

DateLine Calendar

Below are events planned for the first quarter of 2021. If an event is canceled, a full refund will be issued. Upcoming Global Events are subject to change. Please visit susta.org/events for the most up-to-date list:

IPM Essen
Essen, Germany
January 26 - 29, 2021

Fruit Logistica
Berlin, Germany
February 3 - 5, 2021

Gulfood
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
February 21 - 25, 2021

Food Hotel Asia
Singapore
March 2 - 5, 2021

FOODEX Japan
Tokyo, Japan
March 9 - 12, 2021

2020 CostShare Deadlines

December 31, 2020
All 2020 promotions must conclude by the end of the year

February 28, 2021
The last day to submit 2020 expense claims

April 1, 2021
The 2020 CostShare survey is due

InSight

SUSTA
Southern United States Trade Association

Fall 2020

Global News, Perspectives & Updates
for the International Agribusiness Trade

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Marketing without Borders

Your digital presence travels even if you do not

By **Danielle Coco**
SUSTA Marketing and Communications Director

Trade shows and related travel will return. However, the digital inroads we all made during the pandemic will last long after the virus is subdued. Advancing your digital marketing strategy is a smart investment in your brand.

There is a vast landscape of digital tools available, from search engines, to social media, email campaigns, your website, e-commerce, virtual trade events...and the list goes on. The strengths of these platforms are that you can touch people across the world without leaving home, and you can easily track the results of your efforts. If something is not working, you know it and can change course, thus optimizing your strategy much more easily than you can with traditional marketing.

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6 key components of creating

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1. Defining Trackable Goals

As with all marketing, you first need to define the goal of the ad campaign. Do you want to drive 10% more traffic to your website? Increase sales by 5% on an e-commerce platform? Increase likes or followers by 8%? Having a specific goal for each campaign is important if you are the one implementing the marketing strategy; but it is especially important if you are hiring a firm to do the work. When setting your goals, think about what you can track and make sure to establish a baseline before starting the campaign.



2. Who is your Target Audience?

The people you want to reach will help you decide what digital platform to use and what content is best. The more information you know about your target audience, the better. One way to find out your audience is through the data that digital platforms, particularly social media, collect. For better or worse, everyone consuming your brand online has a digital footprint and fits into a segment. You can also target the audience that likes, follows or engages with your competitors. On a platform like Facebook, you can now import a list of current customers and also create “lookalike audiences” that share the same traits as your current customers. Knowing your audience will help refine your strategy and grow your customer base.

3. What are you Selling?

Defining your brand and your story is a great exercise in staying focused. It is especially important when embarking on a new advertising campaign. Think through the story you want to tell. Is a low price what sets you apart? Or are you a premium, novelty brand? Are health benefits the wow factor of your product? Determine the hook, and lead with that. Things move fast in the digital world, and if you don't convey your message easily and quickly, it will get lost.



Kentucky Commissioner elected president of national agriculture organization



Kentucky Agriculture Commissioner Dr. Ryan Quarles was elected president of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) in September 2020.

“I am grateful to my counterparts in the other states for selecting me to serve as president of NASDA,” Commissioner Quarles said. “2020 has been a challenging year for all industries, but especially our agriculture sector. In this role, I will focus on expanding international trade, reducing food insecurity, and building partnerships to support farmer-veterans and limited resource producers. As Kentucky’s commissioner of agriculture, I will always have the interest of our Kentucky farm families at heart while leading NASDA.”

Commissioner Quarles previously served as vice-president, second vice president, and secretary-treasurer of NASDA. Last year, he was also elected 2019-2020 president of the Southern

Association of State Departments of Agriculture (SASDA), a regional offshoot of NASDA.

“Under my leadership, NASDA will be doubling down on agriculture’s tradition of innovation and resilience,” Commissioner Quarles said. “Armed with a new strategic plan, and a call to action for federal officials, NASDA will rise to the challenge of redefining agriculture for our farm families in these unprecedented times.”

NASDA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit association that represents the elected and appointed commissioners, secretaries, and directors of the departments of agriculture in all 50 states and four U.S. territories. To learn more about NASDA, visit nasda.org. ■

a strong digital campaign:



4. Creating Ad Content

Your ad content should be consistent with your brand and story. Conveying a message is not as easy as writing it in all caps across an ad. Digital consumers are savvy, even if they are not aware of it. A health food brand, for instance, will be more impactful using images that convey a healthy lifestyle – the great outdoors, a fit couple in workout clothing. Even the color choice matters. If it sounds daunting, there are professionals that do this and would love your business! If you hire an outside firm to do the work, you must communicate your defined brand and story with the person creating your ad content.

5. Budgeting

This is an obvious one, but knowing your budget up-front will help shape a lot of your strategy. Can you afford a video? If not, don't try to shoot one on your iPhone. Instead, create something within budget that looks professional and is consistent with your branding. According to Matchstick Inc., a social media marketing firm based in Canada, a good rule of thumb is to spend 50% of your budget on creating content and 50% on promoting it. Professional content should be widely seen, so make sure you also have the funds to place it.



6. Optimize

Every ad can be tested. Split testing, commonly referred to as A/B testing, allows marketers to compare two different versions of a web page, email or social media ad — a control (the original) and a variation — to determine which performs better, with the goal of boosting conversions. One email marketer had her team develop a visually engaging email, that while beautiful was time consuming to create. She wanted to test if that was time well spent, so she created a second email that had no frills, just text. Surprisingly, the no frills version did slightly better. This email campaign was to raise money for a major university, so perhaps the serious nature of what they were asking was better delivered in an email that felt serious (not an email with a video of the university marching band streaming across the header). The point is that optimizing your digital footprint is fairly easy to do because of the data that is readily available. ■

If creating a digital ad campaign targeting a foreign market is in line with your strategic plan, you should apply to SUSTA's CostShare program. Eligible companies can apply for 50% reimbursement of international advertisements, such as content creation, ad placement and hiring a firm to develop your foreign ad campaign. Also eligible is translating pages on your website or creating a foreign URL. Questions? Contact costshare@susta.org.





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InSight is a publication of the Southern United States Trade Association. SUSTA is headquartered in New Orleans and works to promote the export of agricultural and food products from 14 southern states and Puerto Rico. The organization helps food and agricultural producers and distributors target potential overseas markets and assists their marketing efforts by administering federal funds for international market development.

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Do you have a success story to share? Contact Danielle@susta.org

2021 CostShare Planning

This fall, complete your 2021 CostShare application so that you can hit the ground running in January.

Did you know you can apply for 50% reimbursement of . . .

- Creating your packaging/ labels for a foreign market?
- An advertising campaign targeting a foreign market (including the ad agency’s costs, content development, video production, influencers...)?
- Your booth at an international trade show, even if your foreign distributor is the one exhibiting your products?

What are you waiting for? Apply now and promote your brand to the 95% of consumers that live outside the U.S. Email costshare@susta.org with questions. ■

