

BREAKING INTO DIGITAL MARKETING

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO LAUNCHING
YOUR CAREER IN DIGITAL MARKETING



DIGITAL CREATIVE INSTITUTE

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Discovering Your Place in Digital Marketing

Chapter 2: Turning Limitations Into Opportunities

Chapter 3: Understanding the Marketing Landscape

Chapter 4: Becoming the Ideal Hybrid

Chapter 5: Taking Action

Chapter 6: Shaping Your Future

Appendix: Cheat Sheet and Quick Links



CHAPTER ONE

Discovering Your Place in Digital Marketing

Imagine hitting “publish” on your first digital marketing campaign.

The landing page is ready, a call-to-action box has been added, social media posts have been scheduled, and a carefully crafted email has been sent.

You smile with satisfaction at the skills you acquired in planning, organizing, curating, and editing this content. Along the way you even discovered a key insight from the analytics that resulted in identifying an entirely new growth segment.

You learned and, at times, struggled, but you refused to give up. You did it. You successfully started your career in digital marketing and have already distinguished yourself as a tenacious learner. Your trajectory is set to become an ever growing, highly competent marketer.

What if this really described you? Are you interested in digital marketing but unsure where to begin? Then this guide is for you!

Keep reading to learn how you can position yourself as an indispensable marketer in an industry experiencing both remarkable growth and a talent deficit. The practical steps in the following chapters will equip you to launch your career in digital marketing and begin work you love. **The tools are here. The time is now.**

The story of marketing has transitioned from the old days of a traveling salesman with a briefcase to the industrialism of mass media broadcasts to an age of digital connection and individualism. Even what we call “interruption” advertising—mass media designed to interrupt our train of thought and capture our attention—has undergone a digital makeover; cold calling and direct mail marketing are now joined by popups and intrusive banner ads. Mass media



broadcasts—standardized messaging distributed via TV, radio, and even spam emails still exist, but they don't carry the same impact due to the ubiquitous technology so many of us use daily. We have DVRs that let us skip TV commercials, spam filters to keep unwanted mass emails from our inbox, and browser extensions to block popups (not to mention mp3 playlists and internet

radio subscriptions that allow us to bypass advertising between songs). It's no longer a guarantee that consumers will be reached via mass market advertising.

A new kind of marketing is emerging—one that takes the emphasis off the company and places it on the consumer. Some call it inbound marketing, or permission-based marketing. Inbound marketing empowers brands to build relationships based on trust and enabled by technology. Think about the difference between a spam email and your favorite podcast. One, you filter out and never see because it's a noisy interruption. The other, you anticipate because it adds value to your life. And that product, your favorite podcast, exemplifies a

“As new forms of media develop and clutter becomes ever more intense, it's the asset of permission that will generate profits for marketers.” - Seth Godin

shift from sales to marketing. From interruption to permission. From outbound to inbound.

This change is not so much about digital marketing as it is marketing in a digital world. Consider the exponential growth in social media, mobile apps, and even car infotainment dashboards over the past few years. Today's world operates in the connection economy where relationships—enabled by technology—matter more than ever. Building trust is paramount.

Businesses can cultivate these trust-based relationships by creating compelling content. “A significant 58% of marketers stated that original written content is the single most important form of content [for social media marketing], followed by original visual assets (19%),” according to Michael Stelzner in his 2014 Social Media Marketing Industry Report.

Inbound digital marketing works because it is customer-centric. Marketers are putting away their megaphones and conversing with consumers one-on-one. This kind of marketing finds the right people

and interacts with them on their terms. It solves problems for the consumer. Permission-based marketing is the art of crafting a true brand experience.

“Many companies have forgotten they sell to actual people. Humans care about the entire experience, not just marketing, sales, or service. To really win in the modern age, you must solve for humans. Every process must be optimized for what is best for the customer—not your organization.”
Dharmesh Shah

Statistics overwhelmingly validate the efficacy of inbound marketing. “...In 2014, more than twice as many respondents cited inbound (45%) as their primary source of leads versus outbound (22%),” Hubspot’s [State of Inbound 2014 report](#) stated.

