



A GUIDE TO SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

HOW TO BUILD A COMMUNITY OF LOYAL FANS,
FOLLOWERS AND CUSTOMERS

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Social media is one of the main channels through which you can reach a large audience. However, to attract the right people, you need a targeted approach. This guide will introduce you to social media marketing, the different platforms that are available and how you can approach strategy, content creation and engagement.

By the end of this guide, you should have a good understanding of:

- What social media marketing is
- Where to start
- The features of different platforms
- Social media strategy



ELEVATE CREATIVE CO.

WHO ARE WE?

For more than a decade, the team at Elevate Creative Co. have been helping businesses with their marketing. We have written, planned, implemented and reviewed thousands of projects for clients across all industries.

We recognise that not every business has thousands of pounds to spend every month on outsourcing their marketing. This guide is designed to give you the knowledge and tools you need to create and implement a strong marketing strategy.



[Elevate on Instagram](#)



[Elevate on Facebook](#)

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INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

Social media has come a long way since its early days. It's no longer just a way to keep in touch with friends and family; it's now a powerful marketing tool. As a business owner, you need to be using social media to reach your target audience. But with so many platforms and strategies to choose from, it can be difficult to know where to start. Social media marketing is the process of using social media platforms to promote and sell your products or services.

When it comes to social media marketing, there are a few basic things you need to do in order to be successful:

- Choose the right platform: Not all social media platforms are created equal. You need to choose the ones that are most relevant to your business and where your target audience is most active.
- Create quality content: In order to get people to follow you and share your content, you need to create something that's worth reading, watching, or listening to.

- Be consistent: Posting sporadically will not only turn off potential customers, but it will also make it difficult to build a following. You need to be posting regularly in order to keep people interested.

- Engage with your audience: Social media is not a one-way street. You need to be interacting with your followers, responding to comments, and answering questions.

Every action you take on social platforms should be linked to a measurable goal. Common social media goals include:

- Increasing brand awareness
- Generating leads
- Boosting sales
- Improving customer satisfaction



INTRODUCTION

Growing your audience

One of the most important things to remember is that you don't own your account on social media. Your account can be closed at any time, without warning, leaving you with zero audience. Therefore, it is good practice to use social media as a tool to funnel as many qualified people as possible to channels that you own and can control.

Social Platforms

There are more than 15 social platforms that you can use to market your business.

You don't need to be on all of them and you shouldn't try to be. 1-3 platforms is the ideal number. If you have a team you can scale this to more platforms, but always focus on quality rather than quantity.

For businesses just starting out, focus on a single platform. Once you get the hang of things and start to see some results, then you can expand to other platforms.

Some of the most popular social media platforms for business are:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- YouTube
- TikTok

Each platform is different and you need to tailor your content and strategies accordingly. What works on one platform might not work on another. Intent is also different too. A prospect browsing Facebook for example will be in a different mindset to the same prospect consuming content on LinkedIn.

Some platforms will work better than others for certain products and services. Pinterest would be a great platform for visual businesses such as photographers or florists. Keep in mind the prospect, the type of content you post and the intent of the platform user. Find out where they spend their time online and most importantly, where they would be most receptive to your content.



C H A P T E R

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WHERE TO START

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SOCIAL MEDIA EXPLAINED

To get started with social media marketing, begin with the following:

- Identify your ideal client (and develop a customer profile)
- Map out your goals and KPI's
- Identify the most suitable platform based on your audience
- Create a content strategy
- Develop an engagement strategy
- Decide whether you want to focus on organic (free) marketing, paid ads on social platforms or a combination of the two.

Master Content Creation

Your social media marketing will be shaped by the content that you publish. Content must achieve three things:

- Attract new followers
- Nurture your audience
- Move as many audience members into your sales funnel as possible

Content must also be:

- High quality (if you want people to share it) Quality however means different things to different people but understanding your audience will help
- Relevant to your audience (or they won't read it)
- Tailored to the platform on which it's being published (each platform has different content requirements)

Types of Content

Content types vary depending on the platform you choose:

Videos: People love watching videos and they're one of the most popular types of content on social media.

Images: A picture is worth a thousand words and they're great for quickly conveying messages.

Blog posts: If you want to share longer pieces of content, blog posts are a good option. You can post them on your website and then share links on social media.

Infographics: These are a mix of images and text and they're great for quickly conveying complex information.

Podcasts: Audio is becoming increasingly popular as a format for content. You can record podcasts and then share them on social media or on platforms like iTunes.

Live video: This is one of the newest types of content and it's becoming increasingly popular. You can use platforms like Facebook Live or Periscope to broadcast live video.

User-generated content: This is content created by your fans and followers. It can be a great way to connect with your audience and get them involved in your marketing.

Success with social media marketing depends on having a solid strategy in place that sets out your goals, audience, content and analytics to assess performance.



C H A P T E R

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PLATFORMS

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FACEBOOK

Content Types - Video, images, carousels and links work well on this platform.

Followers - Prefer up to date business information, news and promotions

Frequency - Post no more than twice a day and no less than once per week

Theme - Lighthearted, informal, entertaining

Competitors - Explore what they post to Facebook

Hashtags - You can use them but be strategic

Organic reach - Virtually zero. Use Facebook Groups to network or if you have the budget, invest in paid ads or boosted posts

Engagement - Increase post interaction with contests, giveaways and make use of paid ads

When it comes to attracting more people to your page, you can use the following tactics:

Content - Create quality content that educates, inspires or entertains

Messages - Fine tune your messaging and find out what resonates the most.

Relatable - How can you make your brand more relatable through sharing your stories, struggles, journey and behind the scenes.

Questions - Ask and answer questions to start conversations particularly in Facebook groups. Always observe group rules as some do not allow promotions of any kind

Traffic - Drive as much traffic back to things you own such as your blog or email list as you can

Outbound - For new pages, use outbound techniques to find and participate in relevant conversations.

Facebook Groups

Use the groups feature on Facebook to raise awareness of who you are and generate interest in your profile.

Search - Use the search feature to find industry specific, relevant groups

Audience - Which groups would your target audience be in?

Be helpful - When you join, provide value, ask questions and provide helpful answers



LINKEDIN

A useful B2B platform, LinkedIn can drive quality leads to your business. It's also a platform that you can use to build brand awareness and create connections with peers and fellow professionals. It's one of the most trusted social media sites and it's a place where people go to find high quality, authoritative content.

LinkedIn includes features that are not available on others such as the ability to write long form, thought leadership posts.

Popular content on LinkedIn includes industry trends and news, blog posts from your business and others, tutorials and list posts as well as quick tips and updates.

The publication of consistent content will result in greater awareness and the growth of a strong referral network.

As a general rule, you should aim to engage 10x more than you post. This is the secret to growth and visibility.

Brand Story - Communicate who you are and the value you can bring. As with any social platform, posting is not about selling. It's about giving. Help others and provide value. Deliver mini tutorials, show your processes and how you work, share your successes and lessons learned along the way.

