



Five hot trends in knowledge management

Using **knowledge management**
to replicate the in-store
experience online





Using knowledge management to replicate the in-store experience online

The internet and digitalization has transformed the way consumers interact with brands. This paired with the rise in social media usage means consumers are demanding more information from brands than ever before; before they choose to interact, transact or continue doing business with them. For many brands whose comfort zone was the traditional in-store model, this has taken them into terrifying new territory.

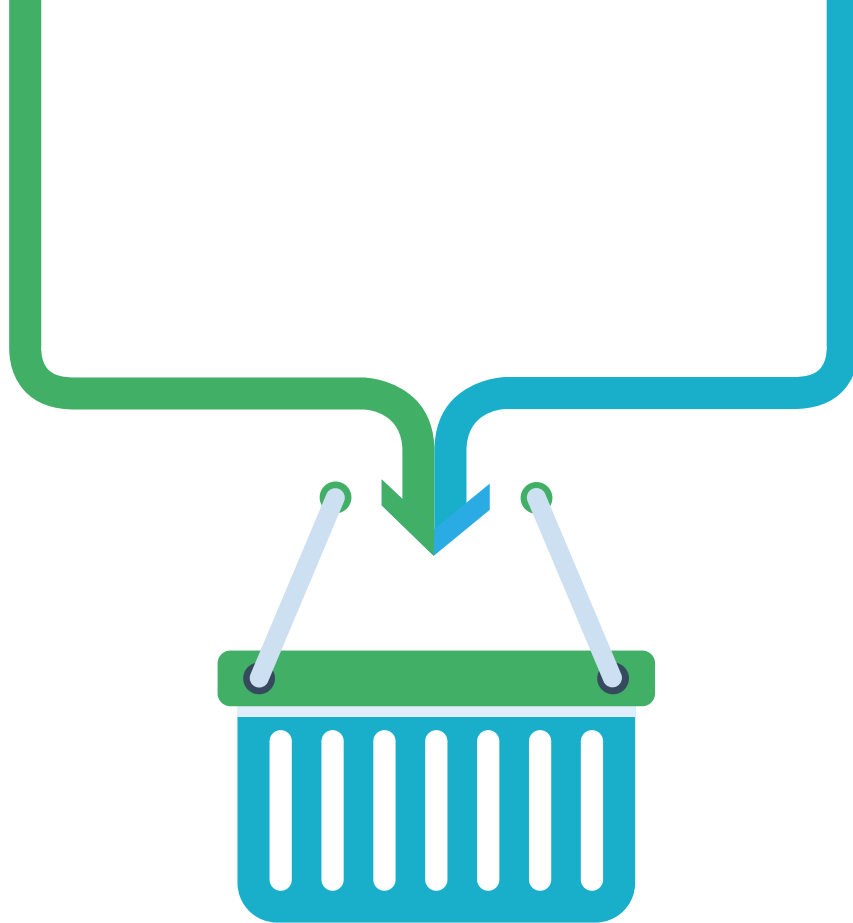
If we take a step back and look at the changes to the traditional high street over the past five years the knock on effect for bricks and mortar stores is clearly evident. From the mass closures of bank branches as consumers opt to bank online to traditional travel agents closing their doors as consumers look towards comparison sites for the best travel deals – where once there was footfall, now there is just more web traffic. Why is this significant? Because it has transformed the where and how in which consumers are interacting with brands and the consequent way

brands should be interacting with today's connected consumers.

Though shopping and purchase habits continue to shift online, consumers' expectations of the level of service they receive has not altered – if anything it has gone up. It is more important than ever therefore that brands are investing in technologies that offer consumers the personalized online experience they crave.

