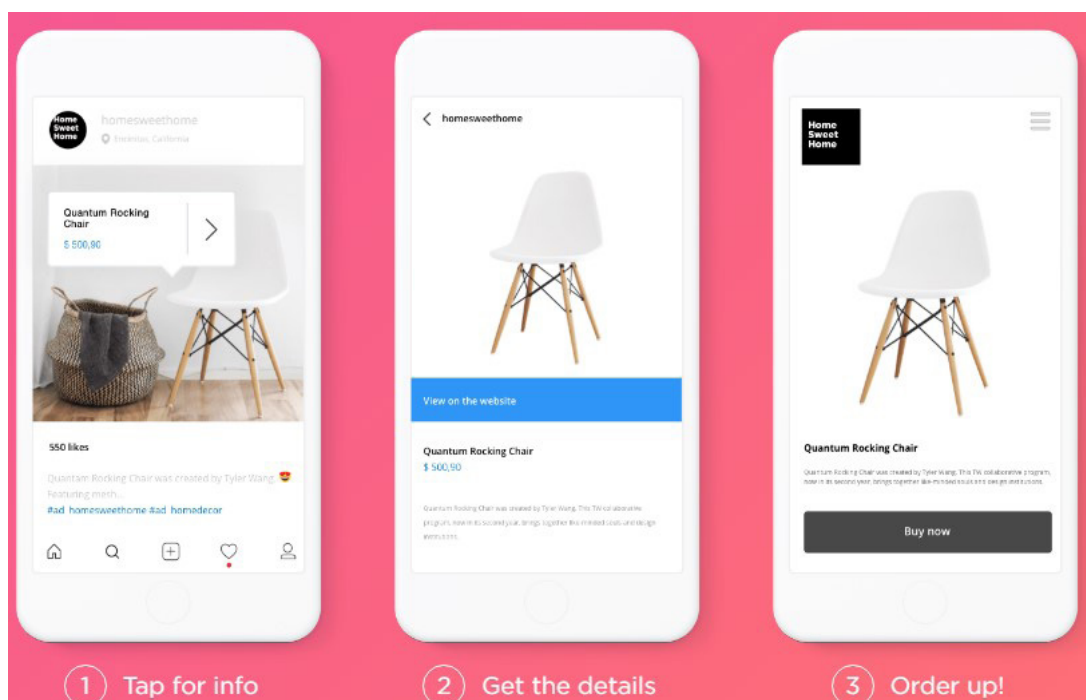
However, this might raise safety concerns for some consumers, given Facebook’s track record.

Instagram

With more than one billion users, Instagram is indisputably the new home for brands who want to make an impact on social. Its emphasis on clean, high-quality visuals makes it ideal for showcasing products—and now it’s the place for shopping, too.

Research conducted by Instagram found that 60% of Instagrammers learn about products and services on the app, while 75% take actions like visiting sites, searching, or telling a friend after being influenced by a post on Instagram.

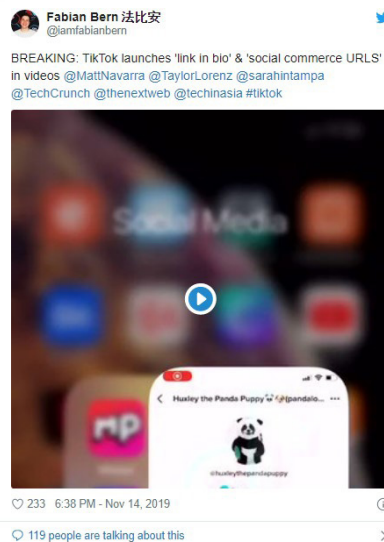
With the launch of a **fully native checkout** experience - “**Checkout on Instagram**”, in early 2019, users no longer have to leave Instagram to purchase many of the items they discover there.



