THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING



TABLE OF CONTENTS

04 What is social media marketing and why is it important?

11 Create a winning social media strategy

26 Choosing the right social media platforms

49 Social media advertising

56 Developing a social media calendar

64 How to structure your social media team

67 Integrating social media into your omnichannel marketing strategy

73 Your social media technology stack

76 Measure the ROI of your social media campaigns

82 Conclusion

WHY SHOULD I READ THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING?

Social media is one of the most powerful ways to reach and engage with your buyers. Because it's almost universally used—by consumers and brands—social media is one of the most effective (and perhaps cost-effective) channels to connect with your audience.

Today, social media activity is higher than ever, with the number of users rising to 2.77 billion in 2019, up from 2.62 billion in 2018, according to Statista.[1]

While social media platforms started as ways to stay connected with your personal and professional network, they have evolved to become powerful ways for brands to connect with buyers and engage in instantaneous two-way conversations. Social media is now the status quo for a business's digital presence, and users expect to see their favorite brands on social media. And that's why social media marketing plays a critical role in the success of every business.

Social media marketing offers marketers vast opportunities to engage with their buyers across the entire customer lifecycle on the platforms they actively use. So, it's critical that, as a marketer, you know how to leverage social media marketing to build your brand, drive demand, and engage your buyer.

"Social media is becoming a real part of people's everyday lives (all people, not just social media marketers)."

-**Peg Fitzpatrick**, Social Media Strategist and Co-Author, *The Art of Social Media: Power Tips for Power Users*

[1] Number of social media users worldwide from 2010 to 2021 (in billions), Statista, 2019. https://www.statista.com/statistics/278414/number-of-worldwide-social-network-users

What is social media marketing and why is it important?



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SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING DEFINED

Social media marketing uses social media platforms to communicate and engage with people—regardless of the goal of that engagement.

Because of its rapid rise and prevalence, social media marketing has become a global phenomenon and a ubiquitous part of a marketer's toolkit. Social media is no longer something that needs an introduction—most marketers and their audiences know about it.

It's important to understand that social media marketing is more than the traditional platforms that many marketers are familiar with—Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter. There are many more activities and platforms that marketers can and should explore to reach their target audiences, engage them with relevant messages, and build lasting relationships.

Social media marketing can be done organically, with posts that are displayed to your audience based on algorithms. It can also be augmented by paid advertising, with posts that are boosted by a platform's ad capabilities, making it more likely for your post to be seen by your target audience.

GLOBAL DIGITAL SNAPSHOT

A snapshot of the world's key digital statistical indicators

TOTAL POPULATION	INTERNET USERS	ACTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA USERS	UNIQUE MOBILE USERS	ACTIVE MOBILE SOCIAL USERS
7.395 BILLION	**3.419 BILLION**	**2.307 BILLION**	**3.790 BILLION**	**1.968 BILLION**
54% Urbanization	46% Penetration	31% Penetration	51% Penetration	27% Penetration

Source: We Are Social

WHY SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING IS IMPORTANT

The impact of social media transcends almost every aspect of our daily lives—work, politics, breaking news, and more. The rise in social media usage by marketers, and our audience, means that participation is no longer an option; it's a necessity. With a majority of audiences actively using social media, we need to meet our audience where they are.

To understand the value social media marketing offers your organization, let's look at how it helps marketers drive value across every stage of the customer lifecycle.

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR BRAND RESEARCH

% of active users who say they use social platforms to research products



Source: Global Web Index

INCREASE DEMAND

Social media offers marketers more than just a way to reinforce their brand.

It's also great for driving people to a conversion or sale by bringing in new marketable contacts for your database and nurturing them across all channels.

Develop offers, promotions, contests, and content that engage your audience more deeply and drive conversion—from a form fill to a purchase. This can be done through social media activity from your brand page or one-on-one through individual team members.

Social selling

Social selling gives you a way to connect with your buyers. Your social media marketing and sales team (if you have one) can reach out to people on a one-to-one level and offer them personal, relevant content, messages, and offers to accelerate them toward a purchase.

SEO

Many marketers use their website as the "home base" for their marketing activities—driving visitors to their site to engage and eventually convert them. An important part of getting people to your website is your ranking in organic search results, which is where search engine optimization (SEO) comes in.

SEO is a strategic activity that can help marketers bolster their organic search rankings on search engines like Google. While social media and SEO may not directly work together to build your website's page ranking, social media is one of the easiest and most effective ways to push out your content.

The incoming links from your social media shares can impact your bounce rate and time-on-site engagement. And if your content is good and people stick around to read it, those engagement metrics communicate value to search engines.

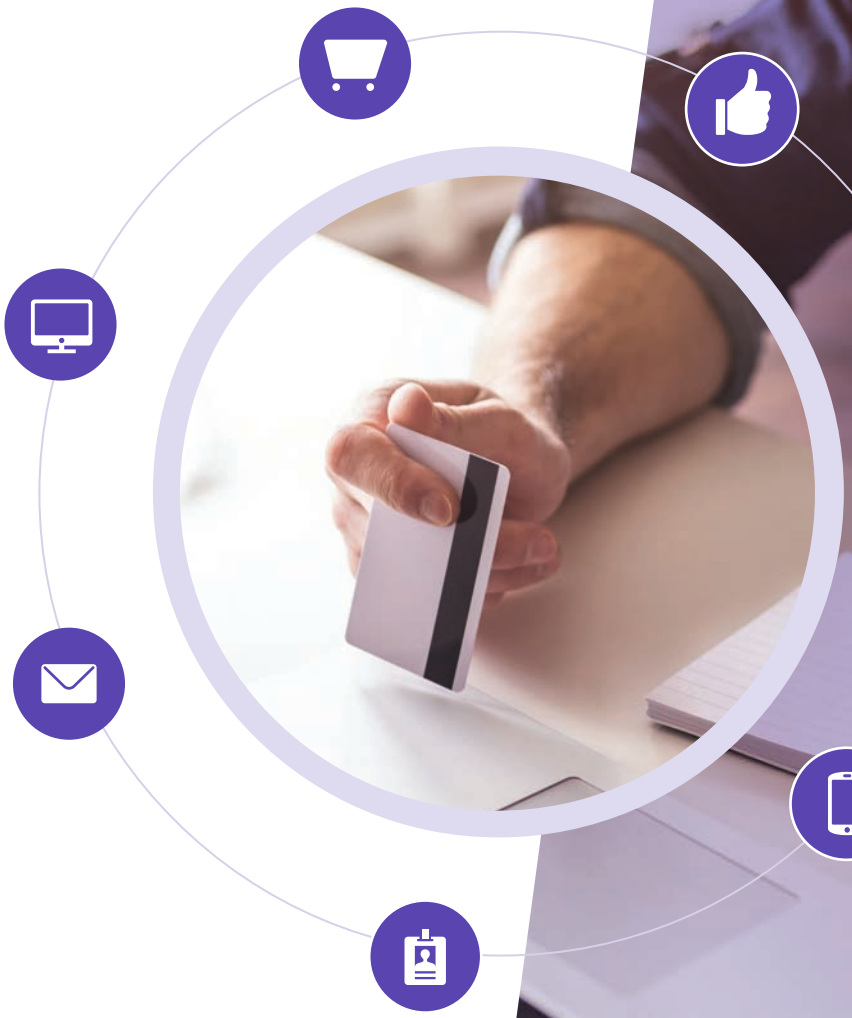
"As social media becomes more personal, social selling, when practiced correctly, is becoming a very real channel to engage people with."

- **John Jantsch**, Speaker and Author of *Duct Tape Marketing*, *The Referral Engine*, and *The Commitment Engine*

What is social media marketing and why is it important?

OMNICHANNEL CAMPAIGNS

Social media does not work in a silo. Many great brands use social networks as critical components of their marketing mix and communications. But it's important to understand that social media marketing is most effective when its messages and content support and reinforce other marketing channels. Coordinated messages across channels allow marketers to carry on a continuous conversation with their audience over time.



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NETWORKING AND PEER-TO-PEER INFLUENCE

One of the best ways to engage your audience is by providing them with a compelling reason to share your message with their networks. Word-of-mouth marketing and peer recommendations are extremely powerful ways to increase brand visibility through social proof, as people believe their network of peers more often than a branded campaign.

Trust—an engagement factor in every product/service category—has become the indispensable connective tissue between brands and customer loyalty.[2] Because people view any brand-to-buyer communication as an advertisement, your customers are less likely to take your word for it. In contrast, Nielsen says that around 90% of people believe what their peers have to say about a brand.[3] If your target audience's friends and colleagues are talking positively about your product or service, you are more likely to gain their trust than by running an ad campaign.

The annually updated Edelman Trust Barometer evaluates consumer trust with brands. And in 2018, only 48% of US respondents said they trust businesses.[4] Americans value word of mouth recommendations from friends and family 41% more than social media recommendations.[5]

"Smart, innovative companies are leveraging thought leaders throughout their entire marketing strategy in order to pull in new audiences."

-**Joe Pulizzi**, Founder, Content Marketing Institute



What does it take to do social media marketing well?

Look at this checklist to make sure you have all your bases covered when starting or improving your social media marketing strategy:

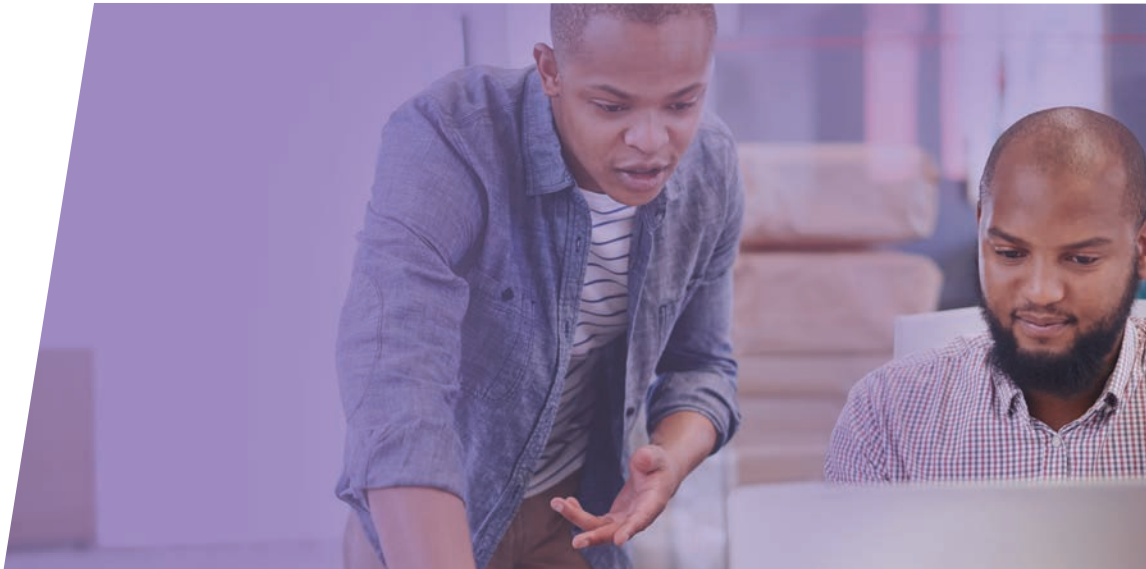
- ☐ Create clear goals
- ☐ Have dedicated and trained staff
- ☐ Produce enough relevant, quality content
- ☐ Understand the social platforms and sites your audience prefers
- ☐ Equip your other channels with the ability to share to social
- ☐ Commit to making every campaign social
- ☐ Track metrics to get insights about your social media campaigns

[2] Consumer trust becoming key to brand success, report, Digital Strategy Consulting, 2019. http://www.digitalstrategyconsulting.com/intelligence/2019/01/consumer_trust_becoming_key_to_brand_success_report.php

[3] 40 Employee Advocacy Statistics To Build A Case For Social Business, Tribal Impact, 2015. https://www.tribalimpact.com/blog/my-favourite-employee-advocacy-statistics

[4] 2018 Edelman Trust Barometer, Edelman, 2018. https://www.edelman.com/sites/g/files/aatuss191/files/2018-10/2018_Edelman_Trust_Barometer_Global_Report_FEB.pdf

[5] The 2018 Chatter Matters Word of Mouth Study, Talk Triggers, 2018. https://www.talktriggers.com/cm