Keywords - Optimise your profile with a succinct headline that describes what you do, who you help and how. Include keywords that are relevant to the work you do. Not only will this help on LinkedIn with visibility, but your profile also shows up on Google which further increases awareness.

Expertise - What do you want to be known for? Share insights, industry news, articles and content that positions you as an authority in your industry.

Network - Take every opportunity you can to network with others. Participate in groups and connect with those who comment on your content. Actively seek out people to expand your network.



TWITTER

Posts are made up of small snippets of text, with a maximum of 280 characters.

Content that works well on Twitter includes contests, memes, funny thoughts and news related to your industry.

You can also make use of the threads feature to create a mini guide or power essay that teaches something or shares an important lesson.

You can include links in your Tweets, either to your own content or to others.

Share information that will help your audience solve problems. You can also use Twitter as a tool to direct people to your own product or service pages, landing pages or a useful blog post.

There are 5727 tweets posted every second, so your content on Twitter has a very short lifespan. Post multiple times per day to maximise visibility. Retweet content from industry influencers.

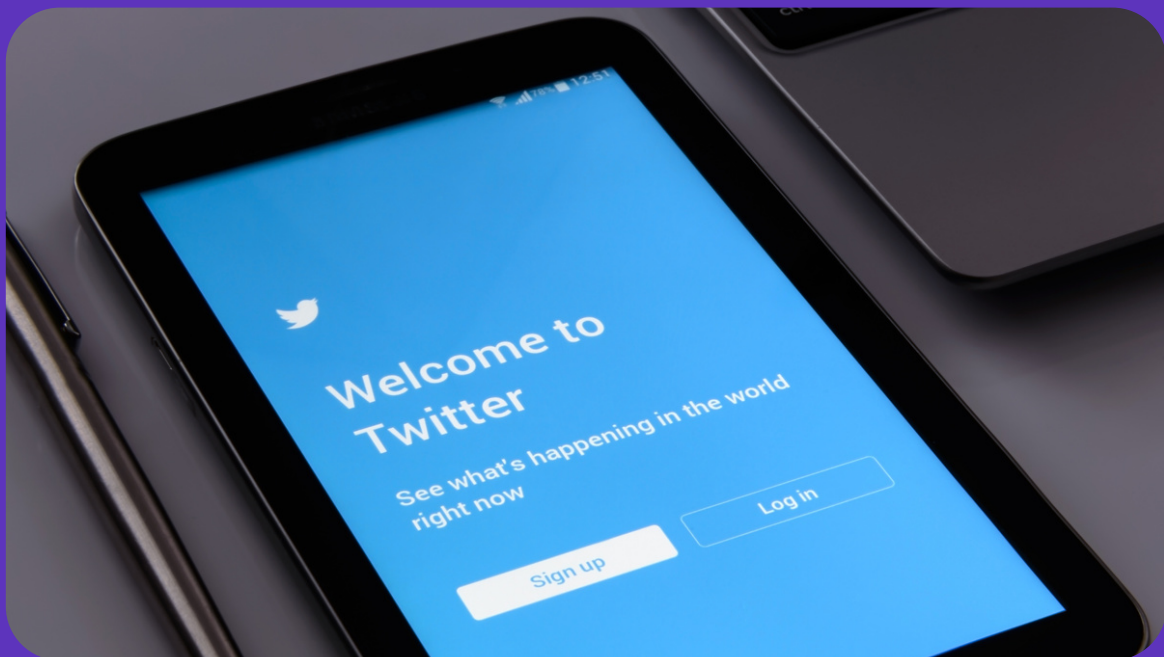
To maximise engagement:

Use visuals - Make your content stand out with appealing visuals. This can include original graphics, images of you and your team, photo's of your products or videos providing demonstrations.

Interact - Regularly interact with tweets from your followers, accounts you follow and large accounts in your network.

Participate in conversations on trending topics - Search for topics in your industry that are trending and participate in the conversation.

Content - List posts and how to guides perform quite well on Twitter.



INSTAGRAM

One of the most versatile platforms because it offers so many different content types to work with. You can mix and match content and tailor the posts to suit the preferences of your audience.

Single posts - Although they don't work as well as the used to due to Instagram pushing Reels content more and more, you can still use static images with a caption to tell a story, share something inspirational or to make an announcement. The caption can be used to add greater context to the image.

Reels - Short form video content designed to entertain or educate.

Stories - Short, ephemeral content that lasts 24 hours. Short snippets that you can use to document your day, show behind the scenes footage and allow your followers to get to know you.

Carousels - Multi image posts similar to a slide deck that are designed to teach. Usually these types of post will include tips, tricks, mini tutorials and strategy.

Hashtags were once a great way to increase visibility on Instagram, but they no longer work as well as they once did. The platform appears to be moving towards SEO and topic based search, so optimise your captions, posts and alt text around simple keywords for maximum visibility.

Posting frequency to Instagram will depend on the resources that you have available and your ability to produce quality content. It's better to create a consistent posting schedule 2-3 times per week than commit to posting poor quality content every day.

Post Reels content 2-3 times a week, feed posts 3 times a week, stories at least one per day.

There are two types of engagement on Instagram. Inbound and outbound. Inbound engagement is the engagement you attract through posts, polls, stories, competitions and content.

Outbound engagement is strategically reaching out to others in a value driven way.

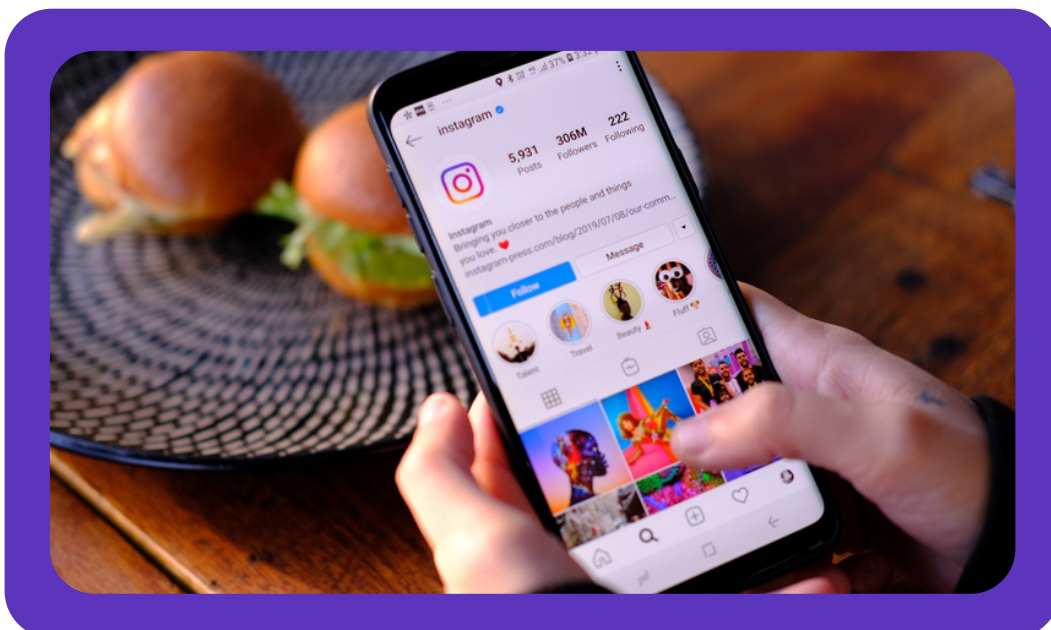
Followers - Commenting on the posts of your followers with something meaningful.