In addition, Instagram's Shoppable Stories have been around for a while now. Businesses that are approved and set up to use Instagram shopping can add a product sticker to any story. When a customer taps on the product sticker, they'll be taken to the same product details page they would see if they tapped on a shopping post in their feed. (It's worth noting that businesses need a Facebook Shop account linked to Instagram).

TikTok

Last, but by no means least, TikTok has featured shoppable ads for some time, and is currently testing an option to shop in-app. Unlike the paid-for video ads from major brands, this offering could theoretically allow any TikToker to turn the platform into a one-stop shop for his or her own online store. Its inclusion of more eCommerce tools will bring it closer to features included by Instagram in recent years that have made it an important tool for merchants and brand influencers.



Takeaway: The entire customer journey on social media has to adopt the idea of frictionless eCommerce.

According to Hootsuite's 'Social Media Trends 2020' report, these new social commerce features are bridging the top and bottom of the sales funnel, creating a wealth of data around the customer journey. This bottom-of-the-funnel data can now be added to brand awareness activities, giving an invaluable holistic view of how people move through the entire buying journey.

For businesses, this means analysing your customer journeys to identify opportunities for frictionless conversions, ie, shopping – purchasing without leaving the app or site. Removing delays and as many steps as possible – every new step is a chance for a customer to abandon their journey. Social followers don't want to click through to gain value, and platforms want to keep viewers in the feed.

2

TIKTOKING

You knew this one was coming, didn't you?

With more than 500 million monthly global users, (and the most downloaded app of Q4 2018), TikTok is a bona fide phenomenon. TikTok's viral, short-form, meme/music video format is basically a rebrand of Musical.ly and has been compared to the now-defunct Vine.

What's behind this major surge in popularity? The format is simple with posts easy to create, enhance and edit; feeds are automatically personalised (TikTok uses an algorithm to show content based on your interests, preferences and content you've previously engaged with) and, importantly in the world of jaded app users, the content posted feels fresh, spontaneous, and genuine.



By encouraging users to interact and collaborate, the platform combines the best aspects of user-generated content (UGC) and the 'social' element of social media.

In fact, Karen Ngai, Click Consult's Digital Public Relations Officer, says the nature of TikTok will mean putting UGC creativity at the heart of social media content: "Despite the integration of AI and machine learning, TikTok's core function is to have its users produce and edit their own videos within the app.

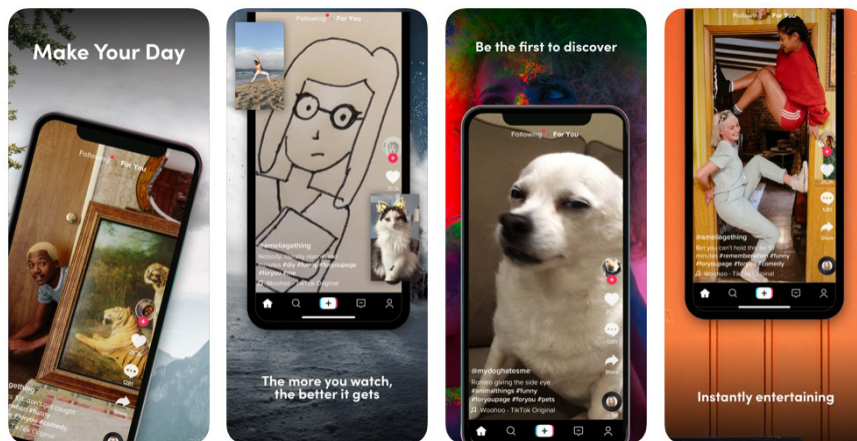
"These videos allow Gen Z, who are digital natives, to exhibit their desire for self-expression and redefine what they believe is good content (as they then become viral by sharing, replicating and built upon)."

"As technology becomes more and more readily available to help generate content, it will be much harder to cut through the noise. Content fuelled by unique creativity will undoubtedly be the way to help gain more traction.