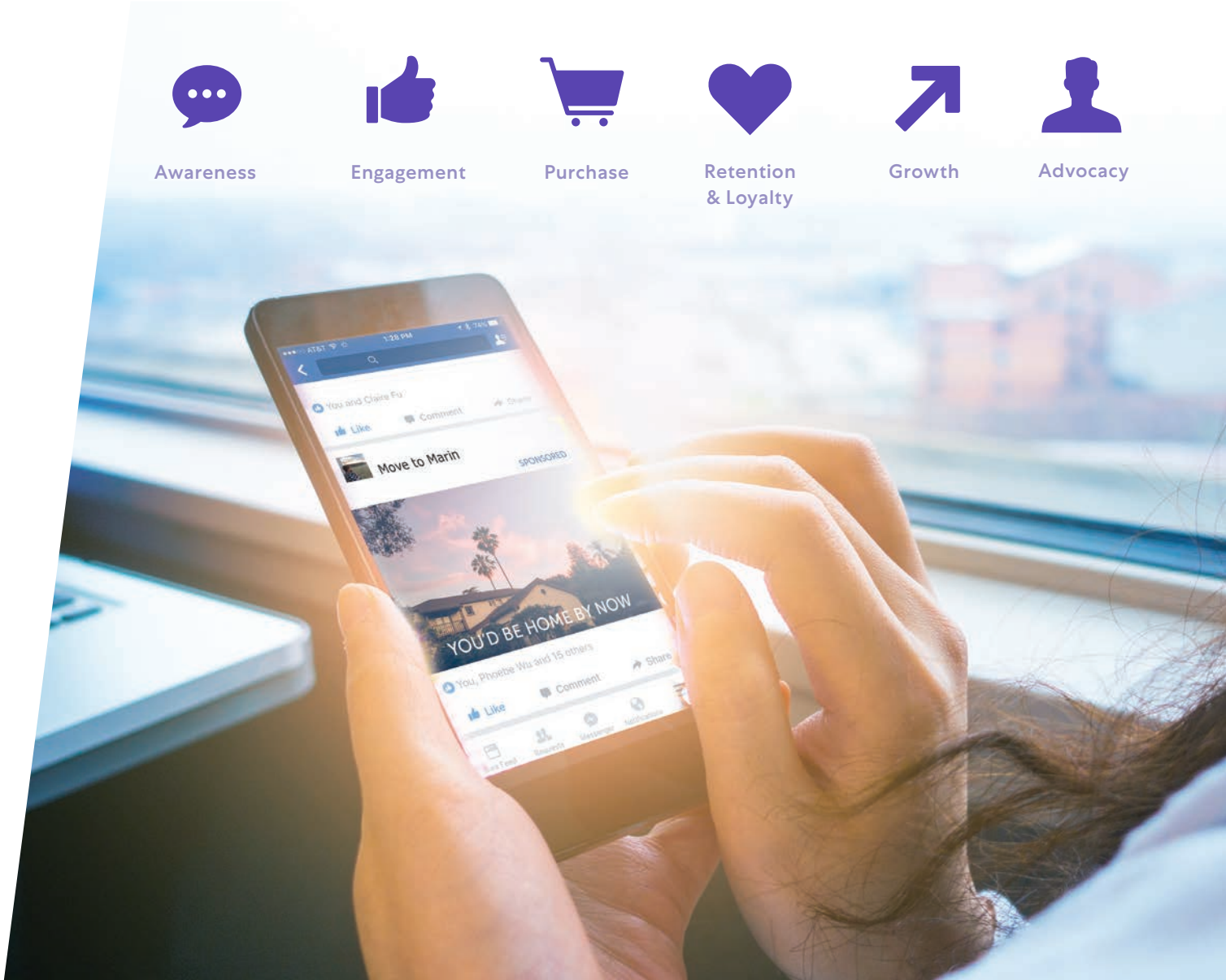


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SOCIAL MEDIA DRIVES VALUE ACROSS THE CUSTOMER LIFECYCLE

Brand awareness and peer-to-peer sharing are important, but social media marketing is not a soft metrics-only channel. Today, it drives real, trackable revenue. The level of innovation on social media platforms also allows marketers to try new approaches to reach and engage their target audience.

With the right tools, like marketing automation and a social media management platform, you're able to listen and respond to your audience across channels, and track the revenue associated with your social media marketing activities—making their impact crystal clear.



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Create a winning social media strategy

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UNDERSTAND YOUR AUDIENCE

Before you jump into the tactical and practical details of your social media plan, it's critical that you take the time to understand your audience. Who are they? What do they care about? This section will walk you through how to answer these questions and define your audience.

Build personas

To understand your audience—from prospects to current customers—you'll want to create personas that represent the people within your audience. Often, this information is already available from work you have done to segment and target audiences in other marketing channels.

In that case, you may still want to go back and examine if those personas truly represent the audience you'll encounter on social media. Listening to your audience on social media can be a helpful way to confirm whether your personas fit your audience. It helps you understand in real time what your audience truly cares about and shares.





Build personas

Sometimes, the personas you are trying to reach simply aren't on social media. If so, you should craft content that will be valuable to them but may also reach people outside of your built personas. It's important to understand and create content for your audience, but on social, the best practice is to avoid being overly exclusive with content.

If you don't have customer personas yet or are adapting them from the personas developed for different objectives, here is a set of questions you will want to ask to get started:

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN BUILDING YOUR CUSTOMER PERSONAS:

BACKGROUND	What companies are they from? What are their key job responsibilities? What are their likes and dislikes about their job? What does their team structure look like?
GOALS	What are their business goals? How can your products help them achieve those goals? What are their challenges and pain points? How can you help address them?
SOURCE OF INFORMATION	Where do they like to consume content (channels)? Are there specific social channels where they do and don't engage?
PREFERRED CONTENT TOPIC	What content topics are they interested in?
MARKETING MESSAGE	Which type of messaging speaks directly to them?
OBJECTIONS	What objections do you anticipate from them during the sales process?
SPECIFIC PRODUCT INTEREST	Are they interested in a particular solution or product?
ROLE IN PURCHASE PROCESS	What is their influence in the decision-making process?
QUOTES	What are some key takeaways that they have said during interviews?

Create a winning social media strategy: Understand your audience

Most companies develop personas based on customer demographics and behaviors in addition to their own understanding of customer motivations and challenges. To distill this into a persona, you can conduct qualitative interviews and surveys of your customers and salespeople, as well as analyze the customer demographic, firmographic, behavioral, and purchase data available in your marketing automation platform or other systems. The better you understand and humanize your buyers, the more relevant your marketing will be.

If your business serves several types of customers, you'll want to develop multiple buyer personas. If you're a B2B organization, your personas may include an executive sponsor, decision maker, and the user. If you're a consumer company, you likely will create your personas around demographic information like age, gender, income level, and region. For most organizations, somewhere between four and six personas is ideal, although you might create fewer for a less complex audience.



Why create personas?

Developing buyer personas requires some initial investment, but it pays off throughout the customer lifecycle—for targeting not only your social media marketing campaigns, but also across all your marketing efforts.

- **They determine which kind of content you need:** If you break your existing content down by persona, you can easily see which personas have enough content and which need more.
- **They set the tone, style, and delivery strategies for your content:** Some buyers respond best to light, conversational voice, while others trust a more formal tone. In creating your personas, you'll find out the best tone and style for your audience.
- **They help you target the topics you should be writing about:** Why speculate about the topics your buyers care about when you could just ask? Personas will help you generate a list of relevant topics.
- **They tell you where buyers get their information and how they want to consume it:** Does your audience like to sink their teeth into 100-page guides, or do they prefer short, snappy graphics? Do they spend their time reading third-party reports, or do they comb through Twitter? This information will inform the way you create and distribute your content.



Early-, mid-, and late-stage messages

You can deliver specific types of messages on social media that correlate to the goals you are trying to accomplish. These early-, mid-, and late-stage messages work to nudge buyers along the entire lifecycle—from awareness to advocacy.

Early: Early-stage messages on social media are fun, entertaining, and educational. These could include sharing or curating relevant news, offering helpful tips, or displaying visual content.

Mid: Mid-stage social media messages are educational, engaging, and often drive toward a goal. They should build trust with your audience and get them to engage with you further. Some examples include social contests, a free subscription to a newsletter, or an invitation to an event.

Late: Late-stage messages are educational, informative, and drive conversions. However, it's still important that your message is on-brand and interesting. These messages could be a click-to-purchase, demo offering, or trial sign-up. These all drive metrics that ultimately support a conversion—a new name, a sale, and so on.

"Once you know your target audience, you can look at the social media landscape and see which social media platforms will work with your message and will reach your audience. It's a combination of your goals and where your audience spends their time."

-Peg Fitzpatrick



Social media pitfalls to avoid

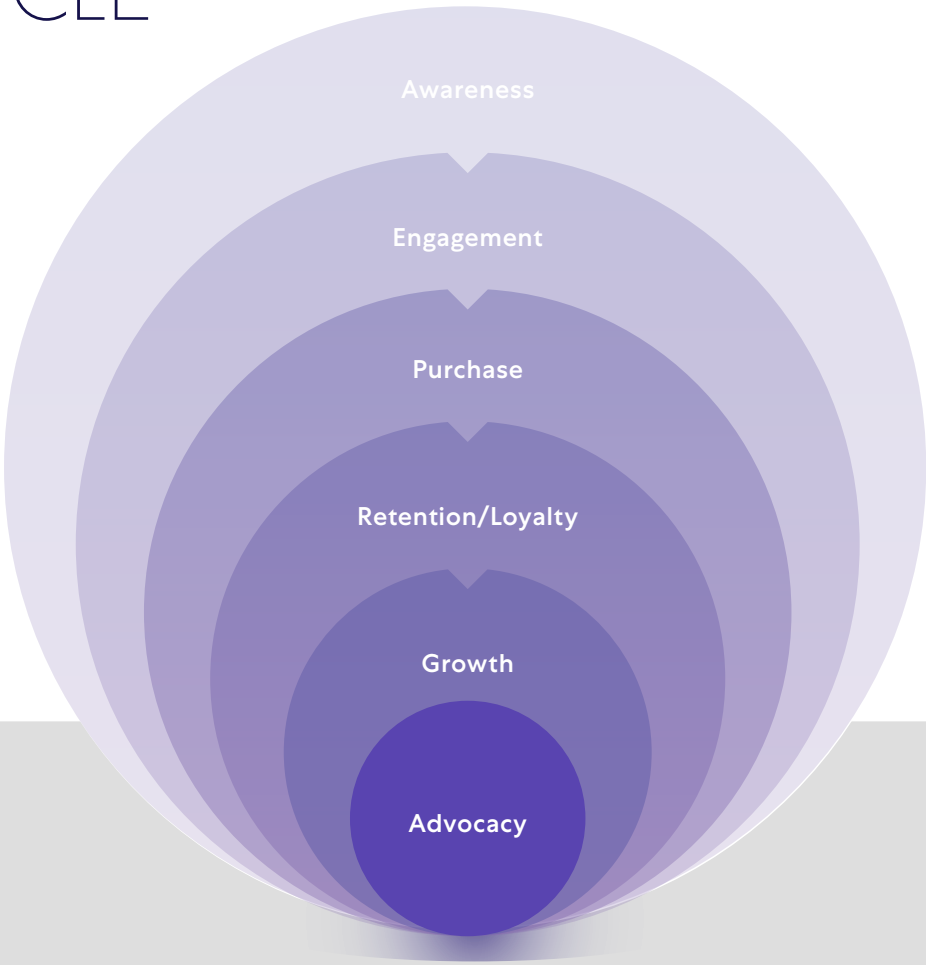
As you plan your social media goals, strategy, and activities, it's important to avoid these common pitfalls:

- Don't go in without goals. You need to establish your objectives, goals, and ways to measure success.
- Don't just brag or sell. Endless self-promotion will alienate your audience and irritate existing customers.
- Don't overlook measuring your ROI (return on investment). There are concrete ways to measure your impact (which we'll cover later).
- Don't assume every social media site is good for your business. It's critical to understand how and when your buyers are using social media. Social media requires you to actively engage with your audience and can become a resource drain if you're on too many channels.
- Don't create a presence on a social site and then abandon it. Creating a presence means finding and building engagement with your audience. It's a continuous process that takes time, but it's well worth the effort.

MAP YOUR GOALS AND MESSAGING TO THE CUSTOMER LIFECYCLE

As with any marketing strategy, it's important to start by defining your goals. To do this, we recommend identifying your social media marketing goals for each stage of the customer lifecycle. This creates a foundation for a solid social media strategy that's flexible enough to react to an individual's buyer journey while also providing a road map for determining which platforms, messages, and offers make sense for your buyer.

In this section, we will look at how to define your goals for each stage of the customer lifecycle and the types of messages that will engage your audience.



"Fully understand the goals and questions your potential customers have at each stage. If you do that, you can effectively guide customers no matter where they choose to get their information and engage."

-John Jantsch

The six stages of the customer lifecycle

Whenever you communicate with your audience, it's important to keep their buyer journey and the customer lifecycle—from awareness to advocacy—in mind. Understanding where each individual is in their unique buyer's journey allows you to have relevant conversations with them.

Your buyers have a goal: to fill a need or solve a problem. To help, you need to understand the different stages of the customer lifecycle, identify where each buyer is in their unique journey, present a call-to-action (CTA) and tie each of your marketing activities to business outcomes.

At Marketo, we break down the customer lifecycle into six main stages: awareness, engagement, purchase, retention/loyalty, growth, and advocacy. Each buyer's unique journey is fluid and can move between these stages, both forward and backward. This is how these stages can shape your social media marketing goals.

1. Awareness

Buyers here are at the beginning of the customer lifecycle. This is where good branding, a high ranking on search engines, and a strong social media presence are useful. Your goal in this phase is to drive brand awareness and capture audience interest, reaching them on the right channels with relevant, personalized messages. For your social media marketing, this means offering plenty of early-stage messages and having a thorough understanding of the social media platforms your buyers use so you can always reach them where they are.

