

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

PLAN



HOW TO CREATE A SOCIAL
MEDIA MARKETING PLAN

Introduction

Social media marketing is one of the most imperative parts of having a social media enterprise presently. Irrespective of what your business is, or will be, in order to make it successful, you will need to create some kind of marketing plan. If you have experience in traditional marketing, you will definitely notice some crossover between social media marketing and traditional marketing. Not to mention that although traditional marketing skills are transferable, they are not the same thing.

In order to succeed online, it is not enough to simply market on social media. You will need to have a social media marketing plan. The strategizing phase of your business will be one of the most important parts. It will set up how you check and monitor your goals and progress, create content, and, ultimately succeed.

The best part about plans is that nothing is set in stone. It is a blueprint, not a legal document. So, if you are unsure about something; just try it. If it doesn't work, just try something else! Having this attitude will be incredibly beneficial on your social media marketing journey. Social media marketing may not be successful on the first attempt, which is why you must not be afraid to try something new every now and again.

First, we will discuss the ultimate goal of marketing: awareness of a product or brand that ultimately translates into revenue. You will need to build brand awareness, which will grow into brand recognition, and finally, brand loyalty, which is where the real fun will begin. This is when you will have an incredible relationship with your audience and have built a community.

It is of course possible that you have already begun your business and are looking for some tips to refresh your brand. If this is the case, you have a head start! Take the time to think about your current strategy and run a media audit. Have a look at your analytics and goals. You can then update them to align with the tools and tricks you have learned here. You should not ignore any progress you have already made, instead, you should analyze it. Running analysis is the best way to understand which area of your strategy is lacking and which needs the most improvement—and the only way to know is to check.

One of the first things that you need to do when creating a social media strategy is to set some goals. Without goals how will you know what you are achieving? This will help you to not only to see your progress, but also to see it from a statistical perspective. Having goals will really help you visualize what you are aiming for and how you are getting there. Setting smaller goals is something that you should consider. While you will undoubtedly have big dreams, setting smaller goals, too, or subgoals will allow you to see your progress towards larger ones.

It is usually recommended that you set timed and specific goals that including specific numbers and examples of what you want to achieve. This will help you measure your goals more concisely. Rather than just saying “increase” say “increased by X%.” Not only does this make your goals more visual, but they are also more attainable.

Therefore, your goals should be attainable as well as being ambitious. You can update your goals at any time so do not be afraid to start smaller. You should also include a projected timeline to reach particular milestones.

You will also need to align yourself with your target audience. You should outline specifically who your target audience is and try to build an example persona of who they are. Your target demographic breakdown should include their age, location, income, interests, values, and beliefs. Really try to psychologically analyze this personification of your audience to ensure that you can convince them why you are good for them, why they should listen to you, and, ultimately, why you are a trustworthy source of information for them.

Conducting market research will also be essential to the success of your marketing strategy. You should conduct deep research into your audience, examining who they are as consumers and how they use social media. You will also need to research the industry you are trying to break into to discover who the key players are. These key players have likely already captured your target audience’s attention; see how they have done it. You can learn a lot from studying the content strategies and analytics of other people. Naturally, you should not copy them, but you can pick up tips and tricks easily—and skip bits that do not work!

You also need to choose your social media platforms. Obviously, you should pick the ones that your target audience uses; there is no point creating content if your audience will not see it. You should specifically look into the demographic data and makeup of each social media platform’s userbase and determine which would be the best for you.

In saying this, it may be a good asset to your brand to set up profiles on more sites than plan on using and create links between them. Your profiles need to have all your contact information, similar usernames and they need to be recognizable as connected to each other: this means having the same visual elements across them all including logos fonts and photos. This means if you change strategies and use different platforms they will already be set up. Additionally, it may be useful to cross-share some content, albeit at different times.

Furthermore, you should try and create a brand. This is the thing that your audience will interact with, and it is how they will perceive you. Therefore, it needs to be in a favorable way! Your brand should be appropriate to them as well as a professional and respectable persona. This will include your voice and tone when you will be replying to comments or messages, as well as emailing. It is kind of like the personality of your business profiles—so make it likable!

You will likely return to market research many times. For example, to determine what is successful in the industry. Figure out who your main competitors are and see how they use marketing. You cannot copy them, but you can use them for inspiration as well as seeing what is unsuccessful. There are multiple ways to do something, so just because there is someone successful in the industry and they are already doing it, does not mean you cannot as well. You just need to show that you are unique and your brand strategy will need to reflect that. Audiences do not like brands that copy, nor do they like brands that seem fake; they want you to deliver your message and your content in the most authentic manner possible.

Creating a content calendar is a huge phase of the planning strategy. You can plan posts in advance and even schedule them (so you do not have to press the post button at a certain time). Planning it all in advance is a great way to capture your audience exactly when they are online without worrying you will miss it. Having a content calendar will save you time and stress; it means everything will be ready to go when you need it, and you will always have something to refer back to.

You should run an analysis and find out when your audience is most active and plan to post in these times. Depending on your platforms and how many problems you have multiple posts a day may be required. For example, it may be successful for you to post a story on Instagram in the morning, a tweet at lunchtime, an Instagram post in the late afternoon, and a Facebook post in the evening; but only on a Wednesday. Content planning is complicated! Different days have different levels of action online and each demographic will use social media differently some people are unavailable between 9:00 to 5:00 while others will not bother to check their phones on a

Saturday night, but on Friday night might be great for an impulse purchase. Without the data, however, you will not know exactly when peak times are. Not only should you use preexisting data but also run your own analysis on your posts and see what times and days get the most engagement and what type of engagement that is.

Building engagement is key. To encourage engagement, you can include a call to action. To emphasize your clickthroughs, run contests, or add a question of the day; but above all, you need to remember that engagement is two ways. You need to reply to the audience and seem available to reply to them. You should want to build a community.

In this calendar, you can include tasks that you need to do and when you plan on doing them. You could have an overall monthly calendar and then split it up into weeks and days. This will ensure you are maximizing your time and not leaving anything out. You should dedicate time to checking your analytics and running these specific analyses that you will require in order to check that you are making progress on your goals. Additionally, you should set aside time to really go through and analyze the perception of your brand that your audience has. This includes running searches for your name, making sure that nobody is saying anything nasty, and not tagging you in it. Among your frequent tasks should be going through and replying to comments, emails, and messages. This will make your audience feel valued, included, and prioritized. Make sure your brand voice is consistent and you are replying in kind and informative manners—quality customer service is a huge value add.

The content is effectively at the center of your strategy. It is what you were trying to sell your audience, after all. When thinking about content make sure that you were thinking about your platform, as well as your audience. You want to create content that is appropriate for the platform and will still excite your audience.

You need to also run your content obviously. Using your content plan on your calendar; run your campaigns and post your content as is appropriate. When you do your analysis, you should be checking which of your posts are the most effective, and what are the attributes of those posts; are they the same kind? Do they include questions? Are you sharing original content? What time of day are they posted? Are they getting new followers or just engaging the old ones? These are all things that you will need to consider because the positive attributes from them can be transferred into new posts: this is how you will grow.

Conclusion

To conclude, you will never be fully done with a social media marketing plan. You will need to continue to update it and refer back to it in order to continue to succeed. There is no shame and having to re-adjust your strategy-- the market is flooded and getting ahead can be a challenge, nevertheless, it is possible. It may take time, and it may take a few more campaigns and you had hoped, but your social media strategy will be helping you to smash all of your goals and succeed in creating your dream life. Above all, use the data, and make a splash!