Influencers - Joining their community and commenting on their posts

Explore page - Using relevant keywords or hashtags and leaving useful comments

Search - Exploring hashtags and keywords to find accounts you can build relationships with.

You never want to approach outbound engagement with the intention of selling. Start new conversations every day. Be genuine and be social.



YOUTUBE

A platform designed for video content only. It's where people go for entertainment and to learn. The content on YouTube is often much longer than the videos you will find on Instagram or TikTok.

How To Content is great for brands to build credibility and to provide tutorials, guides and other types of informational content.

YouTube is the second largest search engine after Google. Audiences are looking for information to show or explain something.

Therefore, informational videos, instructional, step by step content and demonstrations all work well. YouTube users are three times more likely to watch a YouTube video than to read a set of instructions when learning something.

Two minutes is the ideal length of a video, but a lot of YouTube content is much longer than this and gets thousands of views. Optimise video descriptions for SEO to maximise visibility.

You can create your own channel and encourage people to subscribe. Always optimise your video descriptions to ensure they can be found in YouTube search.

You can also include links to relevant pages on your website or funnel to drive more traffic into your sales funnel.

There's also the feature to run YouTube ads which appear in the middle of videos people watch or at the start or finish.



PINTEREST

Pinterest is one of the most visual platforms and is used as a search engine for people who want to find inspiration and ideas.

Some of the benefits of using Pinterest for business include:

- Being able to reach new audiences
- Drive traffic to your website
- Encourage conversions such as sign ups or sales

With 459 million users, Pinterest is a popular platform for businesses, particularly those who are quite visual such as photographers, bakers, creative industries and interior designers to name a few.

As Pinterest is a visual social network, your pins must be visually captivating.

Quality descriptions are a must to accompany each image you post. They improve visibility through Pinterest SEO and provide greater context to your images.

The platform also offers the facility to add links which is great for driving traffic

to your website.

To your posts, you can add a single image, multiple images in a carousel or video.

There's also the facility to create boards which are broader topics or themes to group together seasonal pins or those that belong in a similar category.

Pinterest can also be a great website to direct traffic to other social platforms such as Instagram or Twitter.

Common Pinterest terms include:

Pinner – A user of Pinterest

Pins – A post (image, video or carousel)

Promoted Pins – An ad

Repins – Similar to a retweet or repost

Rich Pins – Pull information from your website (useful for products)

Boards – A way to organise your pins



TIKTOK

TikTok is one of the newest social media platforms and currently has more than 1 billion active users per month. This is a huge opportunity for business owners. Although TikTok has earned its reputation for dancing trends, funny content and entertaining short form video primarily for the 18-24 demographic, it also has its use for business. Even if your target audience doesn't belong to this age range, there's still potential.

If you're looking for a platform that promotes organic reach and you are comfortable with creating video content, TikTok is the place to be.

Before you jump straight into TikTok, spend time browsing through videos to get an idea of what type of content works well. Find 3-5 businesses similar to yours with an established presence on the platform and undertake a competitor analysis.

- What posts perform well?
- What topics do they cover?
- What are they doing well?
- Are there any areas that you could explore that competitors are not?

As with any social platform, identify your audience and understand the reason you post to TikTok.

Optimise your profile so people know exactly what your business is about if they land on your profile.

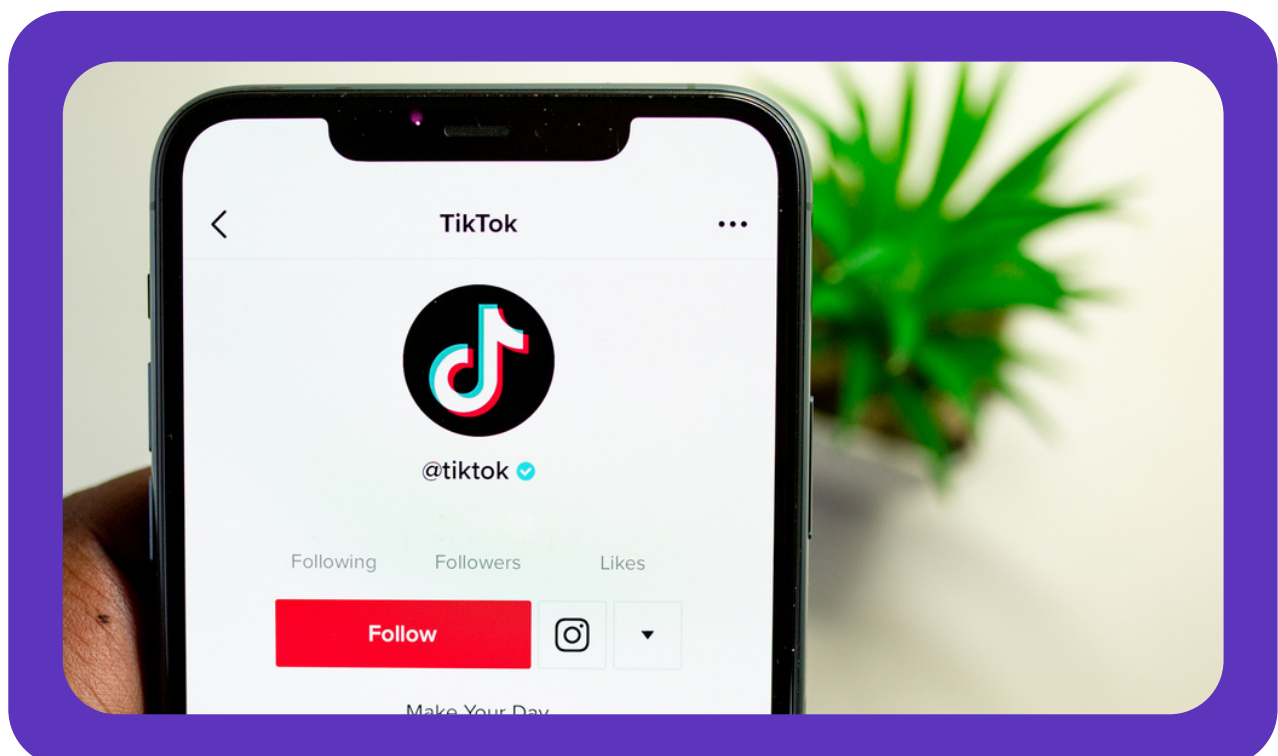
Follow best practices for video content:

- Keep content short and on brand
- Make it fun and interesting to watch
- Mix it up and try different content types
- Check the quality of the audio and visuals before posting
- Use well researched hashtags to categorise your content

The content that performs particularly well on TikTok for business include tutorials and how to videos.

Engage with others, use polls and questions to encourage conversations.