The fusion between technology and marketing has taken the wildest dreams of marketers of 10 years ago and turned them into reality. Before the twenty-first century, it was impossible to conduct personalized business at

scale. Now it is not only possible, it is essential. “The ability to find people, to talk specifically to them, to judge them, to rank what they’re doing, to decide what to do with your products... (it) changes every business globally,” reflected Eric Schmidt, Chairman of Google.

Some technology solutions were created over a decade ago, such as Constant Contact in 1998, Google AdWords in 2000, and MailChimp in 2001. However, over half of the 2,000+ marketing technology solutions available today were launched in 2014. These digital innovations span a vast array of the industry’s more recent needs, including:



This list reflects the areas of expertise businesses must develop and incorporate in their marketing in order to succeed in today's technology powered connection economy. These are just broad areas though—the potential skills a marketer could acquire within each area are extensive.

Tomorrow's skilled marketers understand the *why* behind their marketing (client needs, company solution, and the story tying both together) and *how* to execute campaigns (channels, tools for automation, etc.). Then they use that understanding to curate the *what* for their creative campaigns. They are hybrids, incorporating elements of traditional marketing with current-day analytics and cutting-edge technology.

**“People don't buy what you do,
they buy why you do it” - Simon Sinek**

Unfortunately, talent—or rather, a lack of talent—restricts us from maximizing our available resources. Technology has grown exponentially while talent has only developed marginally, if at all. A lack of skilled marketers leads to severely under utilized assets and ultimately lost revenue. The marketing industry will face an even greater talent deficit as innovation continues to accelerate.

Unless more hybrid marketers launch.

Could you be the next hybrid marketer the industry so desperately needs? Are you ready to launch your career in digital marketing? Reading this guide is the first step.

Take note! You are embarking on a journey that could seriously alter your destiny!



CHAPTER TWO

Turning Limitations Into Opportunities

Marketing technology jobs represent one of the fastest growth sectors in the nation.

Companies are beginning to focus more on digital marketing hires as they see the driving force behind customer traffic shift from sales to marketing. Budgets reflect this shift. Digital marketing took up about 25% of overall marketing budgets in 2014 and an 8% increase is projected for 2015, according to the [2014 Digital Marketing Spending report](#) by Gartner, the world's leading technology research and advisory consultancy.

Remarkably, the digital transformation and the influx of new marketing technology create more jobs than they eliminate. This is your cue.

We have the opportunity to accomplish the extraordinary in today's tech-infused marketing. All the necessary resources are within reach. Yet the full potential of personalization, automation, analytics, asset management, and a plethora of other tools has yet to be realized. A gap has evolved between what the current technology can do for us and what we know how to do.

We need a new kind of marketing talent: individuals immersed in technology and committed to growth. We need voracious learners. Tomorrow's marketers will be apprenticeship-minded hybrids (more on hybrids in Chapter 4).

So what does it mean to have an apprenticeship mindset? And why does it matter?

The apprentice mindset, as we see it, requires a commitment to learning with humility. In practice, new industry entrants (such as recent grads and career-changers) pursuing a career in digital marketing will work full-time with expert and high-ranking employees. This gives the opportunity for these entry-level workers to immerse themselves in a learning environment centered on their work while providing value to their employers as they learn and grow. The employer profits from increased revenues

and the employee benefits from increased job security and higher demand. To learn more about the apprenticeship mindset, read an interview with a digital marketing apprentice (links in the Appendix) or the [Apprenticeship Manifesto](#).

The wildly explosive growth of digital technology creates daily shifts and changes. Everyone—from entry-level talent to managers—must simultaneously learn and rapidly adjust to the massive influx of new solutions. (For proof, check out Chief Marketing Technologist Scott Brinker’s inundating infographic on the [Marketing Technology Landscape](#).) This translates into an incredible opportunity for you to realize your career aspirations regardless of your current skill level. The entry-level digital marketer may quickly come to know as much, if not more, about technology as the marketing manager or director.

But know from the outset, you will not succeed by being average. Graduating with the same piece of paper as every other job candidate is

not sufficient. You must differentiate yourself with the mastery of critical technical skills and evidence of an apprenticeship mindset. Be exceptional. You have what it takes and the marketing industry is eager.