2. Engagement

Buyers in this phase have displayed interest in your company and are potential customers. Your goal is to listen to their behaviors and then engage them with targeted messages to nudge toward the next conversion. This includes creating specific offers and nurture tracks based on their preferences and behaviors. Useful content is a great way to maintain a connection with your audience, educate them, and ultimately build a lasting relationship. For social media marketing, this means incorporating mid-stage messages into your social media editorial mix and using paid advertising to target specific audiences with content and offers that will push them forward to make a purchase.

3. Purchase

In this stage, your buyers are ready to purchase from you, so your job is to make the process convenient for them. Monitor your purchase process to ensure an easy transaction for your new customers. If other teams are involved, such as sales or support, align your communications so that you're guiding your buyers through the transaction.

The six stages of the customer lifecycle (cont.)

4. Retention/loyalty

While converting a buyer into a customer is considered a success for most marketers, creating trusting, long-term relationships with your customers is one of the most effective ways to increase revenue. For social media, this means understanding that your customers are part of your audience and ensuring that you continue to provide them value with relevant content and messages. It also means having a plan and process in place when your customers encounter customer service issues, so you can rapidly respond and deliver on your brand promise.

5. Growth

Marketing doesn't end after the sale. Continue to provide value to your customers by identifying cross-sell and upsell opportunities. You can use your marketing automation platform to segment your current customers and share that list with digital advertising platforms, allowing you to target current customers with new offers.

6. Advocacy

Engaging with customers throughout their lifecycle isn't just about individual value—it's also about the value of their networks. Turning your loyal customers into advocates can expand your reach and promote your brand. It's important that you treat your existing customers well by continuing to engage them with special perks and incentives. Your goal is to offer a great customer experience to encourage your customers to become brand advocates. It's important that you show your advocates recognition, like with retweets, special offers, or promotions.

WHY MARKET ACROSS THE ENTIRE LIFECYCLE?

The probability of selling to a prospect is less than

20%

The probability of selling to an existing customer is greater than

60%

Marketers that say they achieve a higher ROI by focusing on engagement:

49%

Repeat customers spend more than new customers by as much as

67%

[6] Customer Retention Should Outweigh Customer Acquisition, Adobe, 2013. https://www.cmo.com/features/articles/2013/7/18/customer_retention.html#gs.8zjdvq

Source: Marketing Metrics and Bain & Company[6]

CREATING CONTENT FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Now that you've identified your social media goals across the entire customer lifecycle, it's time to start achieving them. Because of the immediate, one-to-one nature of social media marketing, your buyers expect your brand to behave like any other person on the platform.

So, in order to be successful, your content needs to not only offer value but also meet their expectations. In order to grow your social media presence and hit your objectives, you need to create content that maps to each stage of the customer lifecycle and aligns with your buyers' expectations on every channel. With the proliferation of marketing messages, the only way to break through to your audience is with content that offers relevant, useful, and valuable information.



Social media standards and code of ethics

Businesses and people who participate on social media should consider adhering to the generally accepted code of ethics and guidelines set by the Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA). WOMMA provides guidance for marketers and businesses committed to engaging in practices and policies that promote an environment of trust between the consumer and marketer.

"Great social is really about great content. The campaigns that really stand out are those with content that compel the user to participate, to engage, to share, to amplify. Think about how you can make your audience part of the content. Starbucks does a great job of this."

-**Matt Heinz**, President, Heinz Marketing

DEFINE YOUR WRITING STYLE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Your content is driven by the target personas you are trying to reach on your social channels and your objectives for each stage of the customer lifecycle.

Based on your assessment in the earlier chapter on personas, you should have a solid understanding of what tone, style, and delivery strategies to use. Are you targeting practitioners on specific social channels? Perhaps you will want to use a conversational voice on Twitter or Facebook. Are you trying to reach executives? You may want to use a formal voice on a professional network like LinkedIn.

Whoever your target audience is, it's important that you understand which objectives each piece of content helps you achieve. Does a particular asset help increase brand affinity? You may want to promote that post both organically and through paid promotion to increase its reach and achieve your objectives. Is an asset intended to be educational and useful? Perhaps it should be promoted to audiences who have previously interacted with your brand.

Are you creating content that educates?

As you consider creating content to support your social media marketing, frame your thinking around your audience's needs and interests. Not focusing on your audience will result in content that is blind to your buyers' needs and the value you aim to create for them.

Are you creating content that's targeted?

Every piece of content you create should have an intended audience. That audience may be broad, but you should understand the purpose and persona(s) you aim to speak to, inform, and educate.

Let's explore what this looks like for a B2B organization. Practitioners would be interested in actionable content that walks them through "how-to" steps of accomplishing a task, whereas executives are more likely to be interested in content that addresses higher-level strategy and best practices.

Regardless of whether your asset has a broad or targeted audience, there are a few things that you can do to create more relevant content. You can start by applying the 4 Rs—reorganize, rewrite, retire, redesign—to existing content.

"It used to be that we created paid ads, shared those on social media, and hoped they earned organic or "owned" brand engagement. That model has flipped. Now, brands are creating great stories on their own platforms. If the content is good, it 'earns' social shares. Then paid promotion is placed behind it to maximize reach. Ultimately, it all starts with great content!"

-**Michael Brenner**, CEO, Marketing Insider Group

SCALING YOUR CONTENT FOR SOCIAL

The 4 Rs

Because social media marketing requires content to fuel many of the conversations and interactions you want to have, you may need to get creative in how you resource your team and create that content. To maximize the value of your team, save money, and effectively create the content that you need, use the 4 Rs of content marketing for your social content.

Reorganize

Maximize your efficiency and use sections of the same piece to create smaller breakout pieces. For example, you could break up an infographic into different visuals (such as important stats and charts) to share on your social channels and include a link to the full infographic in your caption.

Rewrite

Extend your investment by using pieces that already exist. Take a look at your content library and determine where you can pull relevant information from. Even if an asset is outdated, there may still be relevant takeaways that your audience will find valuable.

Retire

Sometimes it's best to remove content that's outdated. Social media sharing is instantaneous, and the last thing you want to do is make your brand appear out of the loop.

Redesign

In some cases, all your content needs is a fresh design. Your asset can feel old because the creative visuals are no longer on trend. Sometimes you can update an existing asset to make it relevant for a segment of your audience or a certain persona.

"When you create a great video or blog that resonates with your audience, too often, marketers stop there. You must take that content and turn it into other pieces that fit other social platforms. For example, if you have a great Facebook Live video, take the best 1 minute clip and share it on Instagram."

-**Brian Fanzo**, Change Evangelist & CEO, iSocialFanz, LLC

Create a variety of content

To keep your audience engaged, make sure you're creating content that is shareable on social media while still helping you achieve your goals. Content is a great way to show your expertise and your personality, and there are many purposes for content, from building your audience's perception of your brand to thought leadership to simply posting fun, shareable pieces.

When you think about what types of content to create, it's important to first understand where you will be sharing it (many social media platforms lend themselves more naturally to specific types of content) and what types of content your audience consumes and engages with most readily.

Your content can take many forms, and your mix may look different depending on which platforms you choose to engage with, your business type, and your audience. Common pieces include:

- Blog posts
- Tip sheets/checklists
- Infographics
- Long-form content pieces (like ebooks and whitepapers)
- Photos and videos
- Fun visual content (like memes and comics)
- Slideshows
- Podcasts



Emoji marketing—YAY! or nay?

People process visual information much faster than text, so using emojis in your social media messages can help your audience grasp the message quickly, especially if they are scanning through their feed. However, it can be easy to go overboard with emojis, so it's important to follow these tips:



1. **Use emojis tastefully.** Emojis should help demonstrate your message, not be your entire message. Publishing posts with emojis making up most of the content can leave room for misinterpretation.



2. **Use them for the right audience.** If you're building brand awareness and publishing fun or educational content, emojis can add more flavor to your post. On the other hand, if you're trying to reach the C-suite with high-level messaging, it's best to leave them out.



3. **Use them in the right context.** Your emojis should complement your message, not contradict it. Before you use emojis in your marketing, do a little research on whether they mean the same thing to different people.

"One size content doesn't work, of course neither does the same content across all social networks. There are specific content considerations for the campaign, the brand's audience, and the distinct organic networks built up on each channel."

-**Lee Odden**, CEO, TopRank Marketing

"Regulated brands will likely have to take more conversations offline than a retailer or restaurant, but that doesn't mean they still can't be personable, empathetic, and helpful in public via social media."

-**Dan Gingiss**, Co-Host, Focus on Customer Service Podcast

Define your content mix

Understanding what you're going to publish on social media starts with a content strategy because content is the fuel you will use to engage with your audience.

As you assess and develop content for social media, think about how you will distribute it. One example of a common social media distribution framework is the 4-1-1 rule. This rule states that for every four educational or entertaining posts (infographic, blog, awareness-level ebook), you can share one soft/mid-level promotion (a more solution-focused asset) and one hard/late-stage promotion (a demo, for example).

This mix allows you to offer value that far outweighs the sales element of your mid- and late-stage promotions and educates and entertains your audience so that they are more welcoming to the later-stage messages when you share them. It lets you engage in conversations with your audience, build awareness, credibility, and trust, and keep in touch with followers—without coming across as pushy or "salesy." Your audience's trust—ultimately your most powerful selling tool—hangs in the balance.



"The 4-1-1 rule applies to brands on social media, in part because it fundamentally reminds us that being a resource to others is the best way to market. (It's a good rule for life, too, isn't it?)"

-**Ann Handley**, Chief Content Officer, MarketingProfs

The power of visuals

Photos

Sharing photos and images can be a boon for companies. It lets you record and increase the visibility of company events, industry conferences, user groups, and more. On social media, you can build a visual vocabulary that defines your brand in the same way a traditional written-word style guide typically does. Social audiences—prospects and customers—love visual content, so make sure you are consistently using images in your marketing mix. Here are the top three reasons why you should use photos and images in your social media marketing campaigns:

1. Images appeal to emotions

Visual content strikes an emotional chord with customers that text is unable to. The simplicity of photo and image sharing applications makes this appeal even greater.

2. Images creates intimacy

Photos help humanize your company. Now, customers and prospects can relate to your brand message via photos without needing to read a plethora of emails.

3. Images engage

Photo and image sharing applications provide the perfect opportunity for your business to engage your audience in a fun way through contests and other image-centric campaigns.

People following directions with text and illustrations do 323% better than people following directions without illustrations.[7] — NeoMam

Visual content is more than 40X more likely to get shared on social media than other types of content.[8] — Buffer

Content with relevant images gets 94% more views than content without relevant images.[9] — KISSMetrics

The average video post generates 135% greater organic reach, when compared to photo posts.[10] — Social Bakers

"Every post, other than a response or comment, should have a picture or video. That's one of the most important things to remember."

-**Guy Kawasaki**, Chief Evangelist, Canva

[7] Thirteen Reasons Why your Brain Craves Infographics, NeoMam Studios. https://neomam.com/interactive/13reasons/

[8] Why Visual Content Is the Key to Conversion, Social Media Today, 2015. https://www.socialmediatoday.com/marketing/why-visual-content-key-conversion-infographic

[9] Content With Relevant Images Get 94 Percent More Views, Social Media Today, 2015. https://www.socialmediatoday.com/marketing/2015-04-06/content-relevant-images-gets-94-more-views-infographic

[10] Native Facebook Videos Get More Reach Than Any Other Type of Post, Socialbakers, 2015. https://www.socialbakers.com/blog/2367-native-facebook-videos-get-more-reach-than-any-other-type-of-post

Videos

Video is now an essential part of any successful social media marketing strategy. Not convinced? According to Wyzowl, 77% of consumers say they've been convinced to buy a product or service by watching a video.[11] Online videos can help you achieve a range of outcomes, from awareness and engagement to conversion and retention.

Videos are most valuable when they offer a real-time look into your brand activities; it's not enough to just pull copy from your other channels. Therefore, video can sometimes be hard for brands to develop because it requires resources to create and curate content. When optimizing video for your social media marketing, the first step is to understand the goals you're aiming to achieve. Some videos will simply entertain—building brand affinity, awareness, and engagement—while others will educate, helping drive customers toward another purchase or retaining those that you already have. To get more visibility, make sure you optimize your videos by:

Using customer-centric titles

Put careful thought into the keywords your customers might search for when looking for a video like yours and what will catch their attention as they're scrolling their feeds.

Including video descriptions with targeted keywords

Use the description field to add relevant keywords for your buyer and your brand. If your video aims to drive conversions, such as a purchase or download, it's a best practice to include a shortened link with a CTA driving traffic to your website or a landing page with a specific offer.

Encouraging comments

Your goal should be to generate as many "thumbs-up" ratings and comments as you can for brand awareness and SEO purposes. Commenting on other popular videos in your niche is another way to generate more comments and ratings. It's also a great opportunity to present yourself as an expert by making a comment that spurs other viewers to engage.

Increasing social shares

Use links or embed codes to share your videos on other channels and include them on your website. Determine which videos would be useful to prospects and customers and include the links in your emails, blog posts, and other outbound communications.

