



28<sup>th</sup> January is Data Privacy Day and “Data Privacy” is also this month’s topic. Previously we have discussed the scope of what privacy means for a business and why should it matter to a business. We also understand respecting consumer’s data privacy for a business is vital in strengthening the ties it has with its customers. Now let’s understand what steps a business should take to protect its customers’ privacy as well as its reputation without compromising the quality of its marketing campaigns.

Digital marketing has made it possible for a business to reach out to its targeted customers more intimately. It also enables them to keep up with the changing customer dynamics and interests and for that they often collect and store information. In many cases, customers don’t mind if it gives them a better online experience, however, this all happened before the frequent news of data breaches that has created a fear amongst the customers about the security of their personal information.

With tougher regulations against data privacy and the rising distrust amongst customers, marketers are in a fix. They’re struggling to figure a way to create a highly relevant, targeted campaign with the limited use of the customer data without breaking the laws as well as without compromising the quality of their campaign. A business, if it doesn’t respect customers’ privacy then any data breach will damage the reputation and the net value of that business. How a business should then proceed while planning a digital marketing strategy? What are the steps to be taken by a business to ensure that the personal information of its customers is protected without affecting the integrity of its marketing campaign? Here are the following six steps tips that will help a business in becoming a safer and more trusted brand, thus creating strong ties with its customers.

• **Keep a check on the data collection and retention**

Businesses often collect data but they also tend to retain a lot of extra information thinking they might need it in the future to deliver their product or service. This increases the risk of data breach as some businesses are not well equipped in securing data of high volume and at times, they allocate unsolicited third parties to access the information to safeguard it.

• **Storage & Confidentiality of the data**

If it’s necessary to store additional data, then a business must employ a firewall to keep hackers out and sensitive data in or scan any new device or program against malware, bugs or viruses before installing it.

• **Reduce vulnerability to data breaches**

A business, irrespective of its size must respect the privacy of its customers while planning digital marketing tactics as customers are the ambassadors of its brand. If there are certain risks involved with a particular service or product, a business must make it clear to its customers and give them a choice to accept or reject the product or service.

• **Compliance with Privacy Legislation**

Marketers must comply with the regulations and have an adequate data protection and be able to delete personal data if a customer ask them to. A business must proactively ask for customers’ consent before collecting or tracking any identity, even an IP address. If there is an occurrence of data breach then a business must communicate with its customers. The business must explain its customers the necessary steps that needs to be taken to avoid further damage to their data or information.

• **Be transparent about your Privacy Practices and Options**

Data collection about customers’ interests and dynamics has been an integral part of digital marketing strategy. What the business needs to do is to be open about how they collect the data, how much data is being collected and what type of data is being shared and with whom.

• **Clarity in display of policies**

A business should ensure that its data policies are easily accessible to the customers. It also should inform the customers about any new change in the features or options already available in the present policies or newly launched policies, products or services that involve their personal information and the change will affect it in some manner.

**Quick Facts**

- By 2020, 50% of all searches will be voice searches.
- Now-a-days, 19% of people are using Siri at least once a day.
- 55% of teens & 44% of adults are using voice search on a daily basis.

Source: Forbes

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