Review metrics and adjust your campaigns regularly.



C H A P T E R

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SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

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SOCIAL MEDIA PLANNING

A social media marketing strategy can be broken down into a series of steps:

- Research
- Goals
- Metrics and KPI's
- Platforms
- Content
- Engagement
- Analysis

Research

The initial information gathering process where you collect information on your audience, content and competitors.

Goals

Define goals for your social media marketing. Goal setting is important because it will help you track performance.

Metrics and KPI's

How will you know your goals have been reached? Choose metrics and KPI's you can measure.

Content

There are three tasks associated with content creation. Identifying your content pillars, mapping out content types and creating a content calendar that sets out what you will post, where and when.

Engagement

Be strategic about your engagement. Contribute to conversations, ask insightful questions and network. Make friends. Use the direct messaging feature in an ethical way to reach out and build connections. People are sceptical so do this with caution. Be genuine and focus on growing your network, not selling your products and services.

Analysis

The final step in the process is to conduct analysis on a regular basis to assess performance and adjust campaigns.



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SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY STEP BY STEP

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STEP 1 RESEARCH

The first step in your social media strategy is research. There are three main areas to research:

- Audience
- Content
- Competitors

Audience - This research is all about understanding who your target market is. You need to know things like:

- Challenges
- Aspirations
- Goals

You must really get to know your prospect. You can use social media to do this. Use polls, surveys and questions to find as much as you can about them.

Research is important. It will help you understand what type of content to create, where to reach your audience and what type of messages are most likely to resonate.

Competitors - It's also useful to understand what your competitors are doing on social media. Although they may have a different ideal client, there are still things you can use to shape your own research. Look at their strategies and see what's working well for them. You can then use this information to improve your own strategy.

A good social media strategy is never complete without undertaking a detailed competitor analysis. This is required to see how your brand is positioned in relation to others in the market.

An analysis can also help you to identify industry standards, find out problems that people raise over and over and start to explore the customer journey.

A detailed competitor analysis will uncover information about products and services and the conversations that take place on their accounts on a day to day basis.

Reasons for a competitive analysis

With the data collected from your competitive analysis, you should be able to:

- Better position your products and services
- Meet the requirements of your customers
- Use competitor weaknesses to your advantage
- Learn from the strengths of your competitors
- Identify new business opportunities

Competitor Analysis Summary

The competitive analysis process is particularly complex and involves a number of stages. These will include:

- Identifying your competitors
- Conducting a product and service analysis of your competitors
- Evaluating their customer base
- Analysing their presence on social platforms and in search
- Identifying the ideal customer of your competitors
- Evaluate content strategy including frequency and content of each post
- Compare your pricing
- Review engagement metrics

STEP 1 RESEARCH

Identifying Competitors

The first step in the process is to find your main competitors and what platforms they are active on. You should have a good idea of your competitors already, but if you don't spend some time identifying them now.

Using competitors as a benchmark can be a powerful learning opportunity.

Find competitors who offer similar products and service to you.

There are three types of competitor

Primary – Businesses with the same audience and similar products

Secondary – Businesses who sell products in the same category

Tertiary – Businesses who are not direct competitors but who could become a competitor in the future

Product and Service Analysis

Evaluating products and services is key. Pay particular attention to:

- Technology
- Any incentives, freebies, ebooks, webinars, discounts
- Key selling point

A detailed analysis of the product will help you identify any gaps in what your competitors are offering.

Evaluating their customer base

The type of customer that your competitor has. Do they focus on one off purchases or repeat, long term customers?

Which social media platforms are they on the most?

Customers are a valuable source of information. Most of them have done a lot of research before they decide to work with you or your competitor, so use this knowledge to your advantage.

Find out which products and services your competitors are releasing which are proving popular.

How often do your competitors post on social media, what types of content are they using and how do they use SEO in their marketing?

Competitors are always looking to provide their customers with the very best content that maximises engagement and conversions.

Knowing what your competitors are doing is therefore crucial.

What type of content do they post such as carousels, images, videos or links?

Pricing

How does your pricing compare with your competitors? What does their value ladder look like?

Engagement metrics

There are three types of engagement metrics to evaluate for each of your competitors:

Profile metrics – Followers, average posts per week, active, likes, comments, shares does each post have?

Content metrics – Types of content they share, boosted posts, live video, types of content, number of social platforms they use

Brand metrics – Tone of voice, problems they solve on their profile, how followers interact with content, branding methods do they use?

Reviews

Reviews are a valuable source of information. They identify what customers like and don't like about your competitors. Review sites such as TrustPilot if they have a presence or trade based websites such as Checkatrade. You can also look at their Facebook business page reviews. Gather information on reviews from as many sources as you can.

STEP 2 GOALS

With your research complete, you can now look towards setting goals. Your goals should be:

Specific – The goal should be simple, clear and as defined as possible

Measurable – The most effective goals are tied to a metric such as conversions, click throughs or signups.

Achievable – Goals must be achievable with the resources that you have available

Realistic – Goals should be realistic

Time bound – State a timeframe for the goal.

An example of a SMART social media goal would be:

To increase email subscribers by 5% in the next 90 days.

Goal Setting Step by Step

Step 1 Start with Why

Start by listing all of the reasons why your business will use social media. Note down as many ideas as you can think of. Create a mind map and brainstorm ideas.

Step 2 Objectives

Refine your reasons to something more specific using the SMART framework. Define 2-3 most important objectives. The number of goals that you set can be endless and can cover the short, medium and long term.

Daily goals – connecting, posting and engaging

Weekly goals – Posting user generated content, collaborations

Monthly/quarterly goals – Subscribers, sales, conversions, traffic

Step 3 Timescales

Set timescales for your goals. A more complex goal would need a longer timeframe

Step 4 Review and SWOT

Set a time when you will review the goal and identify how you know the goal has been met.

The review phase can also include a SWOT analysis of your social media presence when you have enough data.

The SWOT will cover strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and will allow you to gain a deeper insight into your social presence and understand how you can shape future goals and performance.

Step 5 Metrics and KPI's

Building a presence on social platforms is great, but measuring performance is important. Without a clear understanding of your metrics, your activities on these platforms won't deliver the results that you want for your business.

The goals that you set for your social media strategy will be assessed by metrics. Social media metrics are important because they help you determine how successful a campaign is and how well your social strategy is performing.

Measuring Engagement

Metrics are closely aligned with four key stages in the funnel:

Awareness – How many people you are attracting towards your business (account growth)

Engagement – How your followers are interacting with your content (likes, shares, saves)

Conversion – The number of people you move off social media to a sale or sign-up

Retention – The number of customers who become repeat customers and refer others to you.

STEP 2 GOALS

Each stage in the funnel has its own set of metrics but taken collectively, they will help to shape your entire social strategy.

Stage 1 Awareness

How will you measure awareness of your brand? The main metric to measure here is account growth or followers. Although this is considered to be a vanity metric, it can determine how well your content is performing at attracting new people to your account.

