

Using Social Media to promote your business can be overwhelming. We have compiled this “Social Media Best Practices Guide” to help you get started.

STEPS TO PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS ON SOCIAL MEDIA



1 Identify Yourself & Your Target Market

It is always a good idea to know the following before you begin advertising on Social Media:

WHO #1 – Who are you as a business? What is your mission statement?

WHO #2 – Who are you trying to connect with or market to?

Be as specific as possible. If you sell health products, don't just say, “Healthy People”. Create an Avatar that represents your ideal client. This will make it easier to market to your target audience as well as find solid business alliances.



Name: Susan

Age: 28

Occupation: Entrepreneur

Marital Status: Married

Kids: 2 – boy age 7, girl age 5

Hobbies: Mom's groups, reading, listening to podcasts, shopping

WHAT – What product or services do you offer?

WHY – Why should someone shop or do business with you?

HOW – How are you different than your competitors?

How do you stand out?

Do your research - Explore what makes you, your products and your services more valuable than what your competitors are offering.

2 Pick Your Platforms

Start with your existing social media platforms to determine who your idea client is. Which platforms do you want to work with? Each platform hosts a different demographic of users. Facebook™ and Instagram™ are great places to get started for a majority of businesses. Once you are confident in your current platforms, continue expanding your reach through additional social media avenues.



3 Develop a Campaign Strategy



ESTABLISH A PLAN – Develop a strategy for posting and advertising through social media. With your RESEARCH in mind, create a posting plan or posting calendar that will help you reach your ideal client (AVATAR). Consistency is the key. Find a posting pattern and frequency that works for you and is easily manageable. Like the turtle and the hare, slow and steady wins the race. Do not say you are going to post 7-days per week and get burnt out after two weeks. Create a personal library of post ideas and schedule posts in advance. That way, if you are on vacation or get ill, your posting content will still be covered.



DEFINE YOUR GOAL – Set a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely) goal for each of your social media campaigns. Be specific about what you are trying to achieve. Are you seeking more followers? Do you want them to share your posts? Are you giving them a clear Call-to-Action (CTA) and asking them to go to your blog, join a VIP Group or sign up for your newsletters? The clearer your goals, the easier it will be for you to track your success and make adjustments, when necessary.



SELECT YOUR CONTENT:

WHAT TO POST? - Select engaging content that will help you succeed reaching your defined goal(s).

- **Keep It Simple.** People scroll through their newsfeed quickly, so providing a simple message is best.
- Use creative and unique **images** to get people to stop and pay attention. Try to avoid stock images, if possible, and create your own creative photos with your Smart Phone. Always post content with an image, it's a proven statistic that posts with images are read 70% more than those without.
- Find **inspiration** through posts that you are attracted to and like. Beware of copyright laws and don't use images or content without permission. Just because it is on social media doesn't mean it is "free rights". Trademarks and Copyrights still apply.
- Create a **poll** to engage your viewers. If you ask a question, avoid a "no" answer. Our minds are used to saying, "no" when we are approached with a sale or something that is not familiar to us. You want the prospect to be ready to say, "Yes!" to what you offer them, so focus on questions that have a consistent "yes" as the answer or another positive option to select.
- Create or share an **event**.
- Offer **valuable information** such as **Tips & Tricks** to help build trust with your prospect and make their lives easier.
- Post **inspirational & uplifting messages**.
- Give **thanks and gratitude** for continued support of your business.
- **Spotlight other businesses** that compliment yours and are not competing with you. They will appreciate the support and possibly return the favor.
- Celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, special occasions & accomplishments. This is the perfect opportunity to engage your followers and get their attention.
- **Don't spam.** Unless a prospect specifically asks for more information, do not email or message them with sales offers. This is an easy way to annoy people and get on their bad side. They will be more likely to unfollow, block, and unsubscribe from your messages.
- **Avoid Facebook™ "Jail".** Pace your posting intervals to a few messages or posts at a time. If you do too many of the same or similar posts/messages in close succession, Facebook™ will consider this "spamming" and will shut down your ability to post for 24+ hours. Diversity of posts and messages are best and trickle-feed them throughout the day.
- **Follow the 80%/20% general rule.** 80% of your posts should inform, educate, entertain or add value to your audience (non-sales); 20% of your posts can directly promote your brand (sales). This means for every 10 posts, at least 8 should be non-sales posts.
- **Call-To-Action (CTA)** - Make sure your sales posts have a clear CTA. Direct your prospects to take direct action such as: visiting your website, sending you an email, signing up for your e-newsletter, leaving a comment or review, etc.