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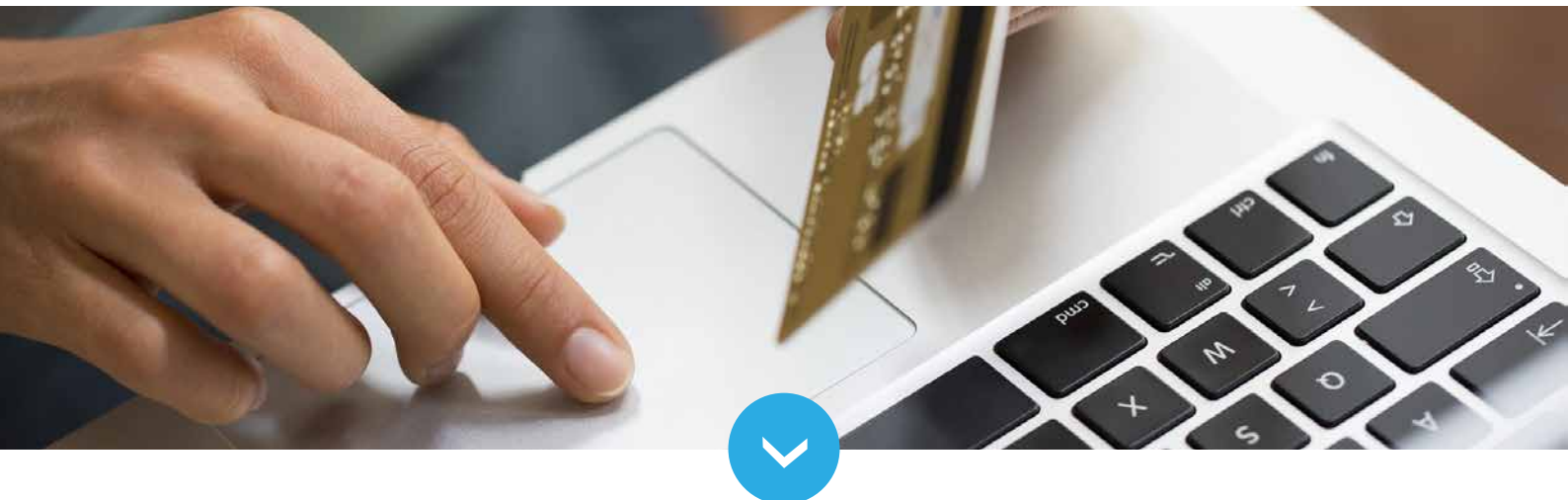
In this article Sharon King-Livesey, Head of Marketing at Transversal and John Ragdale, VP of Research at Technology Services Industry Association (TSIA) take a look at how brands can replicate the in-store experience online.



Treating online and in-store as one

Where before, the high street store would make up the majority of a brand's sales – the ability to browse online anytime has caused an exponential increase in the number of digital customers compared to traditional. Until recently, in-store and online have been treated as two separate entities of the business, but to deliver true value brands need to start viewing in-store and online as a single channel to market, with customers largely defined by the same set of needs and expectations across both.

Communication methods are changing – recent research by Milward Brown Digital found that 86% of consumers want to communicate with brands on a mobile device – however consumers still expect to receive a consistent, seamless experience whether transacting online or in-store and, more importantly, to be made to feel personally looked after. But with face-to-face interaction lessening, and consumers' brand perceptions largely formed by their interaction with a brand website – how can brands ensure they are offering a great experience online, every time?



Offering an in-store experience online

Presenting consumers with the exact information they're looking for – without having human contact – is difficult to get right. While previously brands would have had the luxury of an in-store agent to respond in real time to consumer needs – the virtual agents and self-service technologies used in the online world are relatively new phenomenon – and ones that continue to evolve.

The simple truth is that it can often be difficult to understand customer questions online – for a variety of reasons:

No two people ask the same question in the same way; there are nuances in language, abbreviations and slang that mean the phrasing of the question varies significantly.

Customers with difficulties understanding their problem also have difficulties asking the right questions. Often the initial question is too vague to know where to begin; the correct response can often only be prompted through a series of questions.

Responsive knowledge management is the key to overcoming these difficulties and to gaining a solid customer service strategy in the digital world. The good news for brands despairing of ever managing this is that the information your customers need is already housed in your business, you just need to make sense of it! To make things even easier, we've listed out some of the hottest trends you should take into consideration when setting up your knowledge management solution.