You should always be thinking about how to make your content more shareable, and video content is a great asset to promote social sharing. Integrate videos in your social campaigns to further increase engagement, as videos often have high share rates compared to other types of assets. Promotional and sales-focused videos are acceptable and can be useful. Unlike whitepapers, videos can be product-oriented and promotional, and can include:

- Product demos
- Webinars
- Whiteboard sessions
- Customer testimonials
- Speaking engagements
- Holiday video cards
- Vlog entries
- User-generated content
- Company culture videos

[11] Increasing Product Understanding with Video, Wyzowl, 2016. https://www.wyzowl.com/increasing-product-understanding-with-video



Choosing the right social media platforms

Marketo™
An Adobe Company

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

There are many different social media platforms you can use to reach and engage with your audience. In this section, we will cover some of the core platforms your business can leverage.

Many social platforms have capabilities that overlap, and they will likely continue to develop as each platform evolves to improve the user experience. As with any of your marketing campaigns, the best platforms to use are the ones where your buyers are. Keep your audience and objectives in mind as you choose which platforms to focus on—some are better suited for meeting your early customer lifecycle stage objectives, while others have more advanced targeting options that allow you to reach buyers at every stage.

As you navigate the social media landscape, it's important to have a solid understanding of each channel's features and capabilities to help map a strategy for which platforms to participate on. But the key is to remember that it's not enough to merely post on any of these sites; you must engage and build relationships with your audience continuously.

Reminder

The content you share on each of these social media platforms will vary depending on the target personas you are trying to reach and your objectives for each stage of the customer lifecycle.

"It all comes back to asking yourself how you can make your story relevant to that space. Learning to adapt to evolving technologies will change the way that we connect with people and tell our stories."

-**Bryan Kramer**, Best Selling Author, CEO, PureMatter, TED Talk & Keynote Speaker

"I believe too many marketers are creating strategies focused on where their audience is today. Not only does that not embrace change, but it forgets to factor in where your audience will be tomorrow."

-**Brian Fanzo**

Facebook

Facebook is one of the most widely used social media platforms, with more than 2.27 billion monthly active users.[12] Its continued success can largely be attributed to its focus on user experience and its ability to navigate the shift to a mobile-first world.

Facebook offers more than just a way to stay in touch with friends, family, and colleagues—it's also an essential tool to connect with your buyers. Since it officially created a space for brands in 2007, it has continued to evolve the ways marketers engage with their audience. Facebook allows your business to be accessible to people on a trusted, popular platform, where potential customers can not only engage with your brand but also see real people (their network) interacting with you. This sets the stage for you to build stronger, more authentic relationships with them.



[12] Facebook hits 2.27 billion monthly active users as earnings stabilize, NBC News, October 2018. https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/facebook-hits-2-27-billion-monthly-active-users-earnings-stabilize-n926391

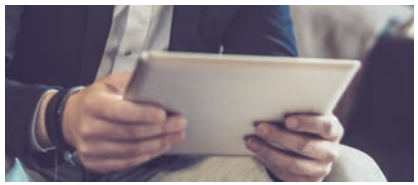
Facebook (cont.)

Will my post be seen?

What you need to know about Facebook's News Feed Algorithm:

Changes to Facebook's algorithm over time have had an impact on organic impressions—now, posting for the sake of posting can actually hurt your chances of being seen. Facebook is very user-centric and continually optimizes its platform to ensure that the News Feed helps users connect to stories that matter most to them. Posting overly promotional content will cause your page's organic distribution to fall over time. So how do you make sure customers see your post? Understand how the following issues impact it and how to overcome them:

Marten L.
2hr·



Like Comment Share

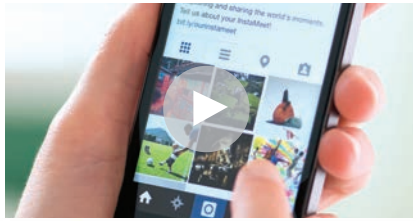
Time spent reading a post: In the past, brands could manipulate their engagement rates by running a contest in which users were required to like, share, or comment on a post, but this no longer works. Facebook measures the number of seconds a user spends on each post to understand whether the content resonated with them. If individuals spend more time on a particular post compared to others, it's a good indicator that it was important to them.

Time spent with content: Facebook starts measuring this after your content has fully loaded and only measures to a certain threshold so longer articles don't get ranked higher. Ensure that you provide users with timely, relevant, and valuable content they will actually read.

Like Comment Share

Shelly D
1hr·

Actions on videos: Behavior differs a bit for video, and people don't necessarily like, comment, or share videos they enjoy. Facebook counts other actions as metrics of success, such as how long someone watches a video, whether someone turns on the sound, makes the video full screen, and enables high-definition. Relevance is key—think about sharing fun, educational, or humorous video content that is immediately engaging.



Like Comment Share

Diversity of posts: Facebook discovered that people enjoy reading articles from a wide range of publishers, so they're reducing how often people see several posts in a row from the same source. This means it benefits you to spread your posts throughout the day to increase the chances of them getting seen by your audience.

Like Comment Share

David N
4hr·

Reduction of clickbait headlines:

You won't believe what happened next...

Like Comment Share

25

Clickbaiting is when a publisher posts a link with a headline that's misleading or leaves out important information to get users to click on it. While these posts get a lot of clicks, Facebook research shows that 80% of the time, people prefer headlines that are more informative. So instead, Facebook looks at how long people spend reading the article and the ratio of people clicking on the content compared to people discussing and sharing it. Facebook has also identified phrases that are commonly used in clickbait headlines to determine which posts are clickbait and which web domains they're coming from. Links shared from those pages or domains will appear lower in the News Feed until they stop posting clickbait headlines.

Like Comment Share

Facebook (cont.)

Important features

Tabs and apps

Tabs and apps appear in two places on your Facebook page: in the navigation bar under your page's cover photo and on the left side of your timeline. Tabs come with your page and help users navigate through content such as photos, videos, and events. Tabs can also be used to host a variety of apps, which help a business extend its capabilities directly on its Facebook page, including running contests, promoting offers, connecting to your other social accounts, and more.

Facebook groups

The group feature is useful for demonstrating someone's passion or expertise in a topic while connecting them to like-minded people. Company employees can join groups dedicated to the industry to share ideas and insights with their peers.

Live video

Facebook Live videos are video posts that you can share on your timeline and in your followers' News Feeds in real time. They can also be watched after the fact, and brands have the ability to offer a subscribe function to notify subscribers whenever they start a live broadcast. You can share announcements, do interviews, cover events, and share educational broadcasts. Live video offers brands the opportunity to share what they are thinking and doing right now with their fans and audience.

Facebook Stories includes photos or videos that followers can see in a dedicated "stories" section for 24 hours. Brands can post content with filters and emojis to increase visibility. It's especially useful during an event where you'd like to post a lot of timely content in a short amount of time.

Tips and tricks

- Create engaging cover photos to promote large assets, announcements, or events. The cover photo is typically the first thing a user sees when they visit your Facebook page, so upload an image that is on brand and makes good use of that white space. To make your cover image especially eye-catching, you also have the option to upload a video.
- Use tabs to promote assets, a landing page, or other important items.
- Incorporate live video into your posts to engage your audience in the moment. Research from Facebook reveals that people spend 300% more time watching a Facebook Live video when it's broadcasted live compared to afterward.[13]
- Add links to some of your posts to point to a landing page on your website.
- Take advantage of Facebook's carousel, slideshow, and canvas features to turn photos or videos of your new product or latest event into an interactive experience.



Bonus!

The best marketing automation solutions allow you to publish multiple landing pages directly to Facebook. Rather than redirecting Facebook visitors to your website, these pages allow you to gather data from customer behavior on Facebook in the same way that you can gather data from a page built on your marketing automation platform. Automation users can also use Facebook Lead Ads to promote specific offers and capture lead data that syncs seamlessly with their marketing automation platform.

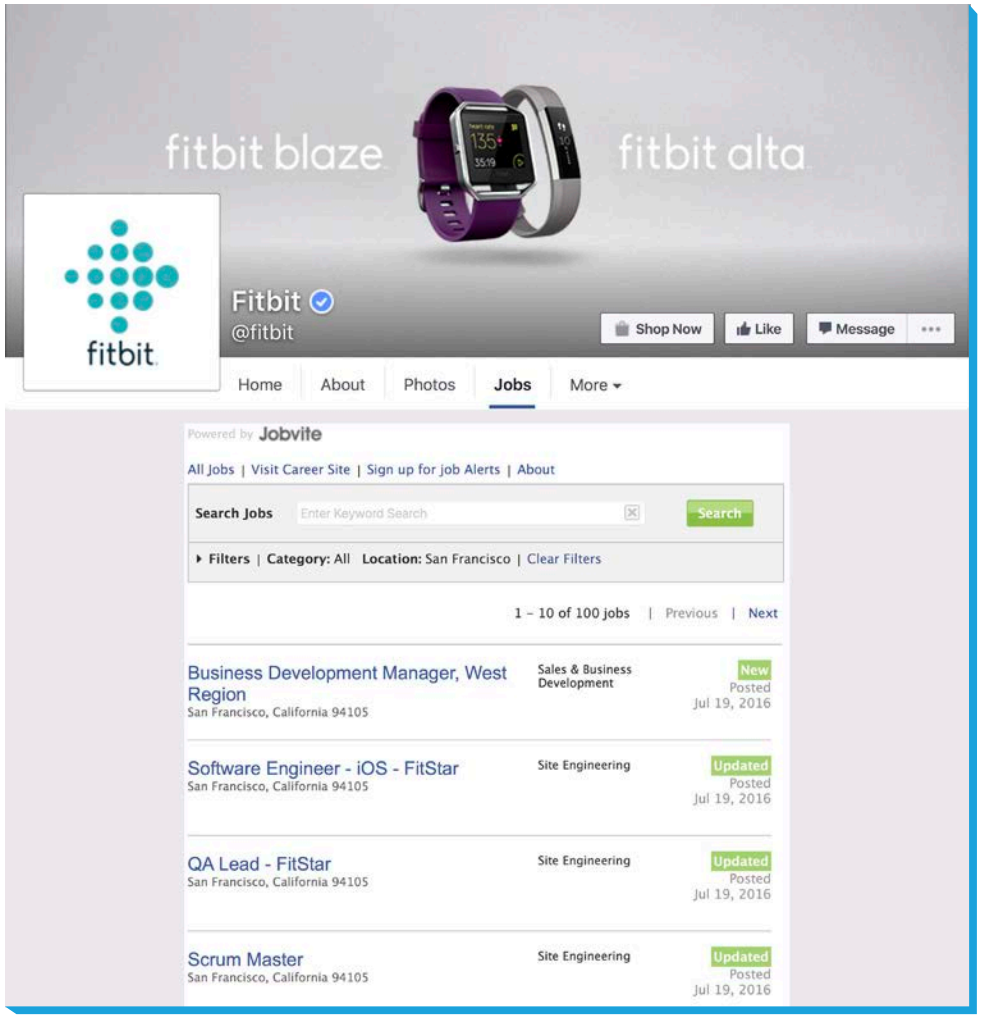
[13] Facebook Gives Live Videos News Feed Boost, Social Media Today, 2016. https://www.socialmediatoday.com/social-networks/facebook-gives-live-videos-news-feed-boost

Facebook (cont.)

Facebook paid advertising

Having a complete Facebook business profile and posting regular updates is an important step to building your audience. But to take full advantage of Facebook's large user base and people-based targeting options, many businesses are turning to paid promotions. Facebook's paid promotions include boosted/promoted posts, which allow you to put paid advertising and targeting behind a post on your Facebook page.

Additionally, Facebook offers advertising, which operates off a traditional pay-per-click (PPC) model. Facebook limits the distribution of organic, unpaid posts, so paid advertising is the best way to reach a large audience. For more information on digital ads, check out our *Definitive Guide to Digital Advertising*.



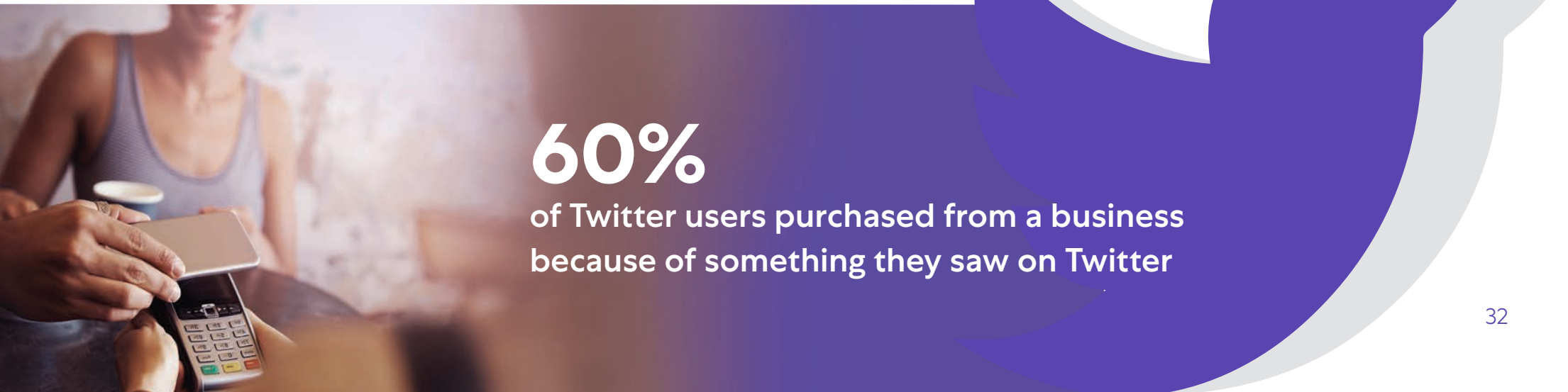
Fitbit uses tabs to promote job openings

Twitter

In 2007, Twitter began and was considered by many to be a flash-in-the-pan social media outlet. But now the platform is a virtual watercooler where the world's news breaks and people gather to discuss industry news, politics, pop culture, and their daily musings. As of March 2019, there are 330 million monthly active users.[14] Additionally, this social giant has proven it's a critical part of any marketing mix. Twitter has become an optimal network for thought leadership growth and development and has become a space where both corporate and personal brands can develop ongoing relationships with followers. Twitter also serves as a popular platform for customers to air their customer service complaints.