The opportunities are truly unprecedented. How will you make the most of it?

CHAPTER THREE

Understanding the Marketing Landscape

The growth of inbound and content marketing has led to a shift in how marketing organizations are structured.

Most In-demand Marketing Titles

(according to the [2014 Kapost Content Marketing Hiring Handbook](#))

- 1 Director of Content Marketing
- 2 Managing Editor
- 3 Content Marketing Manager
- 4 Community Manager
- 5 Creative Director
- 6 Web / Interactive Designer
- 7 Videographer

While marketing departments use a variety of job titles, begin thinking in terms of the following 7 broadly defined roles outlined by Bernie Borges, CEO of Find and Convert:

1. The Visionary. The visionary is the person who “owns” and drives content strategy, including building the right team to execute that strategy. This is usually the top-ranking marketing officer, developing marketing strategy to align with the company’s goals and reporting directly to the C-suite.

2. The Project Manager. The PM turns the content strategy into reality by identifying each element that needs to be executed. This means setting up an action plan, securing the resources necessary for execution, and managing the project from start to finish.

3. The Story-Teller. Also known as Master of Words. This role drafts the story or series of stories that bring the content to life. (Writing or journalism skills are transferrable in this role.)

4. The Editor. An Editor reviews the story-teller's work and edits not only for punctuation and grammar, but alignment with the brand itself. Editors make sure the message is appropriate for both the organization and the audience.

5. The Creative. Creatives visualize the story by adding creative elements—often graphic design and other imagery—to make it more interesting.

6. The Technical Director. Sometimes called the Technical Editor, this role oversees the digital execution of content across the various channels. Commonly used technical skills include image editing, video production, animation and audio production.

7. The Analyst. The Analyst has the critical task of measuring the efficacy of the content strategy. Working closely with the visionary and project manager, this role analyzes the available data and provides recommendations based on the analysis. It requires skills for a variety of software tools including social listening technology, marketing automation software, and (of course) analytics tools and spreadsheets.

WHICH ONE ARE YOU?

In addition to the variety of roles any given digital marketer might play, the roles play out very differently within each type of organization. As you begin to explore working in digital marketing, you will likely encounter these various organizations:

1. An Agency. Agencies range in variation, but all tend to be fast-paced and demanding. A traditional agency is vastly different from a niche or a hybrid agency; and large agencies diverge substantially from small ones. Typically any agency will offer a continuous flow of new challenges and a variety of interesting projects.

2. A Startup: Startups are in their heyday at the moment, providing an interesting environment centered on customer empathy and insight. They may not offer the prestige of a big name, but a position at a startup is certain

1 Agency

2 Startup

3 SME

4 Enterprise

5 Entrepreneur

to be mission-critical and will directly influence the growth and success of the company.

3. A Small or Medium Enterprise “SME”. This is quite possibly the most overlooked opportunity, but also potentially the most rewarding. The business is typically established and looking to expand digitally. It offers a spectrum of learning experiences from managers across disciplines. The hybrid marketer here is a pivotal hire

and will find a clear path to increased responsibility and leadership.

4. An Enterprise. This is often a highly prized role because of the brand’s recognition in the marketplace and the perceived job security. If you want to be extremely specialized, enterprises are a great place to dive deep, but the availability of these opportunities to new talent may be limited compared to other organizations.

5. An Entrepreneur. If you desire to launch your own company, digital marketing skills are some of the very best tools you can have to support this new venture.

Which one
will you
choose?



CHAPTER FOUR

Becoming the Ideal Hybrid

The professional environment today promotes a fluid intermingling of disciplines. As a result, the most in-demand professional is a hybrid.

Hybrid: / hī brid/ noun

1. An individual equipped to perform across disciplines and adept at integrating solutions across platforms. A person with traditional and avant-garde skills.



Hybrids are T-shaped. They have a broad range of fundamental competencies with one or two deeply specialized skills. Sounds almost like a modern superhero, right? And chances are, this does not describe you. At least, not yet. Do not lose heart—you are in good company. The fact you are reading this ebook demonstrates your desire and willingness to learn.