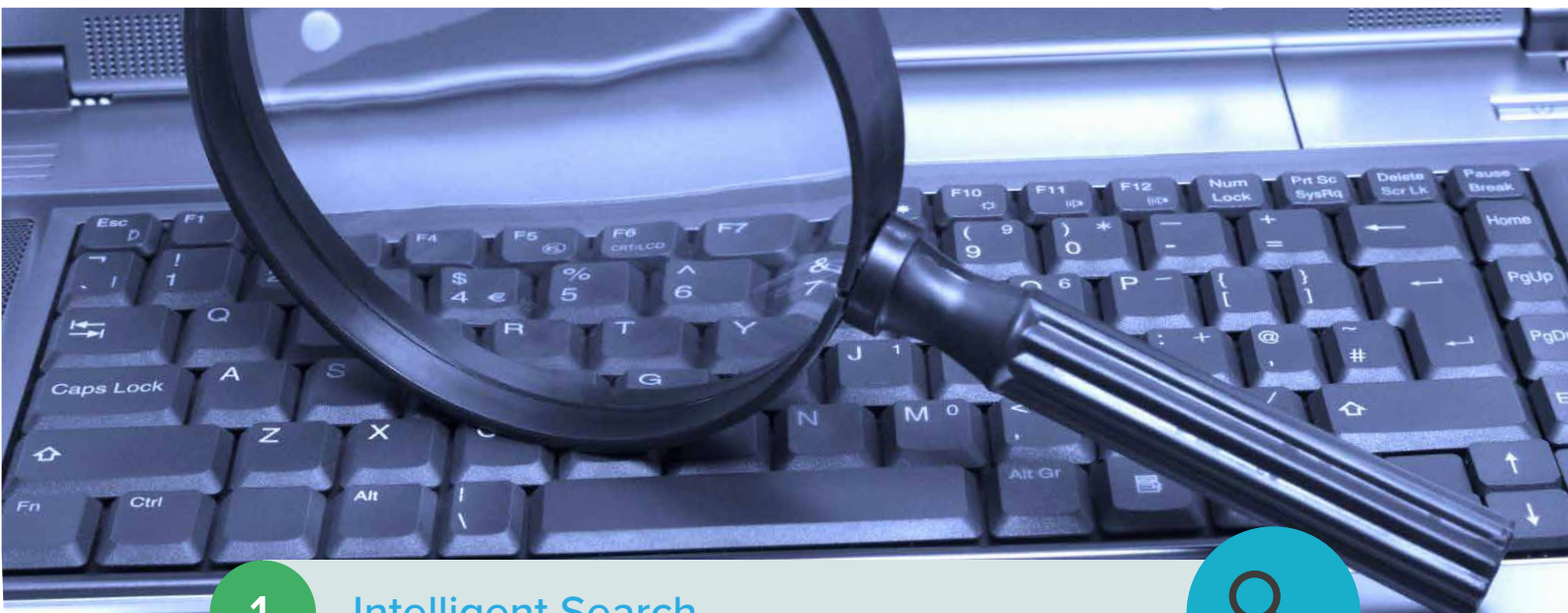
“The mobile revolution has changed every aspect of our lives – and certainly the way we interact with influencers. Customers expect to get access to that knowledgebase at any place and any time.”

John Ragdale,

VP Research, Technology & Social, TSIA



Five top tips for managing knowledge inside your business



1

Intelligent Search



“Intelligence Search” is one of the hottest trends in knowledge management today. Now built into leading knowledge management solutions, the feature understands what the customer is looking for, offering semantic and concept-based searching which enables it to find the right content even if what is entered into the search engine is worded slightly differently. At Transversal for example, we’ve put years of investment into what we call our ‘Memory Engine™’ – ensures it is able to understand what the customer means, not just what is typed.

“Intelligent search understands the way you phrase something, it understands exactly what you’re looking for – it’s able to find matching content even if it’s worded slightly differently.”

