

# SIX DIGITAL MARKETING CONCEPTS TO FOCUS ON IN 2022

*CHEAT SHEET*



## SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION (SEO)

### 1. JOINED UP THINKING – ENTITY CREATION

Those that regularly read the content produced by Click Consult will know that the concept of ‘entity creation’ is a drum we’ve been beating for a while now. However, we’re reaching a point at which the shift from keywords to entities should no longer be considered a theoretical area of search – something discussed, but more academic than useful for practitioners – but a fundamental part of how we think about ranking brands for commercially important queries.

There is always disagreement as to when or if a particular tactic becomes obsolete – there are absolutely still practitioners that still write with keyword density as an ultimate objective (we know, we still come across their content from time to time). There are still agencies that employ link farms (and even comment spam). It should surprise no-one that there will be resistance to the idea that Google is advanced enough for this to be an issue.

What we’d recommend, should you remain unconvinced, is to read through the pieces we’ve published on structured data, check out the work that SEA does on patents and listen to Jason Barnard’s podcast which (among other things) regularly deals with branded SERPs and other aspects of entity detection, or take a look

at [this fantastic article](#) from InLinks’ Dixon Jones, who is an excellent follow on the topic.

While it will depend on how many of your competitors adopt the practice and at what point before it impacts your brand’s bottom line, 2022 may well be the last year where this is a technique that can help you steal a march on your competition.

In this regard, you should begin to think of your brand as an entity, and begin to connect that to the industry or sector that you operate in – think about how your brand fits in to the spider diagram of your industry, the terminology, products and people, and begin to sculpt the information you provide to make the most of the emerging ability of search engines to understand these intricate webs of meaning.

This goes for the products you supply, the people you employ, the content you produce – all of these should reinforce the signals that you’re sending about the brand, and the expertise you possess. It is this that, in future, will contribute to how well you rank for key terms, rather than how many times you mention the keyword in on-page text.

## 2. ACCESSIBILITY – EQUAL ACCESS FOR ALL?

We've put this under SEO, although it could really fall under any of the core search and digital marketing services, primarily because it can have a huge impact on the people able to search for your product or service. There are presently, according to disability equality charity Scope, 14.1 Mn people in the UK living with a disability. As things stand, the internet is a poorly functioning, unwelcoming place for almost 15% of the global population.

This is in spite of research conducted by Microsoft and Forrester (though others have conducted similar research) finding in 2016 that the benefits to brands outweigh the costs both internally in the form of improved talent pools and employee morale, and increased profit from and brand recognition within disabled communities.

While there is no legal requirement for brands to make their sites accessible, it is not hard to imagine that there will come a time when it becomes so – and it's likely that, before that, search engines such as Google, Bing and others will begin to incorporate accessibility signals in their ranking algorithms.

2022 is arguably far too late for this to be one of the selected core concepts to consider for the year, but the search and digital industry – due to tight deadlines, heavy workloads and, unfortunately, a lack of representation, is in part responsible for the poor levels of accessibility on the web.

There needs to be an industry-wide agreement that accessibility should be a core consideration, rather than an afterthought, for brands we work with – and that means that 2022/23 should be the last year that the issue of accessibility has the weight to appear in a list like this.

Focus	Benefits	As Measured By:
<i>Benefits associated with providing accessibility options for employees</i>	<b>Quantitative benefits:</b>	
	> Workforce productivity	> Time required to complete tasks
	> Recruitment costs	> Cost avoided by higher employee retention
	> Compliance	> Legal fees avoided
	<b>Qualitative benefits:</b>	
	> Access to wide pool of talent (recruitment)	> Improved employee morale/satisfaction
<i>Benefits associated with providing accessibility options for customers/constituents</i>	<b>Quantitative benefits:</b>	
	> Private sector: improved revenue	> Additional revenue from accessible website
	> Reduced servicing costs	> Costs avoided by servicing through the website
	> Compliance	> Legal fees avoided
	<b>Qualitative benefits:</b>	
	> Improved brand recognition and engagement	

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

## PAID MEDIA (PPC)

### 3. DATA – WHAT IS DATA AND HAVE WE BEEN USING IT CORRECTLY?

The whole of the search and digital marketing industry claims to be data-driven. However, it's often difficult to see where marketing ends and practice begins. For many years the industry has relied upon analytical platforms provided by ad sellers and search engines to make our 'data-driven' decisions – but is that enough, and as data privacy discussions become data privacy legislation, many within the industry – and brands that rely on similar data collection techniques – risk the possibility of being 'found out'.