Stage 2 Engagement

Engagement metrics are important to track to see how people are responding to your content. Although there are some engagement metrics that you shouldn't worry too much about such as likes, there are other metrics that can lead to conversions such as clicks and messages which are more important.

Engagement is measured by likes, comments and shares and/or retweets on Twitter and reposts on Facebook or Instagram.

When you have a high engagement rate, this means that your content is resonating with your audience.

Low engagement rates mean that you are publishing the wrong content, the quality of the content is not high enough or you are targeting the wrong audience with your messages.

Changing algorithms also play their part too. Sometimes low engagement may just be that your content is not reaching people. If engagement on your posts is low, look at impressions and reach. If these are high yet interaction with your posts is low, this could indicate there is a problem with your content.

The best approach is to evaluate your engagement as a whole rather than basing your strategy on something such as 'likes' alone.

Stage 3 Conversion Metrics

Conversion rate is the most important metric to track. Conversion rate is the number of people who took a specific action from your social media page. This could be clicking on a link to subscribe to your newsletter, enrolling onto a free masterclass or webinar, downloading a lead magnet or making a purchase. Your conversions will depend on the specific goals that you want to achieve from your social presence.

High conversion rates mean that your page visitors like your content and are interested enough to make a purchase.

To maximise your conversion metrics, ensure that your posts are signposted with a clear call to action. This is a very specific instruction that guides them to take an action such as download free guide or sign up to newsletter or enroll today.

Bounce Rate

This is the percentage of people who click on a link on your post or in your bio and 'bounce' from your website back to a search engine, the social platform or click to another site without taking any action.

If you have a high bounce rate, this means that your offers are not targeting the right audience or your offers need more work.

To convert, offers must be valuable to the visitor.

STEP 2 GOALS

Consumer Metrics

Consumer metrics will tell you about brand sentiment – what people think and feel about your business.

Customer testimonials are the main consumer metric that you should track. They include any review, comment, assessment or content a customer posts about your brand.

If your business makes people happy and helps them achieve a result, they are likely to share this message with others.

Testimonials are one of the most powerful forms of social proof.

Customer Satisfaction

The Customer Satisfaction Score is a metric that assesses how happy people are with your product or service. It is usually built around a simple question:

How would you describe your overall satisfaction with (product or service)?

Customers are then asked to rate their satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 10 that they couldn't be happier.

Key Performance Indicators

A Key Performance Indicator is something used to assess performance over a specific timeframe. The KPI you choose will depend on the goal you set. Common KPIs for social media include:

Average engagement rate – This will add up all engagement including likes, comments, shares and saves and divide it by the total number of followers. The result will give you the average engagement per post.

Conversion rate – The number of people who took some form of action from your post or profile. This could include a visit to your ecommerce store, a landing page or sign up page. High conversion rates illustrate that your content is resonating with your audience.

Click through rate – Another important metric that shows how many people clicked on a link to move away from your social media page to something you own such as a landing page to collect an email address, a sales page or a product or service page on your website.

Cost per click – Useful for paid campaigns to determine how profitable your ad campaign has been.

These are not all of the KPIs you can monitor, but they are the main ones. The KPI's that you choose will depend on the platform and of course, your goals.

They are also useful because they can highlight where you need to make changes to your campaigns. Low conversion rates, no click throughs and high cost per click but low conversions all mean that a campaign may need some adjustment.

STEP 4 PLATFORMS

There are many social platforms for you to choose from. To find out the best one for you, follow this process:

Step 1 Your Business

What is the purpose of your business? Some platforms are better suited to certain business types than others. If your business is in the creative space, visual platforms such as Instagram and Pinterest would be beneficial. If, on the other hand, your business is consulting, a good choice may be Twitter or LinkedIn.

Step 2 Competitors

Review your competitors to see which platforms they are present on. Is there a reason for this? Where do competitors seem to have the most influence?

Step 3 Content Types

What types of content do you want to publish? If your audience prefers short form video, TikTok or Instagram would be a great fit. If you want to opt for a combination of blog posts, checklists and links to useful content, Twitter or Facebook may be the best.

Step 4 Channels

Unless you have a good support team, it wouldn't be possible to target all social platforms. Therefore, decide how many you can comfortably manage while keeping a consistent posting schedule.



STEP 5 CONTENT

Content creation on social media requires a strategic approach. The first question to ask is what message you want to communicate to your audience.

Personality – How will your content reflect your personality or the personality of your brand?

Knowledge – What level of knowledge do your audience have? Are they beginners who may need you to explore topics in more detail or are the audience well informed?

What to avoid – Words or phrases that can cause offence or those which are unsuitable for your demographic.

Industry terms – How will you use industry terms throughout your communications? Are people familiar with them?

Your content plan for social media should include:

Where – The platforms you wish to post to

Frequency – How often you will post

Message – What is the key takeaway that the post should include

Content Type – Which content type will be the most effective

Metrics – How will you measure the performance of the content?

Audience

Ultimately, your content is designed to serve your audience. If you don't deliver content that your audience finds useful, your content marketing will fail. Gain insights into industry benchmarks by evaluating competitors and large accounts. Look specifically at:

Competitors – What level are your competitors at and how can you compete with them?

Top posts – What topics and themes prove popular over and over again – use trending topics or explore pages to find this out.

Engagement – What is the engagement like for each post?

Comments – Are there lots of comments on the topics you post about?

Type – What type of content receives the most engagement

The GPSOS Model

This model features five categories that you can use to develop content for social media:

Goals – Define the goals that you wish to achieve with your content.

Problems – What roadblocks or challenges do your customers face? How can you help them achieve quick wins through your content. Is it lack of time, lack of knowledge, poor health etc?

Solutions – How can you help your target audience solve their problem? Your content doesn't have to solve the full problem, and it shouldn't. Break it down into smaller segments to help them achieve a small success that contributes toward a bigger goal.

Outcome – What is the outcome of your product or service? What change or transformation will they achieve? Make sure these outcomes are reflected in your content. Show your audience rather than tell.

Success – What are the long term results of a customer working with or buying from you? Use case studies, testimonials and stories to illustrate successes.

STEP 5 CONTENT

The role of Copywriting and Content Writing

Content and copy are two very different types of writing and they are designed to do different things. Many people confuse them or think they are the same.

Copywriting is a believable message that encourages the reader to take action. Copywriting is used in scripts, sales letters, social media and ads – all the places that are designed to drive action.

Copywriting Features

Copywriting is just one of the many cogs that keep the digital world turning. Without copy you would find it difficult to promote your products and services, create ads and write social media captions.

Everything that you read online that encourages you to take an action is copy. A copywriter is a person who can get into the mind of a prospect and communicate in a strategic way, carefully choosing the right words and phrases to evoke emotions, persuade and inform.

The Headline or the Hook

Headlines are the most important element of your copy. They are designed to capture interest, to draw the reader in and to get the first sentence of your copy read. To craft a compelling headline:

State the claim as a question – You can use questions such as ‘who else wants to...’ or ‘would you like to...’

The headline can also include things that will pique curiosity such as exclusive, discover or insider secrets.

