



The first step in building a digital marketing strategy is to listen and assess the landscape. There is more digital data freely available online than most people realize. Listening allows you to learn about your customers, competitors, your business and the category or industry.

A strong digital strategy starts with a clear understanding of what is already happening.

Listen to Consumers

Where to Listen:

- Google Search Results
- Google Trends
- Google Keyword Tool
- Social Networks: Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Facebook, Blogs, Niche Sites
- Community Sites (based on your category)

Questions to Ask:

- Where are your consumers online?
- What are they talking about?
- What topics related to what you do are trending?
- What needs and interests do your consumers have related to your product or industry?

Listen to Competitors

Where to Listen:

- Search competitors across digital channels
- Search engine results
- Google Trends
- Google Keyword Tool
- Social media mentions

Questions to Ask:

- Define your top 3-5 competitors to evaluate.
- What digital channels do your competitors use? (consider all channels – paid, earned, owned)
- What are their strategies?
- What do they seem to do right? What strategies are working?
- What do they seem to do wrong? Where are they missing out?

Listen to the Category or Industry

Where to Listen:

- Search engine results
- Google Trends
- Google Keyword Tool
- Social media mentions
- Discussion forums
- Blogs
- Niche industry sites
- Industry associations or news sites

Questions to Ask:

- What do people say about the category or industry? What questions do they have?
- What content are they interested in related to the industry or category?
- What content is popular? Why?
- Who are the key influencers?
- What media sites, accounts, or people do consumers look to for advice or to have their questions answered?