The analysis of graphic design platforms used in social media marketing

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Introduction

Social media marketing becomes an integral part of digital marketing and one of the vital tools for overall marketing strategy.

Being competitive on the digital market imposes generating marketing content adjusted for the audience and distributed by the right social networks. Well-designed content is a cornerstone of a brand's online presence, since visual content drives social media exposure and engagement as well as traffic to websites. In order to make visual communication attractive and effective, the intervention of graphic design in marketing communication is required.

Problem Description

With the purpose of combining technology with art better and facilitating the process of creation of visual content, an abundance of platforms are introduced online. Therefore, this paper analyzes the most commonly used online tools and platforms that provide graphic design solutions and increase the effectiveness of online marketing campaigns. The most relevant of them will be presented and compared. With the intention to examine the usage of these platforms, web analytics is conducted using an online platform for website traffic statistics and analytics, named *SimilarWeb*. After that, the most visited platforms were analyzed according to their functionalities and features in order to highlight those that are most suitable and effective for social media marketing.

Methods

As the website Tweak Your Biz is one of the leading global publication and online business communities, we considered it as a relevant source for the list of most important graphic design tools for social media marketing. This web site receives over 50.000 unique views per month and publishes a large amount of articles which cover every aspect of corporate lifestyle. According to Tweak Your Biz, the best online graphic design tools are: 1) PhotoADKing; 2) Canva; 3) Befunky; 4) Pixlr; 5) Infogram; 6) Snappa; 7) Pablo; 8) Quotes cover; 9) Fotor; 10) Genially; 11) Easel.ly; 12) piZap; 13) PicMonkey; 14) Stencil; 15) Gravit; 16) Venngage; 17) PhotoVisi; 18) TimelineCoverBanner; 19) Landscape; 20) IPICCY.

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In order to get more detailed insight to the functionalities and features that are most suitable and effective for social media marketing, the second step in this research is content analysis of the most visited platforms for graphic design. Table 1 highlights the main features that these tools offer in the context of creating SMM content.

Different types of graphic design online platforms provide different features. For instance, for photo editing the most convenient tools are *Pixlr* and *BeFunky*, as for the removing background. All presented tools have option to design text and making special effects on the photos. Video and audio editing have only two of five tools – *Canva* and *Genially*. Templates for social media have three of five analyzed tools – *Canva, Fotor* and *BeFunky*. The all five of most visited graphic design online tools have free version, but also the paid one. The highest price for the pricing packages has *Canva*.

Table 1
The analysis of functionality of the 5 most visited graphic design tools used in social media marketing

Funcionality	Canva	Pixlr	Genially	BeFunky	Fotor
Basic photo editing	+	+	+	+	+
Basic photo retouching	-	+	-	+	+
Background remover	-	+	-	+	-
Collage Maker	+	-	-	+	+
Photo Effects	+	+	+	+	+
Social media templates	+	-	-	+	+
Text editing	+	+	+	+	+
Stickers	+	-	+	-	+
Photo frames	+	-	-	+	+
HDR	+	+	-	+	+
Video editing	+	-	+	-	-
Animation	+	-	+	-	-
Insert audio	+	-	+	-	-
Free stock images	+	+	+	+	-
Free version	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Paid version and pricing	**Pro** 9,95$/user monthly and **Premium** 30$/user monthly	**Premium** 4,90$ and **Professional** 14,99$	**Pro, Master** and **Team** package (respectively: 7,49$, 20,82$, 79,15$ monthly)	6,99$ monthly/59,88$ annually	8,99$ monthly/39,99$ annually

Conclusion

This paper analyzed the most used platforms to make the communication process on social media effective and efficient. Conducted research highlighted 20 tools and used digital market intelligence platform to explore their site analytics. The results show that the parameters vary among platforms. Number of total visits proves the wide use of these websites, reaching up to 146,79M visits.

In the context of these tools' functionalities for social media marketing, we can conclude that different tools contribute to different options, and best one cannot be chosen. For advanced editing photos, the great free solutions are *Pixlr* and *BeFunky*, but for creating memorable content for social media networks, *Canva* and *Fotor* have a huge range of features that can be used for different platforms and public. *Genially* is a tool which is created with wide range of purposes, but with lack of some important features related with social media marketing. Observing the effectiveness of these tools in the context of creating content for SMM, according to the identified parameters, it can be concluded that *Canva* meets the largest number of these requirements, however for certain functionalities some of the other observed online tools are more efficient.

Compelling visual content is needed and marketing communications are greatly supported and empowered by graphic design platforms that are easy and simple to use. Visuals are memorable and relatable. Whether it is used to express the brand, promote a product or convey a message, visual content is the path to get in front of customers in a powerful, interactive, and meaningful way.