So what should you learn? Start by cultivating the following 9 key traits identified by Paul Roetzer, founder of PR2020, a leading digital marketing agency. Roetzer recommends in his [Hybrid Marketer ebook](#) that job candidates be evaluated based on their demonstration of each of these traits:

1. **Analyst.** You're capable of providing tangible evidence of your



competency, such as website traffic, leads, and sales.

2. Creative. You think outside the box, innovating new ways to advance your organizational strategies and mission.

3. Intrinsically Motivated. You find fulfillment in something greater than yourself, while at the same time you seek autonomy and balance.

4. Listener. You have good listening skills and you can synthesize what you hear in the world around you.

5. Social-Web Savvy. You're a part of the online conversations

relevant to your interests and industry.

6. Strategic. You can see the big picture and develop well-integrated tactical plans to get there.

7. Tech-Savvy. You stay informed on emerging technologies, research and test what's new, and find relevant applications for your organization or career.

8. Team Player. You collaborate well and continually add value to the company.

9. Writer. You seek opportunities to strengthen your writing skills for both creative and technical pieces.

Armed with these core characteristics you can begin cultivating an array of technical skills. Aim to learn at least the basics within each of the following key technology areas. And remember, learning practical skills is never once-and-done in the evolving world of technology. Keep learning to stay sharp.

- Analytics
- Automation
- Content Marketing
- Coding
- Communication
- Data Analysis
- Data Modeling
- Database Querying
- Design
- E-mail Marketing
- Inbound
- Mobile
- Project Management
- Social Media
- Strategy
- Technologies

No doubt this is a daunting list even for experienced marketers, but each skill is essential for a hybrid. If you are not sure where to start, focus on the following six topics first:

1. Data Analysis
2. Content Marketing
3. Social Media
4. Email Marketing
5. Mobile
6. Coding

“Tactics and engagement are top areas marketers want to master: At least 89% of marketers want to know the most effective social tactics and the best ways to engage their audience with social media.” according to Michael Stelzner’s 2014 Social Media Marketing Industry Report.

Acquiring strategic and practical skills enables you to become proficient in leadership, technology, and marketing. Becoming a hybrid marketer is hard. (Otherwise everyone would become one.) But it is attainable for those who are teachable and eager to push the boundaries of their current expertise.

Become T-Shaped in your knowledge and skill level. Learn the fundamentals of IT, human behavior, business strategy, and other related disciplines in addition to marketing. Expand your technical skills. Then delve into 1-2 specialties to position yourself as an expert. Use your specialization to find your ideal job and exercise your generalist skills to deliver tremendous value to the position.

This is your chance to become a modern superhero. Accelerate your career by becoming tomorrow's hybrid marketer.



CHAPTER FIVE

Taking Action

At this point, you should have a clear picture of your digital marketing career path and understand how to become an in-demand hybrid marketer.

But you might be wondering – what can be done right now, today? What is the next step?

Assessment

First, discover where you need improvement by taking this quick (free) talent assessment. It outlines the most critical technical and strategic competencies you will need.

As previously mentioned, it is likely you do not have all the necessary skills and experience right now, especially if you recently graduated from college or just transitioned to the marketing industry. And that is okay. This chapter is designed to empower you with valuable resources that will kick-start your growth.

Certifications and Courses

A couple relevant certifications will serve to distinguish you as someone who is both qualified and serious about marketing, especially when listed on your resume or LinkedIn profile.



1. Hubspot Inbound and Hubspot User certifications



2. Google Analytics certification



3. Google Adwords certification

MOOCs and other online course providers offer fantastic training at a very reasonable price (some are even free) and in a convenient, flexible format. Check out courses at [SkillShare](#), [Udemy](#), [Udacity](#), [Coursera](#), [CreativeLive](#), [Treehouse](#), [Code School](#), and [Lynda.com](#). Or for a one-stop search of all online course providers, go to [CourseTalk](#).



Mentors

Possibly nothing else will influence your career as much as the decision to proactively cultivate mentor relationships. The best mentors have more experience and a dynamic perspective on the industry, your career, and business in general. They offer clarity on your next steps, offer insight into your current work, and give invaluable guidance unlike any other resource.

But how do you find great mentors?