Make the headline newsy. What is new that could catch and hold the interest of a prospect? Use words such as introducing or announcing to draw the reader. If you make a claim in the headline, always back it up with proof.

When a prospect first sees your headline, they rarely read it. People are more sceptical than ever. The goal of the headline is to get the opening paragraph read.

If you capture attention, the reader will either scan, skim or scroll the rest of the copy. As they do, they will look for something else that catches their attention.

Opening Paragraph

The opening paragraph of the copy then sets the scene for what you are about to explain. What will the prospect gain from buying your product or service? You can present another question here or paint a picture using an ‘imagine’ scenario.

Credibility

Readers will only take your business seriously if they believe that you are credible. Establishing credibility will emphasise why the prospect should listen to you. Give them something that will verify your credibility. Use the question why you? Through a series of bullet points summarise what makes your business unique, interesting or different from the competition. But make it believable.

The Offer

When you have established credibility you can then start to outline your offer. How can the product or service solve a specific problem that the prospect has? Tell the prospect what they will gain by making a purchase and taking your offer. Storytelling is very powerful here.

Objections

Some of the best copy will anticipate the likely objections that your prospect will have. When you acknowledge some of the objections and handle them properly this will reduce resistance and make the prospect feel more comfortable about buying from you.

STEP 5 CONTENT

Product or Service Information

Product or service information that you include in your copy should be clearly defined in a brief statement. This should highlight one very specific benefit and the offer. You can do this by using a phrase such as 'Here's what you get...' This will then be followed by a series of bullet points outlining your offer. As you describe the benefits of the product or service use words such as, simplified, easy to use, cost savings, reduce stress or increase productivity. Whatever the problem is that your prospect has, work this into the copy.

Social Proof

After outlining the product or service you need to demonstrate proof. You can't just make claims about what your product or service can do without backing it up with some evidence. Use testimonials which will provide reassurance that your solution does what it claims to do. What other people say about your product or service is so much more powerful than anything you can say yourself.

As your prospect continues to read through your copy, they will be constantly on the lookout for value justification. This means that they will be looking for ways to justify why they shouldn't make a purchase. Your copy needs to persuade them that the purchase is worth the investment. The value of the product or service must be highlighted in such a way that the price becomes favourable, sought after almost. This applies even if you are selling something of high value.

How can you make your product or service a no brainer and easily justifiable to the prospect. Show them real results that your customers have achieved.

Options

Once you have summarised what the prospect will gain, you then present them with three options.

The first. To give up on their dreams and all the benefits associated with your product or service

The second. Tell the prospect that they are reading your copy because they believe they deserve a better career, lifestyle etc than what they have now

The third. They can try to go it alone. They can continue to struggle and not make the progress that they've always wanted.

Give them the option of what doing nothing looks like. If your offer is compelling enough then doing nothing won't even be an option. The prospect has to be willing to take the leap and be willing to change.

Call to Action

By this point, you will be ready to conclude the copy with a strong call to action.

Your call to action must be very clear and very specific.

It could be something like enrol onto our course, contact us to find out more, sign up today for a limited time only.

In the call to action express a sense of urgency, give the prospect a reason to buy now. Summarise the offer, provide some free bonuses and give them a reason why they should buy right now.

STEP 5 CONTENT

Risk Reversal

When you make an offer to a prospect you must offer some kind of risk reversal. You can do this through a guarantee. The longer your guarantee, the more orders you will receive and the less likely you will receive a request for a refund. Typical guarantees include a 30 day money back guarantee.

Finally, the order process should be as quick and easy as possible. If the prospect has to go through a lengthy checkout process they will abandon the process and often change their mind completely. Make the checkout super simple.

Types of Copywriting

You will typically need copywriting to create the following:

- Product or service pages
- Social media posts
- White papers
- SEO copy
- Sales Pages or Video Sales Letters
- Email Newsletters

Content Writing

The purpose of content is to inform rather than sell. Usually, when prospects consume content, they are earlier in the buyer journey. Although content can affect buying decisions, it is usually not directly aimed at conversion.

Features of Effective Content

Education

Most content is educational. It will provide prospects or customers information on something. When customers are educated about a product or service, they are better informed and more likely to buy.

The types of content that you could create to educate include a Frequently Asked Questions post, an in depth product guide, a product review or a video tutorial.

Engagement

How can you start a conversation with your content? Can you create something controversial, emotive, inspirational or newsworthy? When you create content that really engages with the audience, this shows that your company has a human side, even more so if you inject a little personality into the content that you create. Remember, prospects buy from people rather than brands so keep this in mind when creating any type of content for engagement purposes.

Brand Awareness

How will you make your brand visible? Quality content can help you establish authority in an increasingly crowded marketplace. Consistent content that speaks directly to your target demographic will position you as an expert in your industry. The more expertise that you develop the greater trust you will build amongst your audience. And when the prospect is ready to buy, the first company they will think of is yours.

Credibility and Trust

People will only buy from those that they Know, Like and Trust. This is known as the KLT factor. When you regularly publish valuable, helpful content that teaches the audience something in a different way, or educate them about a topic that is new or interesting, they will gradually begin to trust your company much more. The more content you create, the more they will be able to picture what it would be like to work with you.

While content can go some way to building trust, it is usually only at the point of purchase that this trust is either strengthened or broken. This is why you must deliver on what you say you will. Broken trust is never regained.

STEP 5 CONTENT

Customer Retention

While it's great to attract new customers into your sales funnel, it's even better if you can maximise the lifetime value of existing customers and turn them into long term clients.

This is one of the best sources of business growth, yet it is one that is so overlooked. Businesses spend a lot of time on customer acquisition and forget about the huge potential that exists with existing customers.

Make the product or service that they have bought work better for them by sharing useful guides, articles and how to's to optimise the effectiveness of their purchase. You can also introduce guides for products and services that will complement their purchase as a way to maximise customer lifetime value.

Don't leave your best advice, information and content for new prospects, remember your existing customers are just as important too.

Types of Content Writing

- Blog posts
- Ebooks
- Online courses
- Slide Decks
- Articles

Content creation is one of the most time consuming parts of running a business. It's something that never stops. While you should have a steady stream of content flowing from your business, avoid reposting the same things that have already been covered hundreds of times before.

Research popular content types then put your own unique perspective on it to create something fresh.

You can also ask your customers and prospects what types of content they like to consume and if there is anything they would find helpful you could cover in a future post.

Copywriting or Content Writing – Which is Best?

A good digital and social media strategy will incorporate both copywriting and content.

You will need to provide educational information to deliver value and build your credibility while using copywriting to encourage people to take action and convert into a subscriber, follower or customer.

Decide on your messaging for each piece of content and decide whether it's copy (you want the reader to take action) or content (you want the reader to learn about you, a product or service or your business).

Content usually appears in:

- Blog posts
- Informational pieces
- Slide Decks
- Thought Leadership articles
- Ebooks

Copy will usually appear in:

- Landing pages
- Social media posts
- Website pages
- Emails

STEP 6 ENGAGEMENT

Growing your social media audience is all about awareness. It's about educating people who you are, what you do and building valuable relationships.