Companies that lack a strategic, conversion-based plan of attack for their Twitter accounts are losing out on access to a huge potential customer base and an opportunity to showcase themselves in a socially savvy, relevant way. Being followed by users on Twitter is a signal of their affinity for your business, and these self-selected audience members are indicating an active interest in your brand.

[14] Number of monthly active Twitter users in the United States from 1st quarter 2010 to 1st quarter 2019 (in millions), Statista, 2019. https://www.statista.com/statistics/274564/monthly-active-twitter-users-in-the-united-states



Twitter (cont.)

Grow your following

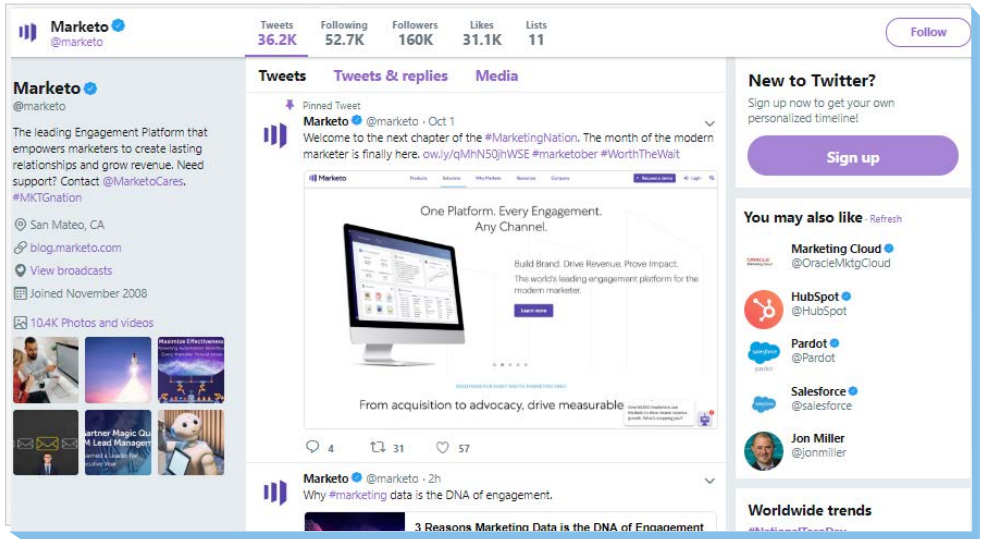
Building your following on Twitter is key to driving awareness and engagement success on the network. There are a variety of techniques marketers can use to build their following—let's explore four key ways:

1. **Create engaging tweets:** Because Twitter is so fast-paced, it's important that you post regularly. Without regular posts, your tweets will quickly get pushed down your followers' streams. Think about creating a mix of content that ranges from entertaining to educational to promotional. A good rule of thumb to use when creating your content mix is the 4-1-1 rule.
2. **Use Twitter lists:** Twitter lists are a simple way to accomplish two important things: strategically listening and curating content for your users. Curated content often comes in the form of a retweet and is a good way to ensure that your content mix is not purely self-promotional. To make curating content easier, develop a Twitter list. Lists are a way to segment a group of accounts that regularly feature interesting content. Segmenting these accounts into a list makes finding content to retweet quicker and easier. It's important to note that some lists are private and some are public. You might want to make a private list of influencers for your brand to follow and retweet and a public list of brand partners or thought leaders within your industry.



The 4-1-1 rule

Originally introduced by Joe Pulizzi of Content Marketing Institute, the 4-1-1 rule states that for every four early-stage, light, and informative pieces of content you share, you can have one soft-sell offer and one hard-sell offer, like a demo. The 4-1-1 rule can guide your sharing strategy for many social platforms, not just Twitter.



A Marketo Twitter List: Top 20 Women

Twitter (cont.)

3. **Craft your tweets:** There are a few important tips for making your tweets more searchable, shareable, and readable.
   - ***Keep your tweets concise:*** Hitting the maximum character count of 280 happens, but try to keep your tweet to around 100 characters.[15] You can use a URL shortener like Bitly and built-in tools on social media management platforms.
   - ***Use #hashtags:*** These symbols have become synonymous with Twitter and are used to tag tweets by topic, making it easier for users to find your tweet. Marketers can develop hashtags and use them to help promote and track social campaigns.
   - ***Use @mentions:*** Mentions are a way for you to engage with other Twitter users. Mentioning people will call their attention to your tweet, but avoid using mentions excessively because it can feel spammy.
4. **Host Twitter chats:** A Twitter chat is a public conversation based around a unique hashtag. The hashtag allows you to follow the discussion and easily participate. Most Twitter chats are usually recurring and focus on specific topics, but some are centered on special events. Hosting a Twitter chat is a way to engage with your audience and followers in real time.

Twitter paid advertising

Because of its large global user base, Twitter can offer marketers advertising options that are highly customizable and targeted. Users can interact with promoted content, such as tweets, accounts, and trends, the same way they can with organic content. Additionally, Twitter offers website cards that promote a call-to-action and aim to drive more website visits. For more information on digital ads, check out our *Definitive Guide to Digital Advertising*.



[15] Know Your Limit: The Ideal Length of Every Social Media Post, Sprout Social, 2019. https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-character-counter/#twitter

Twitter (cont.)

Tips and tricks

- Create a Twitter list for your employees, competitors, influencers, and top followers.
- Keep your tweets short and sweet. Research from Buddy Media shows that tweets containing less than 100 characters receive 17% higher engagement than longer ones.[16]
- Generate hashtags for events, product announcements, and other campaigns that need a big promotional push, and understand the popular hashtags that apply to your business, product, or service. According to research from Buddy Media, tweets with hashtags receive twice as much engagement than those without. But use them sparingly, since tweets with more than two hashtags showed a 17% drop in engagement.[17]
- Engage regularly with industry leaders by interacting with their posts and sharing them with your network.
- Include relevant links. Tweets with links are 86% more likely to be retweeted, according to research.[18]
- Twitter handles and media attachments don't count toward the word count anymore but use this extra space cautiously. You don't want to overwhelm users with too much text.
- Add stickers to your tweets to make them more fun and engaging. Stickers are searchable and function as a visual hashtag.



GE creates Twitter Lists for different interests

[16] The Ideal Length of Everything Online, Backed by Research, Buffer, 2018. https://buffer.com/library/the-ideal-length-of-everything-online-according-to-science

[17] How to Hashtag, We Are Everyone, 2016. https://www.weareeveryone.com/blog-article/how-to-hashtag

[18] 10 Twitter Tactics to Increase Your Engagement, Social Media Examiner, 2014. https://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/twitter-tactics-to-increase-engagement

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network, with more than 460 million members.[19] It has expanded its solution beyond a hiring and networking platform to include robust company pages, a highly targeted advertising solution, and publishing functionality. With these additions, LinkedIn is now the way to reach an audience with a business mindset.

Build your brand presence

Companies can build a profile on LinkedIn to showcase products, employee networks, blog posts, upcoming events, and status updates. Much like Twitter or Facebook, users on LinkedIn can follow your profile to learn more about your company. You can also post job openings on LinkedIn and search candidates, making it a great venue for recruiting talent. Encourage your employees to participate on LinkedIn—it's a great professional location for your employees to promote both your brand and their personal brands. Leverage your employees' business networks by asking them to share your company posts and join and participate in relevant groups. The more evangelists you have on LinkedIn, the more opportunity you have to become a thought leader.



LinkedIn paid advertising

LinkedIn's paid promotions include sponsored updates and LinkedIn ads, which amplify your status updates and advertisements to your target audience. And with sponsored InMail, you can send messages directly to a user's LinkedIn inbox. For more information on digital ads, check out our *Definitive Guide to Digital Advertising*.

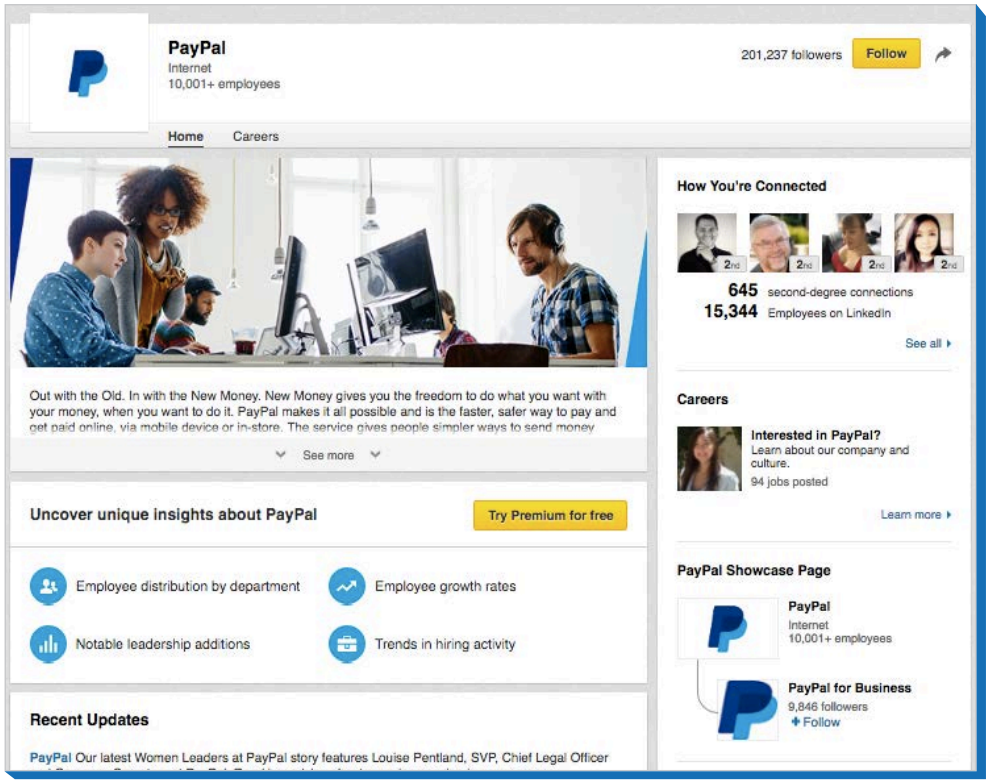


[19] Numbers of LinkedIn members from 1st quarter 2009 to 3rd quarter 2016 (in millions), Statista, 2019. https://www.statista.com/statistics/274050/quarterly-numbers-of-linkedin-members/

LinkedIn (cont.)

A strong LinkedIn presence comes from leveraging different aspects of the social network, which include:

1. **Profile page:** Company profile pages are a free LinkedIn service for any user. Because this is your primary branded landing page on LinkedIn, it's very important to make sure you have carefully thought about the images and messages you choose to represent your brand.
2. **Content sharing:** Posting on your company page is a key way to build followers and fuel your paid advertising efforts. These posts can be text, images, links, video, or slide decks. It's important to note that because LinkedIn is perceived as a professional network, your content mix and tone should aim to be fairly professional and engaging. We've found that because users are on LinkedIn mostly for professional purposes, educational posts perform very well.
3. **Showcase page:** A company showcase page is an extension of your company page that is designed to highlight specific products or services. Showcase pages are especially helpful when your business has multiple solutions with their own different fans and followers.



PayPal's Showcase Page highlights their merchant solution, PayPal for Business

LinkedIn (cont.)

4. **Groups:** LinkedIn groups are communities formed around topics of interest, industry, title, professional organization, brand, and so on. In these spaces, users can share articles, post jobs, exchange advice, and gather digitally. Groups can be a strategic and important way for an organization to create a community of users, demonstrate thought leadership around a specific area, and gain insight into the pain points of potential customers. Before starting a group, identify your objectives and decide which group structure will best facilitate those goals.

   LinkedIn groups make it easy for companies to locate potential customers. Simply make a list of keywords that relate to your prospects or the industries you target, and run a search for any LinkedIn groups related to these keywords. Once you find the right groups, participate in discussions, ask questions, and make connections.