Begin by identifying potential mentors in your existing network and evaluating their characteristics, experiences, or expertise. What do you want to learn? Express your interest in learning one thing. Apply what you learn and repeat the process. Be specific and intentional.

Tap into your professional network through LinkedIn if you need a mentor with a specific skill or industry expertise. Continually expand your network and do not be afraid to ask your connections for introductions.

Another goldmine in LinkedIn is their groups. Become active in one or more of these and look for the individuals whose advice and contributions you consistently find valuable.

You can also utilize your social network on Twitter. Most marketing leaders on Twitter engage in conversations and appreciate good questions. Identify potential mentors, research their background, and come up with an insightful question to ask them. The conversation that unfolds could turn into a breakfast or coffee meeting and potentially a long-term mentoring relationship. The key is to thoughtfully engage, not just follow and stalk.

Connecting with local mentors affords easier logistics and possibly more frequent (and more helpful) meetings. Two great ways to find local mentors are by attending marketing specific [Meetups](#) and engaging with your [local AMA chapter](#). Becoming an AMA member is a good idea, but it is not required for participation.

Conferences and Coaching

Conferences are another effective, but often under-utilized way to make highly valuable connections and begin forming strategic relationships. While they may be expensive, especially with travel and lodging, you position yourself for big wins by being the only entry-level person in a room full of seasoned professionals. A few of the

conferences we recommend include [SXSW Interactive](#), [MarTech](#), [Inbound](#), [Content Marketing World](#), and [MozCon](#).

If you are committed to achieving your full potential, work one-on-one with a coach to identify your goals and the best way to achieve them. Benefits of coaching include increased motivation (because you are on the hook financially to make the most of this investment), accountability, and a more direct plan to get and stay on the critical path to your goal.

Another more indirect form of coaching is through books or blogs. Invest in your own personal library and read as much as you can. (See the Appendix for specific recommendations.)

Projects, Portfolios, and a Personal Brand

Look for new, challenging digital projects. Completing freelance projects builds an archive of material to show potential employers and also gives you valuable experience in the marketing industry. This is especially important to do before you get a full-time job in marketing. Most desirable positions require 3-5 years of work experience, but with enough relevant projects outside of a job, that requirement might be waived.

You will need a portfolio of work to demonstrate your competency. Whatever projects you work on –

whether building a website, designing graphics, or creating case studies with data analysis – compile them in an easy-to-review location. Show, don't tell, with your portfolio. Let your accomplishments prove you are knowledgeable and have hands-on experience with these skills and technologies.

“In an online world, our online words are our emissaries; they tell the world who we are.” - Ann Handley



Every hybrid marketer needs a personal brand – an online representation of who you are professionally, including your style, personality, and expertise. You should have a profile and engage regularly on at least one social media platform (e.g. LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Google+, or Instagram). Focus on adding value and developing a strong professional presence.

Create your own blog or website. Look for fun projects you can support in an incubator-like

setting. (Check out [Geekdom](#) and [Capital Factory](#) as examples of communities launching entrepreneurs and startups.)

The more real-life and mission-critical your projects are, the better. DIYU (rigorous self-education), workshops, certification programs, bootcamps, volunteer opportunities, internships, and apprenticeship programs are all excellent methods of gaining experience and building your brand.

“The challenge, it turns out, isn’t in perfecting your ability to know when to start and when to stand by. The challenge is getting into the habit of starting.”
- Seth Godin

It should be obvious by now that you cannot rely on others to launch your career. You must be the one to take initiative and invest in these new opportunities and relationships. Pick a couple of the numerous resources in this chapter and begin taking action today.

Get into the habit of starting.



CHAPTER SIX

Shaping Your Future

Launching a career in marketing has never been more opportune than right now.

The shift from company- to buyer-centric shopping has revolutionized marketing, creating tremendous growth opportunities for companies and marketers alike.

As technology changes constantly, the demand for skilled workers increases and new jobs continue to open.

The industrial economy has been replaced with the connection economy. Building relationships, requesting permission, and providing value are all essentials for tomorrow's marketers. The unprecedented opportunity to scale personalization from customer to customer is critical in delivering relevant content and ultimately increasing revenue.