"Other than creativity, there will be a greater demand for authentic marketing. When Instagram entered the market, we saw a rise in the polished, professional content and the importance of a carefully curated feed. With TikTok, we can see that trait has been reversed. The younger communities prefer creating candid, unfiltered content, which may seem like low-quality to the untrained eye."

As TikTok's popularity is being driven by Gen Zers for whom the quicker they can consume content, the better, TikTok fits into the previous penchants for Snapchat's bite-sized updates, Reddit's curated newsfeed, and the proliferation of social media's 'story' format.

They're looking for immediacy and convenience. This generation may have a lower attention span, but this is not because they're ignorant – far from it. It's because they know what they want and, having growing up as 'digital natives' who've never experienced life without the internet or wireless internet, they have a very keen BS filter. They're looking for concise and informative content on demand. This means they have a preference for content that's immediately engaging, and the visual and immersive nature of video fulfils this.



Colgate-Palmolive's success

The consumer goods giant put TikTok at the centre of a major campaign in Asia, designed to celebrate World Smile Day.

The activation encouraged people to film their smiles, which were then given an instant rating. It generated 1.6m user-generated videos and 2.5bn total views – numbers you cannot ignore.

The FMCG brand launched a hashtag challenge called “Smile Challenge” that covered India, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines over six days. Colgate introduced a customised smile sticker that can detect and virtually score the TikTok user's smile.

The effect on influencer marketing

TikTok is rolling out the capability to include links to stores and content in both your bio and in videos. While this opens an opportunity to sellers, it could also pose a threat to Instagram's influencer ecosystem as these features would make it easier for TikTok influencers to make money from their followers on the app.

It's worth noting that Instagram's apparent content saturation has recently been highlighted, and the effects it is having on influencer success, many of whom are seeing close to record-low engagement levels.

The social climber

Google sees fast-growing TikTok as a threat to YouTube's dominance among video content creators.

With 41% of its user base aged 16 to 24, TikTok is also encroaching on Instagram's territory. One brand that has leveraged TikTok to increase sales is clothing label Gymshark, who were already known for its well-designed influencer marketing campaigns on Instagram.

Gymshark has ported its influencer marketing expertise over to TikTok. Partnering with fitness and lifestyle influencers on the platform, the brand has furthered its reach and messaging.

With TikTok actively working on its eCommerce capabilities, and working fast to take advantage of its recent explosive growth and popularity, brands and marketers need to be aware of TikTok's increasing influence in this area.

Takeaway i: Create marketing campaigns that initiate UGC by making it easy and fun to engage with your brand.

The highly-customised nature of TikTok means personalised user experience is fundamental to attracting users, and emphasises the need for deep research into the interests and behaviour of niche audience groups.

Takeaway ii: Consider the advertising opportunity

Advertisers can currently run the standard in-feed video ads with age, gender, and state-level geo-targeting, but there are signs TikTok is widening the opportunity, having promised interest, behavioural, more granular demo targeting over time.

Last year, TikTok began introducing a "managed service platform" which brought the app into the biddable ads space, but still requires reps to run the ads. In other words, fully self-serve ads are not available just yet.

TikTok has also offered takeover ads and sponsored hashtag challenges – hugely popular on the app - which are where users are prompted to post videos of them using a product, or participating in a (often manufactured) viral trend. These have so far only been available well-known brands with big budgets, such as the Kruger challenge below – but it's worth keeping an eye out for wider rollouts, especially if your audience is primarily Gen Z.