Tips and tricks

- Encourage employees to participate on LinkedIn Pulse and LinkedIn groups to build their network and generate awareness around your brand.
- Create a group for your customers and brand advocates or an industry group for professionals in the same space.
- Optimize your LinkedIn page for SEO—include your top keywords in your company description and specialties to see a real impact in search results.
- Keep track of industry news and engage with key influencers on LinkedIn Pulse.

LinkedIn for talent, recruiting, and careers

LinkedIn Talent Solutions is a product that serves recruiters and HR. The focal point of this offering is the company career page—a paid page that is tabbed behind your company profile page.

This space augments your company page branding efforts by sharing the personality and brand of your corporate culture. Your marketing and messages on your career page are targeted specifically at prospective employees or followers who are looking at all aspects of your company.

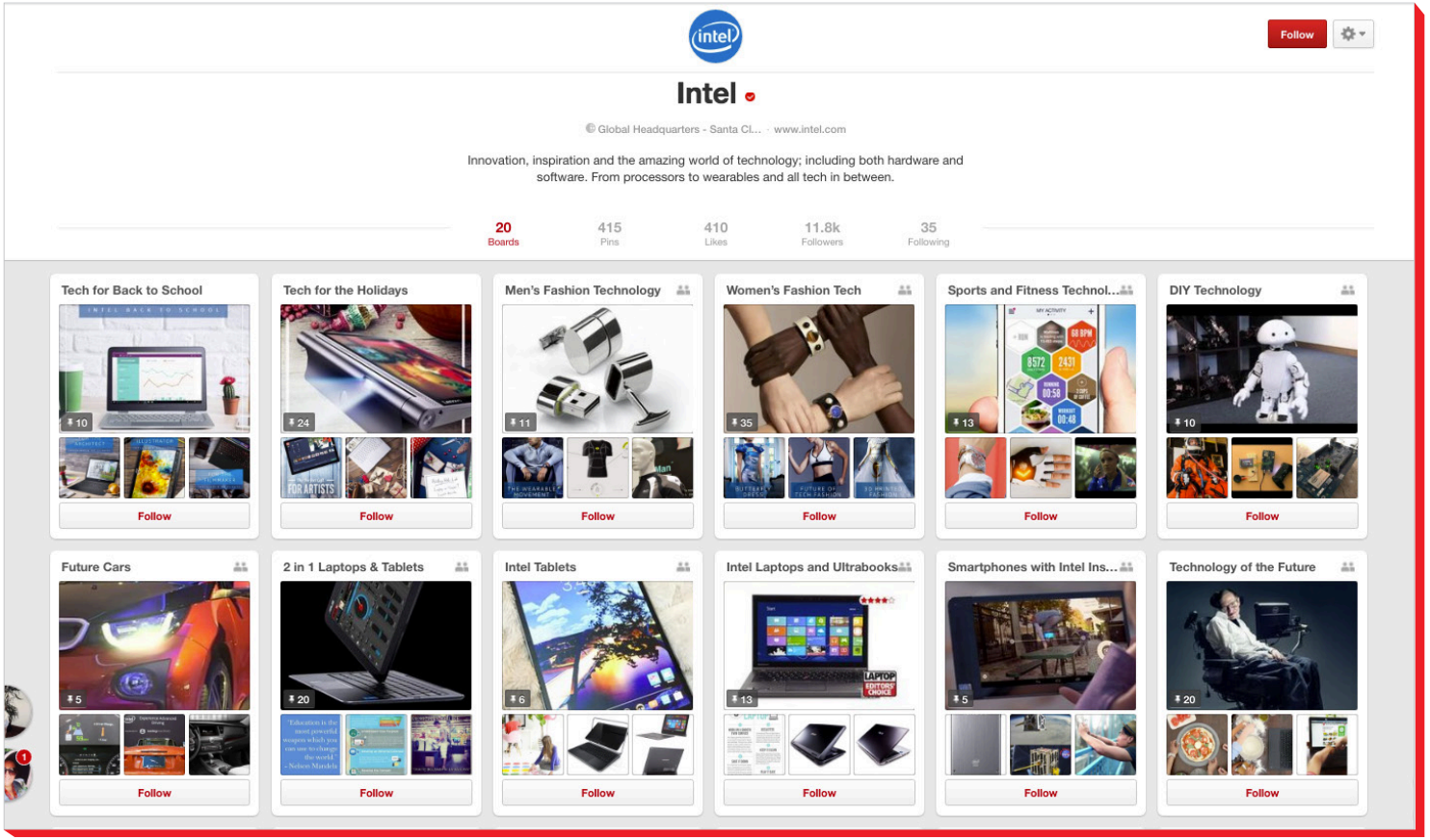


Pinterest

Pinterest is a virtual scrapbook or pinboard that allows users to share and organize visual imagery and link to external sites. The platform functions like a visual search engine. A user can pin anything from around the web, other users can re-pin their images, and they can organize their Pinterest pages by categorizing content on boards.

Pinterest can serve different purposes depending on the type of business you're promoting. For B2B organizations, it's a great way to curate visual content like infographics, videos, company culture, and even blog posts. The boards provide a unique, visually appealing way of organizing content. But always make sure your content is relevant to your audience and that you include a good content mix on your Pinterest boards.

For consumer organizations, Pinterest is a valuable tool that allows brands to curate content that builds and reinforces their look and feel. Additionally, depending on the product, Pinterest can help drive conversions and sales. From retail to fitness to vacation packages and beyond, Pinterest has become a valuable conversion generator for many marketers.



Intel creates Pinterest boards that highlight everything from products to design to culture

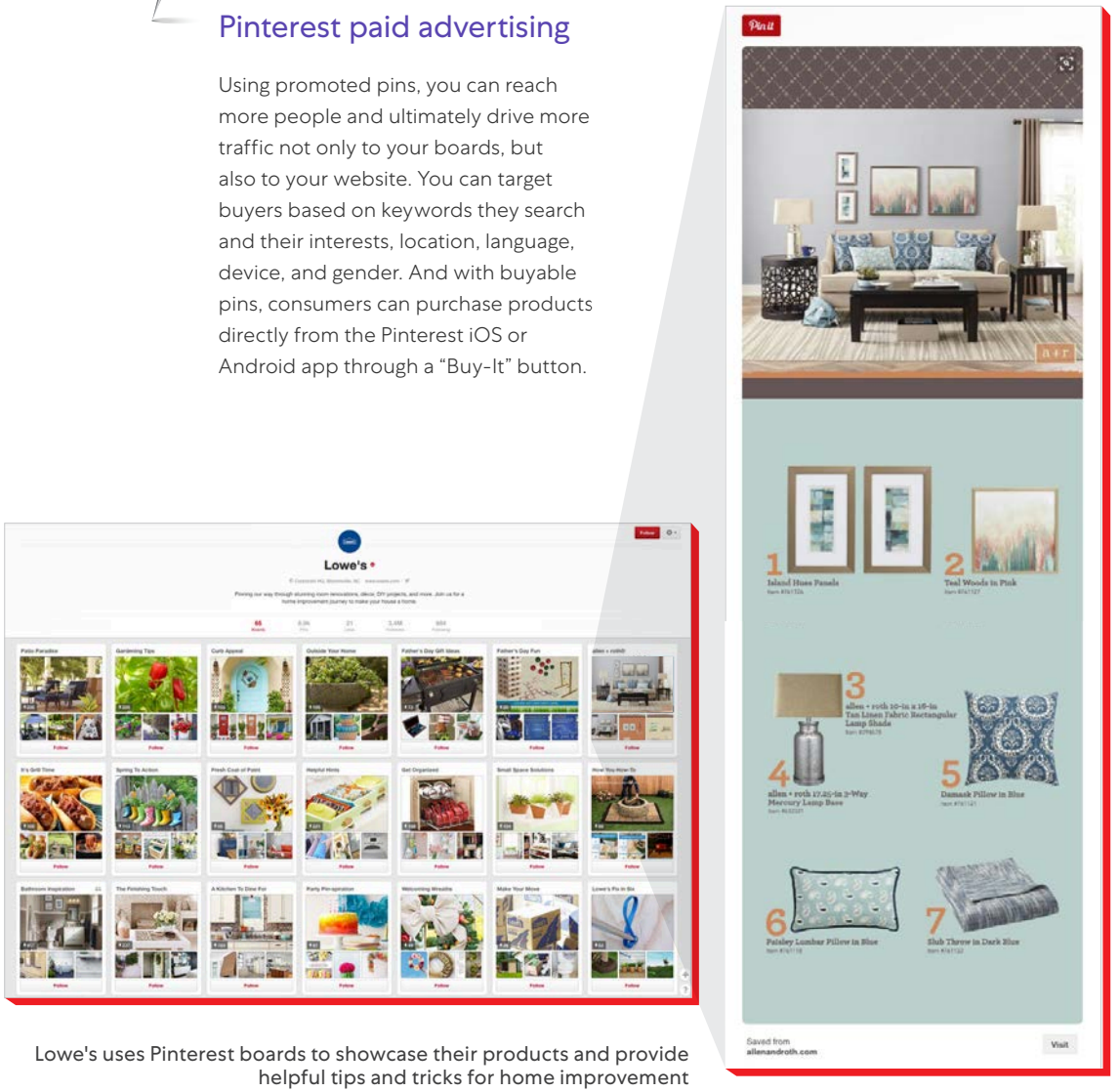
Pinterest (cont.)

Retailers can easily socially market their goods on Pinterest, but companies that sell consulting packages or aircraft engines typically don't have Pinterest in their marketing plans. Should they? If a brand cares about or spends money on any of the following, then the answer is yes:

- Awareness: Pinterest's platform is a search engine in itself, allowing buyers to search for content they're interested in—which could very well be your brand's.
- Engagement: If you have interesting content that has done well on other social channels, you can also pin it. Pinterest allows you to appeal to a more visually focused segment that may not be spending their time on Facebook or Twitter. Content pins can be a great way for your audience to collect a library of useful assets.

Pinterest paid advertising

Using promoted pins, you can reach more people and ultimately drive more traffic not only to your boards, but also to your website. You can target buyers based on keywords they search and their interests, location, language, device, and gender. And with buyable pins, consumers can purchase products directly from the Pinterest iOS or Android app through a "Buy-It" button.



Lowe's uses Pinterest boards to showcase their products and provide helpful tips and tricks for home improvement

Pinterest (cont.)

- **Branding:** Are you a design-forward company? Pinterest is all about the visuals, so leverage the fact that graphic designers are one of the most prolific groups of pinners by getting your creative team to pin their work to both inspire and be inspired. Start a company board to show your peers the beauty of your marketing, and then start a board with pins of other brands' marketing campaigns that inspire you.
- **Conversions:** Pins can link to pages on other websites, which gives brands the opportunity to drive buyers to a landing page for a gated asset, a registration page, or a product page. Pinterest's search is primarily how people find you and your pins, and it is all about keywords. Include relevant, popular keywords in the description of your pins and boards to get more views, likes, and follows. The fastest way to increase your following is by pinning new and interesting items.

Tips and tricks

- Use relevant keywords to describe your pins, so users can easily find them. Over 80% of pins are re-pins, according to RJMetrics.[20] So, engage to increase your visibility. If you're a consumer marketer, consider adding prices to your pins. Pins with prices get 36% more likes than those without, according to a study by Shopify.[21]
- Organize your boards around different themes: different product collections, company culture, inspiration, how-to, and so on. To get started, document all the different types of assets you can share on Pinterest, then group them into common categories. Some of your categories may be broad (office fun), while others will be specific (infographics).
- Get verified as an official business, so users view you as a trustworthy source of information. This will make your pins stand out as users scan through, which is especially important if you're directing them to another website.



[20] Pinterest Data Analysis: An Inside Look, RJ Metrics, 2012. https://blog.rjmetrics.com/2012/02/15/pinterest-data-analysis-an-inside-look

[21] Top 5 Social Media Platforms for Ecommerce, ShipStation, 2015. https://www.shipstation.com/blog/top-5-social-media-platforms-ecommerce

Instagram

Instagram is a photo and video sharing app that is becoming more valuable to marketers, especially with Facebook's acquisition of the platform. It has a very active user base with more than 1 billion active monthly users.[22] Many consumer brands are already realizing tremendous success with Instagram, using it to showcase their products and engage their audience through posts, contests, and giveaways.