In truth, marketing and advertising has always been data driven – as we've pointed out in pieces discussing the evolution of digital marketing as a discipline. There was simply a huge shift from reliance on qualitative to quantitative data as Google Analytics and similar platforms became available.

Now that regulations governing the use of cookies are likely to see an end to many methods of collecting that data, it will be necessary to decide which parts of the data we have been using to drive our decisions have served us well, and how we can continue to benefit from them in a cookieless world – and whether we have been overlooking qualitative data in our decision-making processes.

There is going to come a point when we may need to rely more on first party data to ensure that the increasingly opaque ad platforms are able to reach the right people – and that requires that we spend the intervening time contemplating the data we use, its general usefulness and which alternative data capture methods can help us to become genuinely data driven.

## 4. REFRESH – THE CHANGING FACE OF PAID MEDIA

For a long time now, tinkering with your Google Ads account has been sufficient to carry your performance through the latest set of changes to the way Google treats keywords and targeting, but 2022 is likely to be the last year that this will be the case. With an end in sight not just of the way users are targeted (as mentioned in the previous section), but also to a number of different ad formats and a move to responsive search ads (RSAs) as the primary ad type, older accounts will need to be [thoroughly audited](#).

This needn't be a negative, however, the chances are that most people currently managing Google Ads accounts have been looking to squeeze in a review of their account for some time. This year represents the perfect opportunity to make a convincing argument for that work to be carried out. Regardless of current performance, there are almost certainly optimisations that could be made – and acting sooner rather than later could prevent an unexpected drop in performance if top ads are eventually rendered obsolete and cease to be served.

For that reason, 2022 should be looked at by any and all Google Ad account managers as an opportunity to tackle work that has been long overlooked, or to make the case for further internal or external support to ensure that your current spend is as efficient as it can be and that you build upon the hard work of the past with the new tricks and tools that have been made available over the last few years.

While the 'new year new you' may be clinging on with the added stress of Veganuary, dry January, budget planning and all of the rest that a new year throws at us, we can come through this looking and feeling better – and with a much-improved paid media performance – with a little bit of determination.



## CONTENT

### 5. LET THEM SPEAK! SHOULD WE DO AWAY WITH BRAND VOICE GUIDELINES FOR BLOGS?

With the improving ability of various search algorithms to ‘read’ our content, there has been a lot of talk about writing for users over robots – but in addition to improvements in these areas, search engines are also greatly improving their entity detection, and has been actively encouraging brands to make the most of the expertise of their employees through EAT updates.

It is inarguable that there needs to be a specific tone of voice for a brand’s marketing, for its service and product pages etc. – we build relationships that way, and it provides stability to the brand as staff come and go. Corporate blogs are a different matter, however, and we may soon find that allowing writers to be themselves and put more of themselves into their work will help to reinforce their expertise rather than detract from an illusory uniformity of voice.

So, while it clearly pays to expect the best when it comes to spelling and grammar – is there really a need for corporate blogs to enforce guidelines? By allowing your writers to show off their personalities, is it not possible that they could earn a wider readership, and feel prouder of the work they do?

Obviously, the advances that will allow search engines to determine authors from passages of text is still a few years away, 2022 seems like a good year to begin considering whether brand guidelines or individual voices are more important to us – because when those advances arrive, they’ll be looking backward as well as forward.