However, optimizing this limitless marketing potential is a challenge. The industry needs marketing technologists who diversify their competencies and learn continuously. The industry needs more hybrid marketers.

You can be the answer to that need and position yourself for career-long success in the process. Immerse yourself in work that constantly challenges you and broadens your horizons. Surround yourself with experienced individuals and begin learning.

**“Knowing the right thing to do and doing it are two different things. There is no partial credit for the first.”
- Dharmesh Shah**

But what should you learn? That's the exciting thing—it's entirely up to you. Learn enough across the broad scope of digital marketing to have a working knowledge (going wide) and then find one or two areas where you want to specialize (going deep).

Becoming one of these in-demand hybrid marketers is not for the

faint-hearted. It requires initiative and resolve. There is much to learn and it increases daily. But with stubborn self-determination to master the relevant technology, build valuable relationships, and gain more experience, you will be well on your way to a deeply satisfying career as a hybrid marketer. Your demand will increase as you play a critical role in advancing your company's growth through digital inbound marketing

Now is a historic moment for you to actively create the future. Your future. You have the tools at your disposal. You've seen the opportunities. The horizon of digital marketing stretches wide, waiting for you to step into it.

All you have to do is begin.

**Begin your free Talent
Assessment now.**



Appendix: Cheat Sheet and Quick Links

Apprentice Interview

Meet Nate Desmond: The Growth Hacker Apprentice Who Dared to Take the First Step

Apprenticeship Manifesto

Certifications

1. Hubspot Inbound and Hubspot User Certifications
2. Google Analytics Certification
3. Google Adwords Certification

Conferences

Inbound
Content Marketing World
MarTech
MozCon
SXSW Interactive

Hybrid Marketer: 9 Key Traits by Paul Roetzer

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Analyst | 5. Social-Web Savvy |
| 2. Creative | 6. Strategic |
| 3. Intrinsically Motivated | 7. Tech-Savvy |
| 4. Listener | 8. Team Player |
| | 9. Writer |

Mentors:

Identifying Potential Mentors and Implementing Good Advice

MOOCs and Online Study Resources

CodeSchool
Coursera
CourseTalk
CreativeLive
Lynda.com
SkillShare
Treehouse
Udemy
Udacity

Recommended Thought Leaders, Books, and Blogs

Ann Handley

- Twitter: @marketingprofs
- Blog: <http://www.annhandley.com/blog/>
- Books: Everybody Writes, Content Rules

Anum Hussain

- Twitter: @anum
- Presentations: <http://www.anumhussain.com/presentations>

Dharmesh Shah

- Twitter: @dharmesh
- Blog: <http://onstartups.com/>

Jay Baer

- Twitter: @jaybaer
- Book: Youtility

Kerry Bodine

- Twitter: @kerrybodine
- Blog: <http://kerrybodine.com/blog/>
- Book: Outside In

Paul Roetzer

- Twitter: @paulroetzer
- Book: The Marketing Performance Blueprint

Scott Brinker

- Twitter: @chiefmartec
- Blog: <http://chiefmartec.com/>

Seth Godin

- Blog: <http://sethgodin.typepad.com/>
- Books: Tribes, Permission Marketing, Poke the Box, All Marketers Tell Stories

Best Blogs:

- <http://blog.hubspot.com/>
- <http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/>
- <http://blog.marketo.com/>
- <http://marketeer.kapost.com/>
- <http://digiday.com/>
- <http://www.marketingprofs.com/>
- <http://www.convinceandconvert.com/>

Talent Assessment



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THE NEW APPRENTICESHIP MANIFESTO

For some deep thinking on apprenticeship and a new perspective on how to approach your work and life, download the New Apprenticeship Manifesto.

[FREE DOWNLOAD](#)

LAUNCHING A CAREER IN MARKETING HAS NEVER BEEN MORE OPPORTUNE THAN RIGHT NOW

The practical steps in this eBook will equip you to launch your career in digital marketing and begin work you love. The tools are here. The time is now. All you have to do is begin.



Digital Creative Institute is a transformational digital marketing apprenticeship program designed to equip students with the skills they will need to enter the workforce and supply employers with highly qualified talent.

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