B2B organizations can use Instagram to share interesting quotes and fun visuals, capture event and office culture photos, and run contests and scavenger hunts. Whether you are a B2B organization or a consumer brand, here are a few tips to help you find success on Instagram:

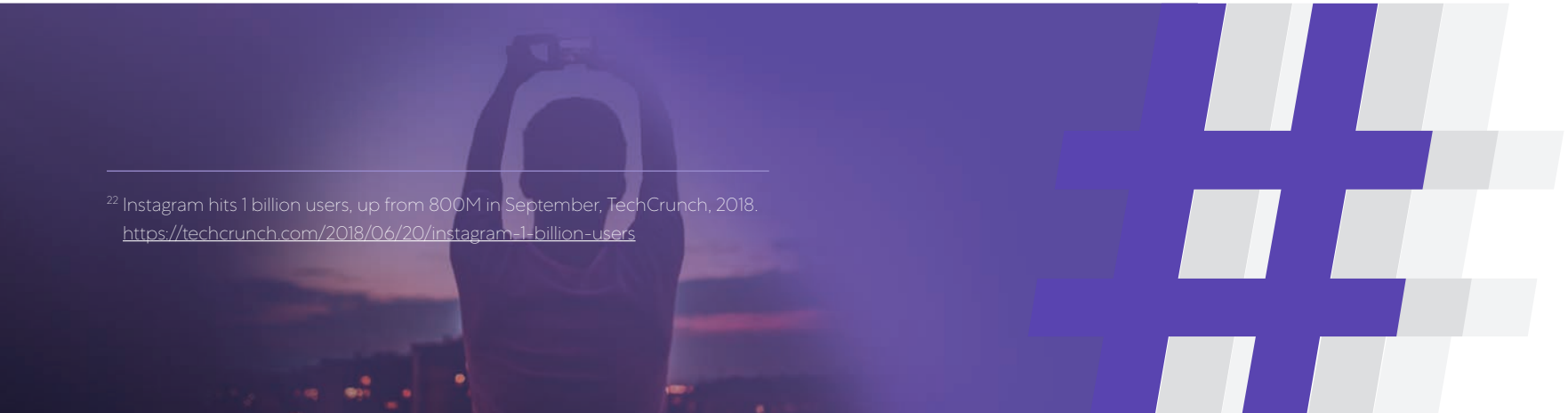
Plan: Before you begin sharing photos and engaging users, it's up to you to create a plan for how you will reach your audience. Ask questions like:

- What does my target audience want to see?
- How can I get them to engage with my photos and videos?
- What will get them talking about my company?

At its core, the planning stage is about determining what will make buyers engage positively with your brand and creating a plan of execution.

Capture: Create and share your content. Consider the following objectives as you do:

- **Make it exclusive—**Post images and videos that can only be seen on Instagram.
- **Make it visually engaging—** Instagram users are savvy and creative and know lackluster content when they see it. Don't post a photo or video unless it has aesthetic appeal.
- **Make it personal—**Post photos and videos that give your audience insight into the inner workings of your product or company.
- **Include your audience—** Find ways to feature your followers and promote them (with their permission). Including and acknowledging your audience will encourage them to continue to engage and share.
- For Instagram stories, you have the ability to add polls, ask questions, run "ask me anythings" (AMAs), and more to test less-permanent versions of content.

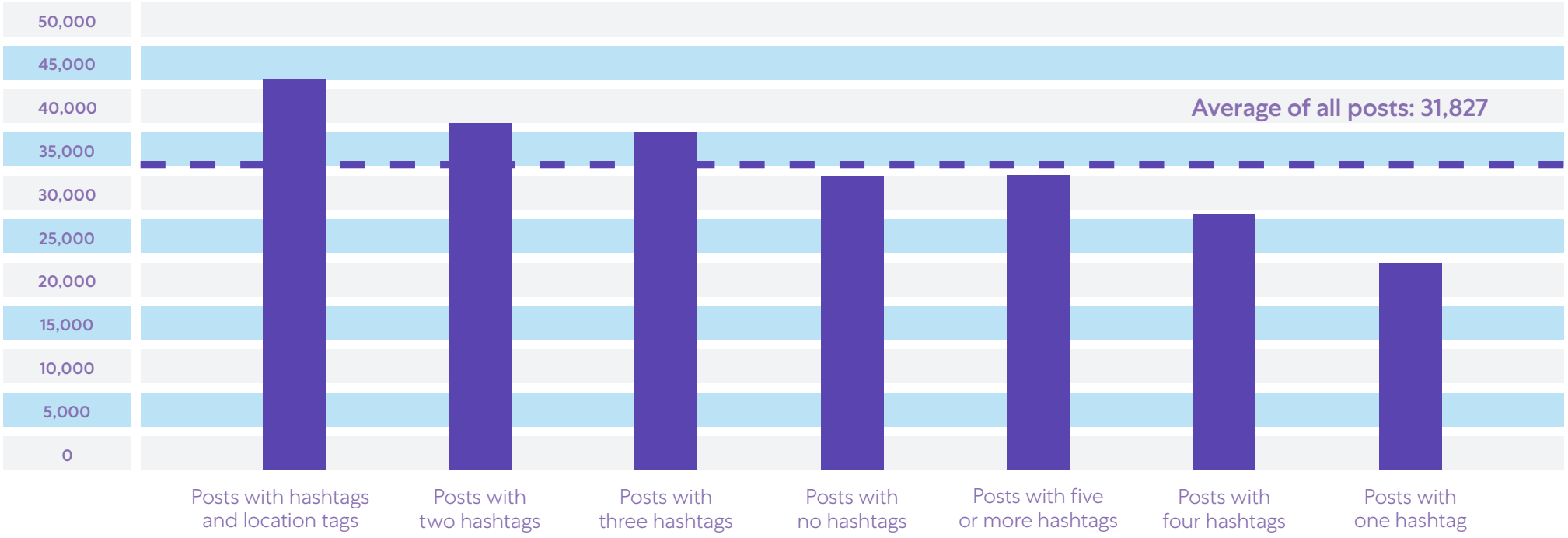


[22] Instagram hits 1 billion users, up from 800M in September, TechCrunch, 2018. https://techcrunch.com/2018/06/20/instagram-1-billion-users

Instagram (cont.)

Hashtag: The Instagram hashtag is a powerful feature to engage your viewers. Hashtags act as keywords, providing a way for people to find photos through a simple search. They are especially useful as you seek to establish your brand as an industry leader and get more followers. Implement hashtags that are unique to your brand and industry, as well as ones that are popular keywords. And remember to use hashtags (more than one!) on all of your posts.

HASHTAGS AND AVERAGE ENGAGEMENT PER POST



Posts that include both a hashtag and a location tag over-index engagement, averaging 43,061 Likes and Comments each. Posts with multiple hashtags also perform better than average.

Instagram (cont.)

Engage: Engaging and sharing with potential customers is the primary reason to use Instagram. There are a number of ways for brands to do this:

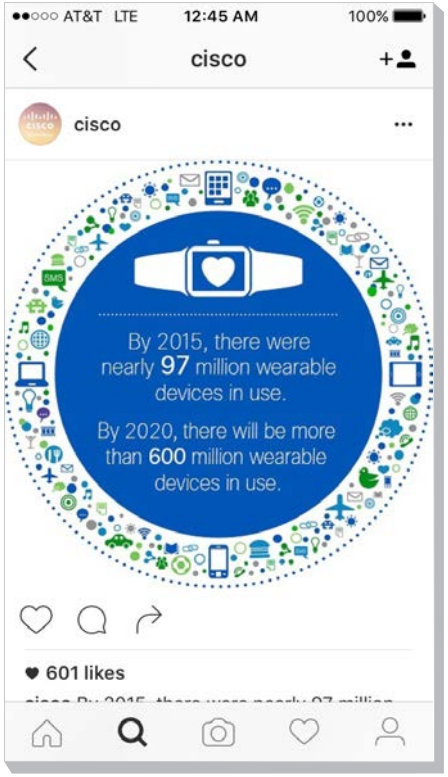
- **Events**—Post photos and videos of events you host for your current and potential customers.
- **Geolocation**—Use the geolocation feature so users can easily discover your account and your photos. This can be especially useful when you are hosting a conference or event or promoting in-store events.
- **Gamification**—Hold a contest for your audience. Have viewers submit photos, provide captions, or solve a puzzle.
- **Convert**—Instagram offers advertising that can drive direct sales, form fill-outs, subscriptions, and other conversion activities. While these are not organic posts, they are important to consider as you create your Instagram content mix.

Tips and tricks

- Make sure your Instagram account name is very similar to your company's name and that it's set to public so users can easily find you through search, hashtags, and their networks' activity.
- Post at peak times. Between 7:00 and 9:00 p.m. are typically the busiest hours for Instagram.
- Identify hashtags that fit for your business and product, trending hashtags you want to participate in (like #MondayMotivation or #WednesdayWisdom), and hashtags unique to your brand, and incorporate them in every single post. Consider using a branded hashtag as well. Simply Measured reports that 70% of the most used hashtags are branded.[23]
- Create an image with text on it, such as a quote or important takeaway, if you want to share text.
- Use Instagram stories to post more frequently without overwhelming your audience. This feature makes your content available for 24 hours, and you can choose which ones you want to save to your regular feed for a longer shelf life.

Instagram paid advertising

On Instagram, brands can advertise through a variety of imagery. With single photo ads and multiple photo carousel ads, you can advertise using content that appears seamlessly in the user's feed. For more information on digital ads, check out our *Definitive Guide to Digital Advertising*.



Cisco posts statistics on Instagram, visualizing them with photos and text

[23] 5 Ways to Rock a Branded Instagram Hashtag, Later, 2016. https://later.com/blog/branded-instagram-hashtag-guide

YouTube

YouTube has more than 1.9 billion users.[24] Your video titles should be customer-centric and descriptive so users can easily find your content, and your video descriptions should be two or three sentences that include targeted keywords.

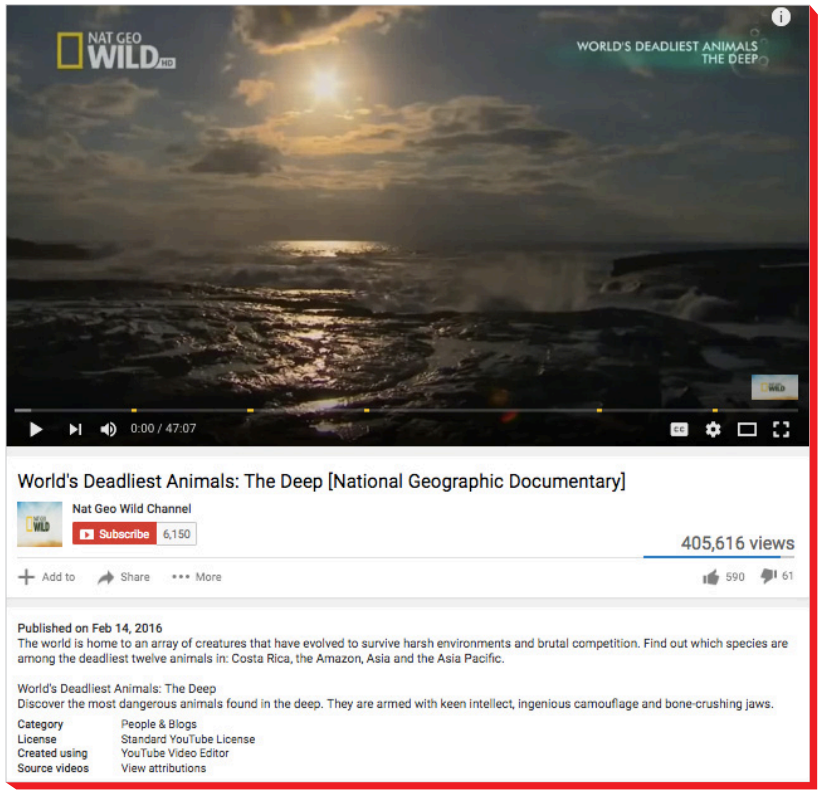
Be sure to take advantage of the tagging feature, which is how YouTube determines the relevance of your asset and groups similar videos together. Five to seven tags are optimal and will ensure your video is associated with other videos and appears as a "related video."

Tips and tricks

- Use a keyword-rich description because this section represents the metadata that Google searches.
- Post new videos consistently, so users feel that it's worthwhile to subscribe to your channel. Set a cadence for how often you will publish videos and stick to it. Once you've set expectations with your audience, it can hurt your brand to not meet them.
- Include CTAs in your videos, asking viewers to subscribe or visit a link. You can direct them to your website to learn more or to a landing page to download a coupon or register for an event.
- Broadcast live videos on your YouTube channel (and then host the recording).

YouTube paid advertising

Whether your buyers are looking at funny cat videos or watching educational marketing videos, there are various types of ads you can show to targeted audiences based on content: in-stream, in-search, in-display, or in-video overlay ads. For more information on digital ads, check out our *Definitive Guide to Digital Advertising*.



National Geographic uses keyword-packed descriptions that help boost their search rankings

[24] Most popular social networks worldwide as of April 2019, ranked by number of active users (in millions), Statista, 2019. https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number-of-users

Snapchat

While Snapchat is more of a messaging app, brands can use the platform to tell interactive stories. Its content disappears after 24 hours, but it can be downloaded and saved elsewhere.

Tips and tricks

- Create a custom QR code for your brand's profile and get creative with where you place it.
- Create branded geofilters for events and launches for your audience to use and share with friends. At Marketo's Marketing Nation® Summit, we used a geofilter within the conference center vicinity so users could interact with and share with their network.
- Understand how your tone, voice, and branding will be represented. Consider starting an employee ambassador program to share unique views of different teams within your company.
- Think in terms of a story. The "My Story" part of Snapchat accumulates your snaps over a 24-hour period. What do you want your audience to know about you in that time period?



Snapchat paid advertising

Snapchat's 3V (vertical video views) ads, which appear in both premium and curated content, allow brands to promote their stores in a portrait mode that takes up the full-screen space. And with the geofilter feature, businesses can create unique filters for their audiences to use to promote a campaign or event.