## 6. ARE INFLUENCERS REALLY THAT INFLUENTIAL

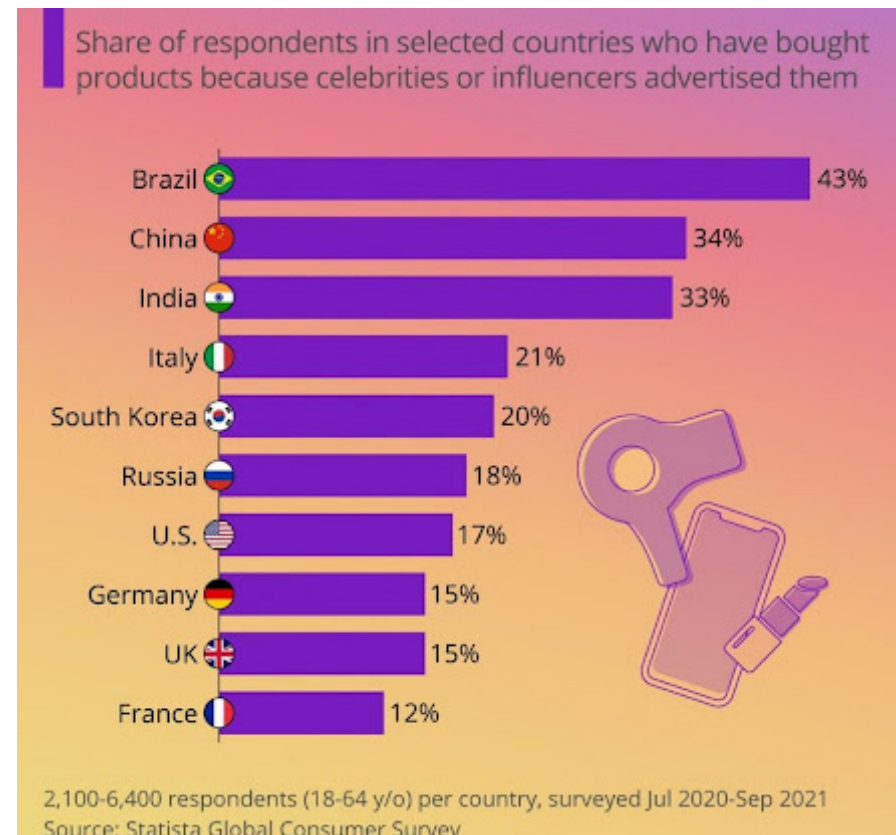
Despite the fact that influencer marketing has been on the rise for years now, there seem to be conflicting views on whether it has actually been useful for the brands using it. While, at first, influencer marketing was about capturing the sincerity and trustworthiness of the influencer – allowing brands access to engaged audiences – it has drifted into the domain of diluted celebrity endorsement, and lacks the things that made it special in the first place.

This has led to brands engaging more and more niche influencers – micro influencers, nano-influencers – but with each level, as soon as there's a profit motive, the integrity of the influencer is instantly questionable. So, can influencers actually be considered influential? Recent research from Statista suggests that, unless your brand operates in one of three countries, your budget may well be better spent elsewhere.

The joy of Nathan Apodaca and Ocean Spray wasn't dreamed up in a brainstorming meeting, it was a spontaneous moment of pure authenticity – something which is lacking in the majority of influencer campaigns (and influencers, for that matter).

So, what next for influencers? The truth is the Statista numbers don't give a full picture – you'd need to see numbers on things like social commerce, splits by age group and more to make a full assessment. The likelihood is that it will work for some industries more than

others, and for some demographics better than others. What needs to happen, however, is that there needs to be a conversation on whether it works and where – and how brands can prepare themselves to respond quickly to moments of authenticity when they arise organically.



## FINAL THOUGHTS

We hope these talking points will have provided some things to think about over the next year. They're the questions we'll be looking to answer here – and we'd love to include you in the discussions.

If you'd like something more actionable than theoretical, you can check out our [2022 trends report](#), or get in touch to see how we can help you navigate what is likely to be a busy year in search and digital.





## ABOUT US

Click Consult is a multi award-winning search and digital marketing agency with two decades of experience. Part of global consumer brand business Ceuta Group, we have a team of 70-plus specialists and a portfolio of more than 60 clients worldwide.

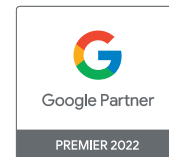
Click was named both SEO Agency of the Year and Organic Search (SEO) Team of the Year 2020; ranks within Econsultancy's 'Top 100 Digital Agencies', and Prolific North's 'Top 50 Digital Agencies'. We're also a Google Premier Partner, and a Microsoft Advertising Select Agency Partner.

We're here to help - whether you're looking to hire an agency to undertake technical and creative work behind the scenes until the present situation is clear, or you just need some free advice. You can get in touch using [hello@click.co.uk](mailto:hello@click.co.uk).

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#), or to find out what Click Consult can do for you, call:

**0845 205 0292**

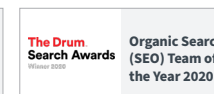
## OUR ACCREDITATIONS



## OUR AWARDS



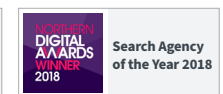
SEO Agency of the Year 2020



Organic Search (SEO) Team of the Year 2020



SEO Agency of the Year 2019



Search Agency of the Year 2018

## OUR TECHNOLOGIES

monitor **TRAX**™ rank **TRAX**™ feed **TRAX**™ link **TRAX**™ pro **TRAX**™ page **TRAX**™