Social media is a huge part of people's lives. Sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok and Pinterest give people the opportunity to connect with others all over the world.

It is important for businesses to have a solid presence on social media because many consumers turn to this type of media when they are researching a new product.

Social media is also being used by businesses behind the scenes to find talent, communicate with employees across the globe, and monitor what consumers are saying about its products or services.

Purpose

Businesses and brands use social platforms every day to connect with their audience, raise awareness, generate leads, increase website traffic and make more sales. When you build an engaged following and manage to achieve consistent growth on your account, you can effectively spread the word about your business and the products or services that you sell.

That said, having thousands of followers on social platforms, doesn't always equate to success. You can have 50,000 followers and although this looks good, it doesn't mean anything if they don't engage with your content, click on your links and buy your products or services.

Your objective is to build a community of loyal fans who are engaged with your content and look forward to seeing your posts.

Building Your Following from Zero

Every account in the social media world started at zero. In the initial stages building your follower base will be slow and you may want to give up if you see little movement on your account. You may be posting regularly, following all the best advice and still, no traction. You might post a piece of content and collect a handful of new followers, comments and shares one day, then post something different another day and this post receives no engagement at all. Remember, it can take at least 90 days if not longer to start seeing results from your social media efforts and that's only if you are committed to growth, so be patient and most importantly remain consistent.

Defining Your Goals

If you are just in the startup phase of your social media journey, begin by mapping out your goals. For businesses already established on social platforms, review your goals. Typical goals for social media include:

- Generate leads
- Increase brand awareness
- Boost sales
- Drive traffic to your website
- Build your email list

Avoid focusing on vanity metrics such as likes and followers because they don't really give you any real value in terms of business growth.

Target Followers

One of the best tactics to use when trying to grow your audience is to decide who you are talking to, what messages you want to communicate and most importantly what problem(s) are you trying to solve.

What types of content will the audience enjoy the most? Topical pieces, opinionated posts, humour, advice or something else?

You can always find out what issues your audience has by asking them through polls or in conversations.

STEP 6 ENGAGEMENT

Competitors

Spend some time analysing your competitors to see what types of content they post. Visit the work that you did earlier in the course to review the content they are posting, engagement levels, what types of content followers respond to the most. Look at posting frequency and content type. With this data, you can build up a picture of the types of content and posting patterns that work the best.

Engagement

Learn how to properly engage with others. Engagement is all about building relationships. Spend time on social media networking as you would in person. Start quality conversions, make friends, share stories and help others without wanting anything in return. You can't expect people to engage with your content if you don't engage with others yourself.

Consistency

Growing a following is a sustained effort over a long period of time. Post consistently, engage regularly and build relationships. These are the core foundations of any growth strategy on social media.

Inbound marketing focuses on creating and distributing content to attract people towards your social media page.

Outbound marketing will involve identifying and strategically reaching out to others.

Inbound Marketing

An inbound marketing strategy will focus on the publication of content using social platforms and blogs. When a consumer has a problem or a need, they will often start their search for information online. Content should be built around solving problems, addressing key issues and answering key questions in the mind of the prospect.

Inbound marketing tactics include content and lots of it. Think of content such as free guides, blog posts, frequently asked questions, ebooks, mini courses and email newsletters as magnets which draw people towards you. That's the purpose of inbound.

How Inbound Marketing Works

A customer is looking to set up an email list. They will enter a search term into Google and see a list of blogs with content relating to software. After they read the article, they will discover the importance of building a complete digital strategy. At the end of the email there is a link to download a free resource on building a digital marketing strategy. They download and consume the guide. There is a call to action at the end of the guide inviting the reader to request a free demo for some email marketing software. If the reader was impressed by what they read in the guide, they may request the free demo. If the demo fulfils their need, they may then go on to becoming a paying customer.

Inbound Marketing Advantages

Inbound marketing is a useful strategy to use in your business because it is:

Non-intrusive – Prospects can access your content and read information that interests them in their own time

Educational – Most inbound content is educational in nature

Measurable – Each piece of content can be tied to a metric so you can measure its success

Consistent – Inbound marketing will continue to work if you have the right systems in place, consistently generating leads for your business

Inbound Marketing Types

Methods of inbound marketing include:

- Paid search
- Content marketing
- Email marketing through an opt in form

STEP 6 ENGAGEMENT

Outbound Marketing

Outbound marketing essentially involves you finding and reaching out to prospects. With outbound strategies, consumers are not aware that a product exists or on some occasions, they don't even know they need it.

Outbound marketing is renowned for getting bad press because when it's done incorrectly, it can feel like you are spamming people.

Advantages of Outbound Marketing

An outbound marketing strategy can:

- Promote brand awareness which is particularly beneficial for new brands
- Generate immediate results
- Target a large group of people

How to Make Outbound Marketing Work

The importance with outbound marketing is to avoid being spammy in your approach. Make sure that emails or DMs are tailored to the individual. Avoid selling your product or service from the first message. Outbound marketing is designed to build relationships first and promote who you are and what you do. Remember, people often don't like to receive cold DMs, calls or emails, so you need to be careful in your approach.

The Know, Like and Trust Factor

You may have heard about this in marketing before, but it's worth mentioning and exploring in some more detail in relation to social media. It is well known in every industry that people will only do business with others they know, like and trust.

Know

The focus of this phase is to make people aware you exist. There are four main aspects to this:

Experience – When people come across your content, they want to learn about you. They want to know your values, vision and the person behind the business. If you are not showing the real, authentic you on social media it is very difficult for people to get to know you. Their experience of you online should be exactly the same if they worked with you in person.

Intention – Your community will know if you are posting with intent or you are just posting because you haven't shared anything for a while. Each post you create should be underpinned with strong intent. Your followers will pick up on the fact that your content is supported by a feeling, emotion and what you think.

Perspectives – Share your outlook on the world, your business and industry – the good and the bad. It's one of the best ways to connect.

Authenticity – The best way for people to get to know you is to be authentic. Share your story, be vulnerable and tell people about the lessons you've learned along the way. Inspire, share stories, your struggles and things you have overcome.

STEP 6 ENGAGEMENT

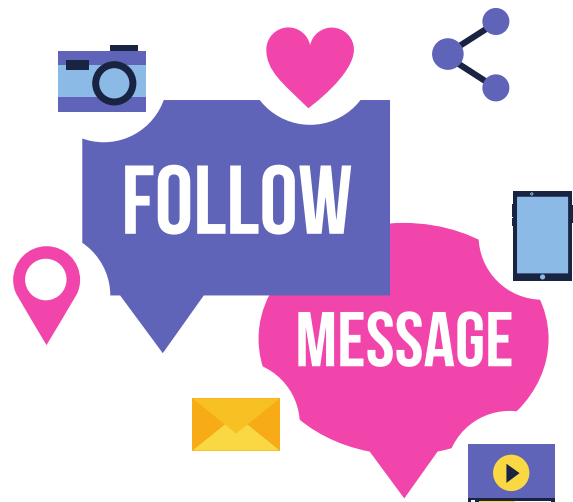
The 'Like' Factor

Just because you have checked all the boxes under the 'Know' Factor, that does not mean that people will like you or resonate with you enough to connect. To get people to like you, you must focus on:

Presentation – The way you present your business to people who find and follow you and how you share your expertise will make a huge difference. To get people to like you, you must help them.