3

PINTEREST

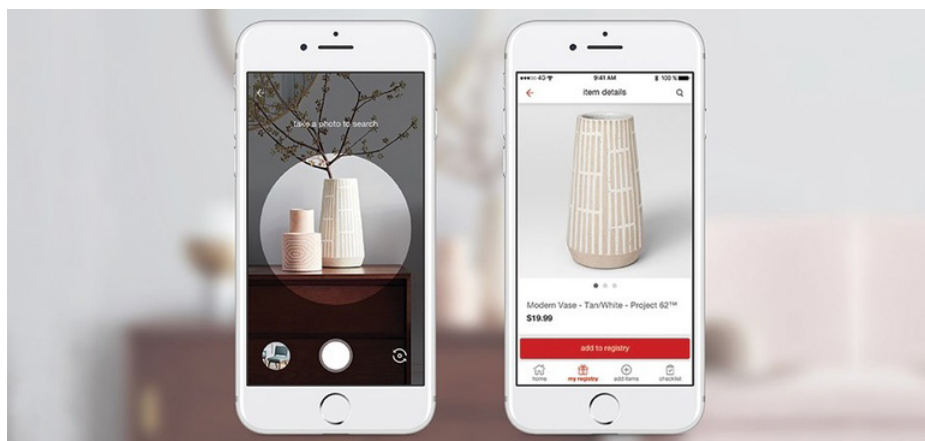
Maybe you weren't expecting this one as much? People don't talk about Pinterest as much anymore but, even as a relative oldie at 10 years old this year, its value isn't lost. It's just been quietly working away in the background on its main USP: its powerful visual search engine.

Visual search is an emerging development in the world of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) which has the potential to revolutionise how consumers find and buy products.

“The future of search will be about pictures rather than keywords,” Pinterest CEO, Ben Silbermann declared last year. And, as **62%** of Millennials and Gen Z desire the ability to visually search over any other new technology, there appears to be weight behind that claim.

Alongside Google, Bing and Amazon, Pinterest has already developed significant capabilities in this area and could comfortably be described as the leader in this field.

As evidence of this, in 2017 Pinterest completed a deal with Target to embed its Lens visual search technology within Target's apps and website – an example of how brands can incorporate visual search options as a way for customers to browse products easily on their site.

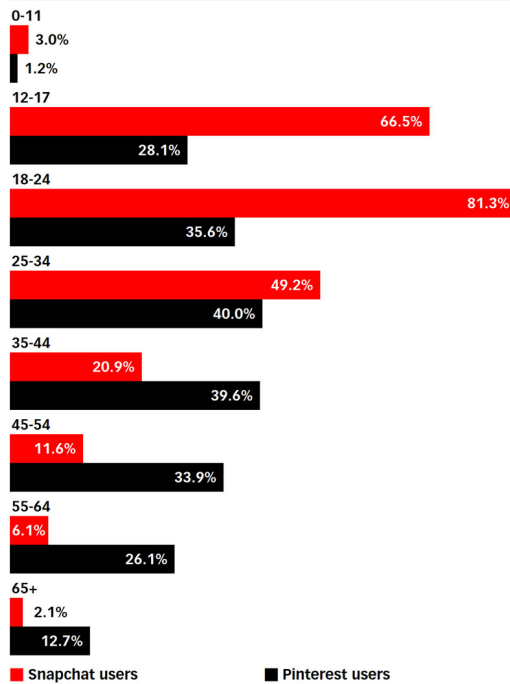


Another thing Pinterest has going for it is its “universal appeal,” having “made significant gains in a wide range of age groups,” explains eMarketer Junior Forecasting Analyst Nazmul Islam.

In fact, according to a recent report from eMarketer, in 2019, Pinterest overtook Snapchat as the third largest social media platform in the US.

Pinterest and Snapchat User Penetration in the US, by Age, 2020

% of population in each group



Note: internet users who access their Pinterest account via any device at least once per month; mobile phone users who access their Snapchat account via mobile app at least once per month