John Ragdale,

VP Research, Technology & Social, TSIA



2

Dynamic Linking

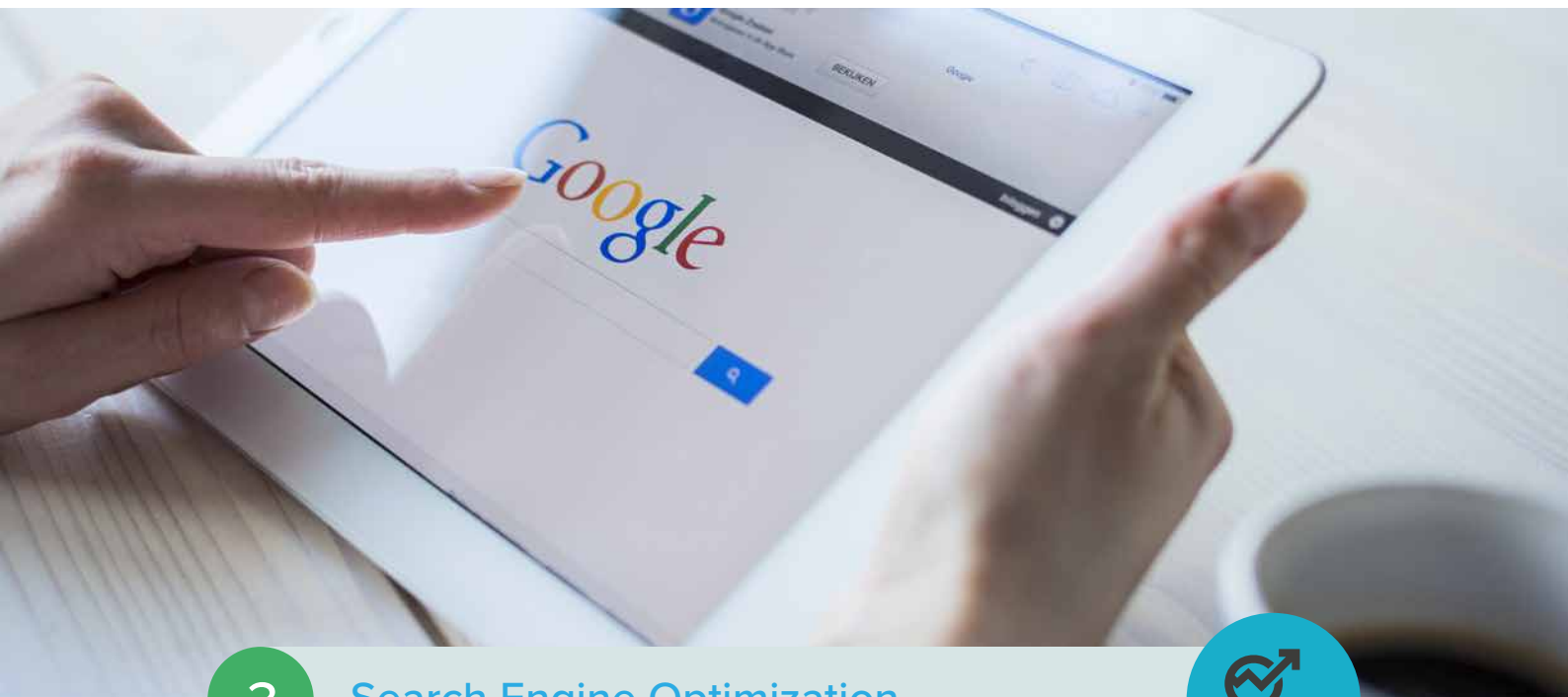


Dynamic linking is the second hottest trend in knowledge management. Most knowledge managers will be familiar with manual linking and tag clouds that have to date been used to perceive the most prominent terms within content. Though they may previously have been a good place to start, this form of tagging was both cumbersome and inaccurate.

The better alternative – dynamic linking – automatically indexes and links content by concept. This form of linking ‘learns’ associations between questions and content through usage and there is no manual effort involved, saving brands, their employees and their customers a lot of time.

“This self-learning technology auto-predicts suggestions and auto-links the content – it’s great for intelligent mobile navigations and it really does help eliminate a lot of the manual linking many of you may be experiencing today as knowledge managers.”