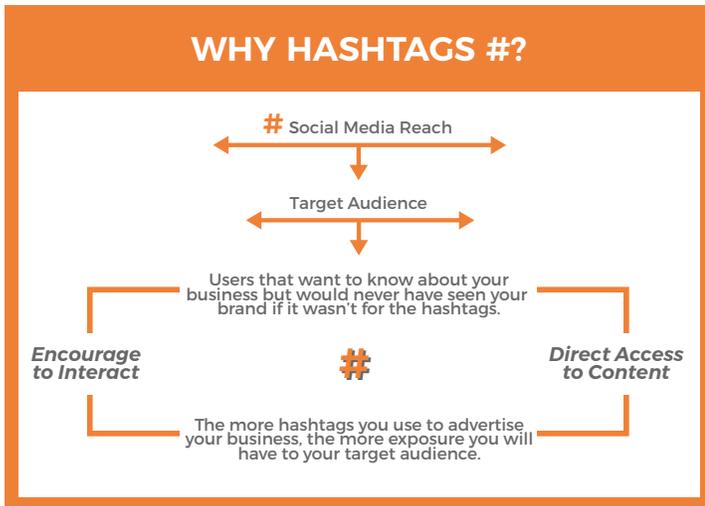
GRAPHIC IMAGE & VIDEO TOOLS - Some free or low-cost tools to utilize:

Graphic Editor - Canva™, PicMonkey™, Vectr™, Inkscape™, Gimp™, Snapseed™, Easel.ly™

Videos - YouTube™, Vimeo™



KEYWORDS & HASHTAGS – Keywords and hashtags can be helpful, but keep these to a minimum. Create specific targeted ones and use them in moderation. Too many look cluttered and unprofessional, so stick to 5-or-less.



VIDEOS – Videos are great for search engine results and to attract viewers. Remember to keep it simple. You have less than 7 seconds to make an impression. Videos of less than 2 minutes can be very successful. Be sure to add elements of fun, humor and education for best success and don't forget to have a catchy intro and a clear CTA (Call-to-Action) at the end. Keep in mind search engine results look at both the title and description. When posting a video be mindful in using a title and description that highlights the overall message and key points you are sharing.



TIMES TO POST – Consider your audience and discover what times they are utilizing social media. Posting at 9 a.m. in the morning is going to have differing results if you are trying to reach a stay-at-home-parent with school-age kids, versus a single corporate person with a 9am - 5pm job. Statistics show that the average social media follower checks in about 5x per day. Try to target them during these popular time frames - early in the morning, lunch time, afternoon break, after work/before dinner and after dinner/before bedtime.



FREQUENCY – Remember that consistency is more important than frequency. Diversity of posts is also important. Viewers like to see new fresh content that is informative, fun, or helpful. Ideally, best results come from well thought out campaigns that post different content 2-3x per day and engage with their prospects. If you are unable to designate this much time to your social media marketing, consider hiring someone that can help you out or scaling back to posting 2-3 days per week on a routine schedule.



AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT – Regularly monitor your messages and be sure to respond in a professional and timely manner. Review and reply to comments, mentions, reviews and any questions. Customer service is crucial. Just like you would in a restaurant or storefront, be sure to welcome your followers and engage with people who are checking in to your business or interacting with your posts. Thank people who take time to post or review and contribute to your efforts.

4 Testing, Measuring & Analyzing

Once you have been posting regularly, do routine audits of your posts. Which succeeded? Which didn't do as well as you expected? Were there any surprises? Try to find patterns within this information. Make small adjustments with your next rounds of posting content and see if you can improve upon the results.

5 Build Professional Alliances

Success in social media is all about relationship building. Be sure to take time, daily, to explore others using social media platforms for business. Connect with them and help them grow. It is natural for kind-hearted people to want to reciprocate, so set the example and – connect, help, share, & give back. Don't be afraid to let your friends and family know how they can help to support you as well.