Source: eMarketer, November 2019

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Embracing social commerce

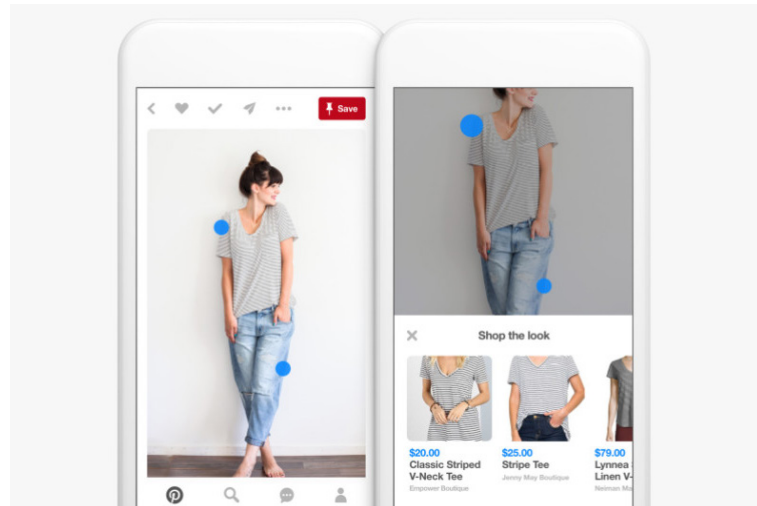
“Every day, people come to Pinterest to discover new ideas — and when they find a product they want to buy, it should be easy to purchase it”, says Pinterest Engineer, Kunlong Gu.

As we touched on in the beginning of the eBook, Pinterest pretty much blazed the trail in terms of social selling.

As well as the Product Pins mentioned earlier in this eBook, **Shop the Look** lets people make fashion and home decor purchases directly from a pin, by identifying products contained in an image and returning results for visually similar items.

Last year, this feature became fully automated, rather than using a human-in-the-loop approach which they claim helps Pinnerers get to products that match their interests faster and more accurately, and for brands to put customers on a path to purchase.

2019 also saw Pinterest further broaden its eCommerce capabilities by introducing a **Complete the Look** visual search tool that recommends relevant products in the home decor and fashion categories based on the context of scene (such as variations in lighting, decor, location, or even the subject’s body shape).



Shop the Look combines computer vision technology with human curation to recommend a variety of related products and styles.

These developments will provide an opportunity for eCommerce brands to gain visibility on the platform at a time when users are actively looking for inspiration, often for something specific, with high purchase intent.

Gu continued: “On Pinterest, 97% of the 1,000 most popular searches are non-branded (meaning people generally start with basic searches for products like “shoes” or “couch”), and so brands of all sizes have an opportunity to reach people who are in a shopping mindset.”

Takeaway: Retailers not on Pinterest could be missing a trick



With so much consumer and brand interest, it’s no surprise that visual search promises to be a breakout trend of 2020.

And with Pinterest making it easy to leverage social selling, this could be the platform on which to place your marketing efforts. After all, the numbers seem to speak for themselves.

A GfK “Path to Purchase” report from last November found that 78% of Pinterest users who engaged with home decor Pins made a purchase based on content shared by brands on the platform — that number increased to 83% of users who engaged with fashion Pins on a weekly basis.

According to Pinterest itself, full automation for Shop the Look has led to a 22.5x growth in Shop the Look coverage across Pins and products, and in early testing has led to a 7% lift in engagement.

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12 habits of effective social media marketers in 2020 - Part 2

- 4. A new breed of influencer
- 5. Re-evaluating social metrics
- 6. Making data accessible
- 7. Groups
- 8. Storytelling

12 habits of effective social media marketers in 2020 - Part 3

- 9. Video
- 10. Social TV
- 11. AR and playable content
- 12. Gaming

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Our complementary services include content marketing, outreach, social media, conversion rate optimisation (CRO) and international/multilingual search marketing. We can also offer training and consultation to support your teams or existing strategy.

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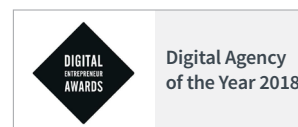
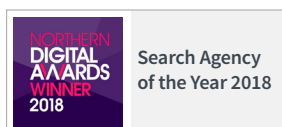
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