Sharon King-Livesey,
Head of Marketing, Transversal



3

Search Engine Optimization

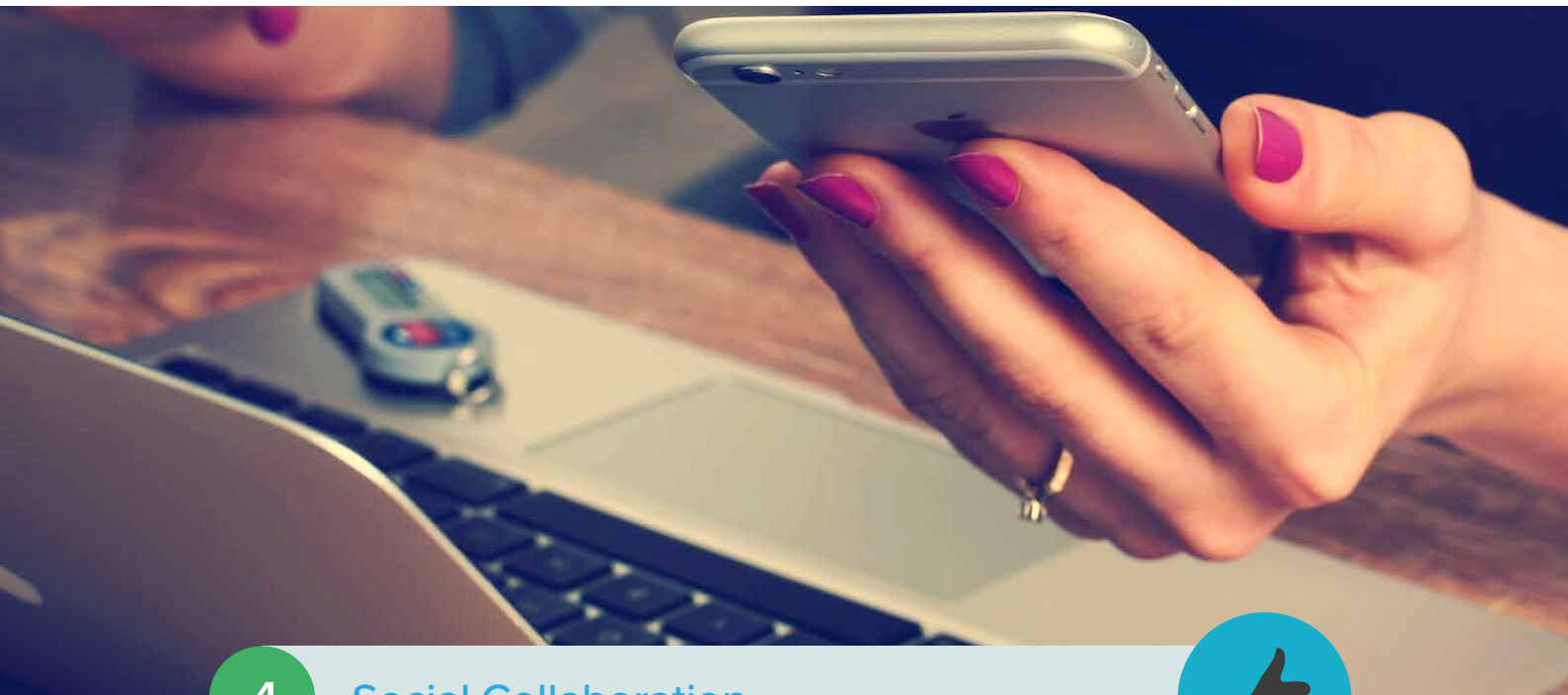


SEO comes in at third place as the hottest trend in knowledge management. 90% of customers have said Google was their preferred channel to get results which is why optimizing its use as a search engine is so important. The mass majority of people start with a Google search when needing support, which is why it's vital for your content to be appearing high up in the search results. Not only will this drive more traffic to your website – it will help increase customer loyalty. Goodwill can be built by always having the answer!

“If you’re selling products, you want customers to look to you for the answer, [...] to rely on you for the right answer – that means that whatever they type into Google search, your content should be showing up in the top results.”

John Ragdale,

VP Research, Technology & Social, TSIA



4

Social Collaboration



Social collaboration is another knowledge management trend that needs to be maximized and is concerned with leveraging customers to crowdsource knowledge. Customers have a very unique insight into a brand's products; they're aware of shortcuts and they know how to train people on how to use them better, so finding a way to gather this input into your knowledgebase can be extremely useful – not only for employees but for other customers as well.

“Customers really like participating in collaboration and they also want to contribute to your knowledgebase – whether that’s directly or not.”

John Ragdale,

VP Research, Technology & Social, TSIA



5

Mobile Optimization



The mobile revolution has changed just about every aspect of our lives and undoubtedly the way we interact with information. Next year, more than a quarter of the world's population will use smartphones and for many it's their only device to access the internet for web self-service.

A final, but equally important trend in knowledge management is mobile

optimization – as a business, brands need to be making their content mobile friendly. By which, we are talking about responsive design and content management. Employees and customers today are demanding 'just in time' access to knowledge via mobile devices and brands need to ensure that they are supplying this so they're never short of the knowledge they require.



Summary

Our final call to brands

If you haven't already, it's time to look at how knowledge management can be implemented into your customer service strategy. With customers' expectations of businesses on a seemingly endless rise, implementing the trends outlined in this ebook will ensure your business remains on the front foot, distributing the necessary knowledge in an efficient and positive way.

For further information on this research or to speak to an advisor about how Transversal solutions could help your organization improve the customer experience, please contact us at

www.transversal.com/contact