Authenticity – No one connects with a cold, distant corporation. They want to connect with a human.

Storytelling – There's nothing that connects better than a good story. People want to learn about the why behind your business, the ups and downs of your journey, experiences of your clients etc.



The 'Trust' Factor

One of the most important factors to your business is trust. People may know and like you but they'll never buy if they don't trust you.

Scepticism – People are naturally sceptical. Even more so when they encounter a new brand. They have their guard up, they are resistant. Your objective is to build credibility and reduce resistance.

Consistency – Continue to be a consistent presence in the lives of your prospects. Share content they love, provide valuable resources, knowledge, information and solve small problems. All of these things can help to build trust.

Social Proof – Other people's views are more valuable than your own. You can never have enough social proof. Share testimonials, case studies, media mentions and anything else that will help position you as an authority. Authority = Trust.

STEP 7 ANALYSIS

The goals that you set will determine what metrics you track. For every goal identified, you need a metric to measure success. Metrics can:

- Evaluate the performance of a campaign
- Determine the success of your strategy
- Assess the impact of decisions you have made
- Provide evidence that your social media marketing is working
- Demonstrate how effective your content marketing efforts are on social platforms

The Funnel

Every metric that you measure should fit into your marketing funnel. There are four stages to the funnel:

Awareness – Your existing and potential audience

Interest – Strangers become interested in who you are and enjoy reading, watching or listening to your content and become followers and subscribers.

Decision – Followers make a decision to work with you. They may request a free trial, download a product info pack or request a demo.

Action – The prospect likes what they see and they buy.

Engagement metrics

Define how well your content is performing across platforms.

Approval rate – Number of positive interactions with your post such as likes, comments and saves. Add total approval interactions per post and divide number by total followers and multiply by 100.

Engagement rate – Compares number of interactions to followers. Add all engagement from a post and divide by follower count and multiply by 100.

Amplification – The rate followers share your posts. Take the total number of shares per post, divide by the number of followers you have and multiply by 100.

Conversion Metrics

Conversion rate – The number of visitors who took some form of action on a post, story or piece of social content. Divide conversions by total link clicks and multiply by 100.

Click through rate – How many link clicks made. Divide total number of clicks by impressions and multiply by 100.

Bounce rate – How many people click through to a landing page or website and then bounce or click away from the page without taking any form of action. Use Google analytics to check the bounce rate. High bounce rates could mean that there is a problem with your offer or it's not appealing to your audience.

Social conversion rate – The number of conversions directly from social media. Divide the number of conversions by total number of conversions from social platforms and multiply by 100.

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis is a tried and tested approach to evaluate your social campaigns. The evaluation will take you through identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Strengths – What is going well and what advantage does this have to your business?

Weaknesses – Areas where your business is underperforming or factors that are stopping you from reaching your goals.

Opportunities – What is the potential for each strategy or campaign?

Threats – External factors that could create obstacles

STEP 7 ANALYSIS

Identifying strengths

There are five areas to assess your strengths:

Platforms - Which platform is performing the best?

Engagement - Who engages with you most often? What posts and content types generate the most engagement?

Growth - How have you set yourself apart from the competition to grow your brand? What do you offer differently?

Traffic - How much traffic are you taking into your sales funnel? Where are people going when you move them off social media?

Conversions - How many people have you converted? What offers, incentives or discounts have converted the most?

Understanding Weaknesses

Sometimes your greatest strengths can also be your weaknesses.

Brand - A brand that doesn't reflect who you are or one that sends a confusing or conflicting message to your audience. When an audience is confused or they don't know what you do, they won't interact.

Content - Does your content reflect your standards? Poorly written captions, hastily put together posts and leaving out important elements such as a headline or CTA won't leave the right impression. Little to no clarity in messaging won't inspire your audience to take action and participate.

Consistency - Is your posting sporadic? Inconsistent or absent posting can reduce the impact that your posts have. You don't have to post every day to be consistent.

Engagement - Low engagement on your posts, no one replying or engaging in stories may mean there's a problem. There could be many reasons for this such as not providing enough value, you aren't resonating or you have the wrong audience.

Conversions - Poorly converting copy, little to no enquiries, sign ups to your mailing list and little interest in your offers may also indicate there's something you need to improve.

Exploring Opportunities

What opportunities exist that you can use to grow your business. You can assess this through:

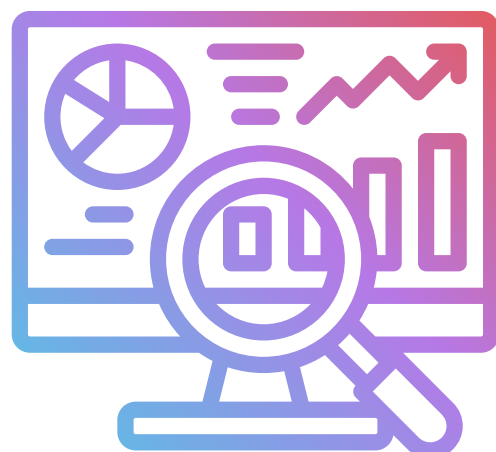
Requests - Do you receive requests from followers to cover certain topics or provide information in particular areas? Take note of these and incorporate them into your strategy.

Features - Are there any new features that you could use on the platform to incorporate into your strategy? How could you use Reels for example to set your business apart from all the rest?

Followers - What opportunities do you have to engage with your followers and their audience. Think about the different ways you can start conversations.

Content - Can you cover new themes or concepts that prove more helpful or insightful for your audience. Can you present your content differently?

Competitors - What are the things performing well on competitor pages that you could develop to offer something new, unique or different. Use them as a source of ideas an inspiration.



STEP 7 ANALYSIS

Eliminating Threats

The majority of threats that you face won't be imminent but they are still important to include in your analysis. A threat is something that has the potential to derail your social campaigns.

Algorithms - Social media platforms are changing their algorithms all the time. What steps can you take to mitigate the effects of algorithm changes?

Market - Are there changes in your marketplace or industry that have altered customer perceptions or reduced demand for your product or service?

Competitors - New competitors who are growing rapidly or existing competitors who have added new product or service offerings that are performing well.

Strategy - New marketing strategies appear all the time. Is there a new tactic or approach you are not using that is harming your presence?

Initiatives - New initiatives in the industry that competitors have introduced that are taking away your customers.

Economy - There may be things in the wider economy that could be affecting buying habits or decisions.

A thorough SWOT analysis will keep your social media marketing efforts on track. Review your results regularly and make changes to your strategy as needed. By understanding your weaknesses, you can make the necessary improvements to turn them into strengths. Exploring new opportunities will help you to find new ways to grow your business. And by identifying threats early, you can take steps to avoid or mitigate them.





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