Marketo's Snapchat filter at Marketing Nation Summit

PRESENTATION SHARING

Presentation-sharing platforms play a critical role in the research your buyers do long before they get in touch with you. Platforms such as SlideShare and Scribd offer you a great way to display your content, educate your audience, and support your SEO strategy.

Upload and share content that addresses your buyer personas and track which sites are most popular with each persona. Then, refine which topics and content work best on different sites. Types of content you may want to share include infographics, slide decks, and webinar slides.

Tips and tricks

- **Make it a part of something bigger.** Your presentation is more powerful if it's part of a larger content initiative. If your presentation is part of a bigger campaign, you can engage your audience further with content you know will interest them.
- **Base your presentation on a topic in which you are an expert.** Leverage subject matter experts within your company for topics they know well. This will help you offer your audience a unique, expert point of view on a topic and provide value.
- **Take it on the road.** Use your presentation outside of simply posting it to the presentation-sharing platform. Share it at company meetings, user groups, meetups, and conferences.
- **Get SEO value.** Make sure all your presentations are optimized for SEO so you can reap the search engine rewards. This will help drive traffic not only to your presentation and channel, but also back to your website.



CMI publishes SlideShares on a variety of different topics to educate marketers

Q&A

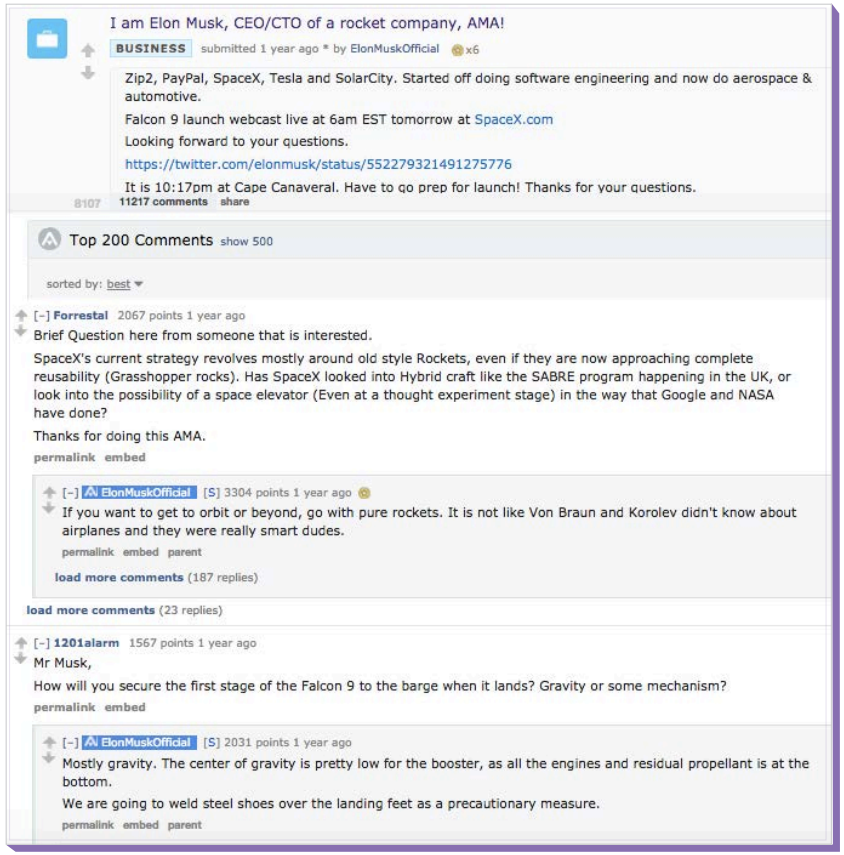
Q&A sites give users a platform to ask questions, provide answers, and discuss topics of interest. The best sites provide easily searchable answers and can be good for SEO. Popular Q&A sites include Quora, Reddit, and Answers.com, although topics on these sites can vary significantly. They can help you drive traffic to your website and can also help you build relationships with key influencers. Set up Google Alerts for your company, competitors, and top keywords and keep an eye out for questions you can answer. Remember to provide thought leadership and insight in your comments and only include link-backs when relevant. And, of course, always focus on building relationships.

Tips and tricks

- Listen for conversations that are going on about your company or product and ask employees to join in when appropriate. For example, if customers are experiencing a technical issue or looking for advice about your product or service, you can alert your colleagues and ask them to answer the questions.
- Host an AMA with subject matter experts and thought leaders within your company. AMAs give your brand direct access to your buyer's needs and interests and allow them to connect with you on a more personal level.

Link building

Many Q&A sites have high rankings and a continuous amount of traffic. Adding links to your responses on Q&A sites is a great way to drive traffic to your website and will have a positive impact on your SEO. However, make sure that you aren't just placing links without a quality response—links should be relevant to the question and your answer.



Elon Musk hosted an AMA to engage with his audience



Social media advertising

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SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING

Social media advertising, like organic social media marketing, has become ubiquitous for marketers because of the size and quality of audiences on leading social networks. This section will examine how to think about your paid advertising campaigns across social media platforms.

Social advertising allows you can target specific audiences and deliver your message on the platforms that your buyers spend time on. But advertising on social media platforms has changed tremendously. Recent updates to many social networks' algorithms give users a better experience—one with less promotional content and more relevant content they want to see. So, as a marketer, you need to supplement your organic posts with paid promotion to get your content seen by your audience.

This has led to an explosion in digital advertising on social media platforms. And as marketers increasingly spend more on social, it's more important than ever to have the right strategy in place, track all your paid social campaigns, and gain insights into what's working and what's not. Only then can you understand the return on ad spend (ROAS) from your campaigns.

So, where are marketers spending the majority of their advertising dollars? According to the 2018 Sprout Social Index, Facebook remains the most favored social media platform among social marketers.[25]



Social advertising tips:

1. Don't take yourself too seriously
2. Focus on valuable content and solid offers
3. Use platform targeting for the biggest impact
4. Always add value
5. Test your ads and content on each platform

[25] 65 Social Media Statistics to Bookmark in 2019, Sprout Social, 2019. https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-statistics

Defining your social media advertising

You need to determine which platforms are best for your brand to advertise on. Here's how to structure your paid social campaigns from start to finish.

Define your goals

It's important to understand your goals for each paid social campaign up front because your strategy and key performance metrics will vary depending on your goals. Your objectives—whether brand awareness, engagement, lead generation, customer acquisition, retention, advocacy, or a combination—will help you map out the most relevant offers and content.

Identify your audience

Just as you would with any marketing campaign, you need to know who you are trying to reach with each of your paid social ads. Use the personas you developed to identify whom you should be targeting, then pinpoint your exact audience for your social campaigns. There are many ways to target specific audiences across social platforms, but if you don't know whom you're targeting, you won't be able to take advantage of them.

Pick the right social media platform and content

Audiences on each platform are different, and while some overlap across channels, their expectations of content for each channel differ. You not only need to understand the networks your audiences are on and how to reach them, you also need to know which content will engage them where. Try testing different types of content on your social media platforms to see what resonates on each.

"Social media is speeding toward a 'pay if you want to play' model. With the introduction of algorithms across most major social networks, it's very hard for businesses to stand out without bringing money to the table."

-**Michael Stelzner**, Founder and CEO, Social Media Examiner.



Select targeting options

Once you have determined which platforms you will advertise on, it's time to get familiar with the targeting options on each channel.

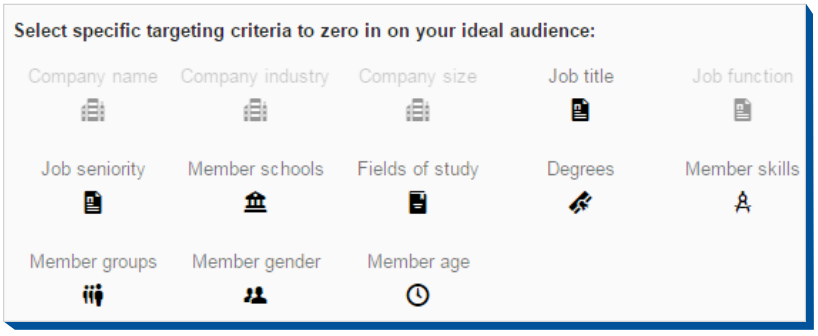
Social networks are getting more sophisticated with their targeting options, and you can now target based on different attributes: interests, skills, titles, company names, and even lists from your marketing automation platform. LinkedIn lets you target people based on their titles, skill sets, company, and degree, while Facebook allows you to target people based on their demographics, behaviors, and interest levels in certain topics or products. You can also exclude certain audiences that you don't want to serve specific content or ads.



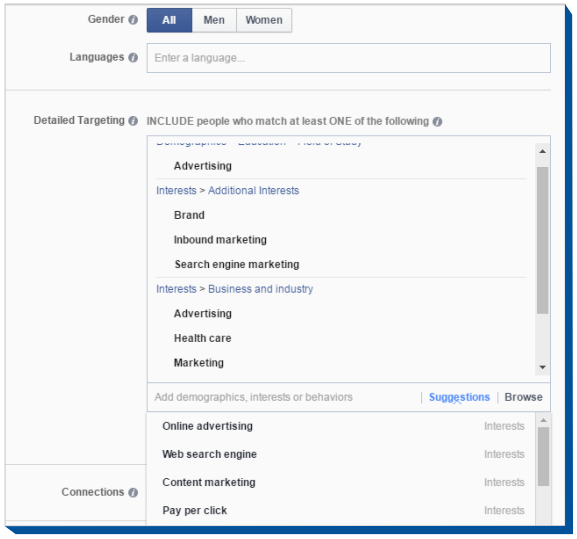
Consider dark posts

Both Facebook and LinkedIn offer dark posts. Facebook calls them dark posts and LinkedIn refers to them as direct sponsored content. These are ads you can create and promote without publishing directly to your news feed. Using dark posts can help you:

- Promote a product or service to a specific audience
- Adjust your ad messaging based on the segment you're targeting
- Promote local events that will only apply to a regional audience
- Avoid alienating followers by sharing too many broad messages on your timeline
- A/B test different ads without having to post them multiple times



LinkedIn's ad targeting options



Facebook's ad targeting options

Social media advertising

Full lifecycle advertising with Ad Targeting

Using Ad Targeting, you can associate offline conversions with the paid search ads that initiated them. So, rather than optimizing ads based on landing page conversions, marketers can focus their bids on keywords that generate the most qualified leads, sales opportunities, pipeline, or revenue. Optimizing your PPC campaigns with this data boosts ROI, particularly for companies where part of the sales process takes place outside the website.

Marketo has unique audience data on high-value prospects and customers, such as an engagement or lead score, buyer journey stage, product or topic interests, products owned, cross-channel activity, and more. By connecting this data in Marketo with Facebook, LinkedIn, and other ad platforms, you can target the right potential customers with meaningful, relevant ads at each stage of the buyer journey.

Marketo Ad Bridge lets you send lists of your best prospects or customers to social media platforms, which can identify similar people. And once you drive targeted prospects to your website and landing pages, you can retarget these anonymous visitors with personalized ads after they leave. You'll be able to identify details like industry, company size, revenue, company name, location, and other attributes, and connect them with the social media platform.

After a prospect provides their contact details and becomes known, you can continue to target them with ads on social media to accelerate the nurture process. For example, you could target qualified leads with a live demo offer to bring them into the sales process. You can even support the bottom of the funnel by targeting contacts at early-stage sales opportunities with messages that help position your organization and offerings.



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Create and measure your campaigns

A good campaign structure will help you measure and report. You can build separate campaigns around each product and service you want to market, which will help you identify the audience most likely to respond to a product and serve them the most relevant content or ads. This is much harder to accomplish if you have everyone grouped together in the same campaign. However, in some cases, it might be wise to start with a broader audience, like when you're launching a new product. You can track the campaign data to identify which personas responded the most.

There are a few ways to track the performance of your social campaigns. Clicks and form fills are standard metrics, but if you are using a marketing automation platform, you can go beyond those and also track qualified leads, sales opportunities, and pipeline and revenue generated per channel or campaign. This gives you a better opportunity to optimize your campaigns and budgets to ultimately drive more ROI.

To do this, tag your URLs with unique query string parameters for each campaign. Depending on how granular you want to get, you can track your activity at a channel level, a campaign level, or across campaigns at a product or asset level. By creating unique query strings for your registration URLs, you can track which campaigns drove the most registrations and attendance for the event. And afterward, you can measure how much each campaign contributed to pipeline. This will help you understand what's really working to drive your business.



Tip:

As you create and measure your paid ad campaigns, A/B test different versions using dark posts to select audiences. Analyze your results to understand which version drove the most conversions, such as clicks or form fills. Then track which posts drove conversions that ultimately matured into opportunities and eventually customers—all without disrupting your hard-won followers.



Defining your social media advertising

AD NETWORK SPECIFICATIONS FOR DESIGN

Whether you want to place your ad on social media or another ad network, you need to be familiar with the specs.

Common sizes for PPC ads mandated by Google:

- Medium rectangle
- Half page
- Large mobile banner
- Large rectangle
- Leaderboard
- 160 x 600 pixels
- 320 x 50 pixels
- 250 x 250 pixels
- 468 x 60 pixels
- 970 x 90 pixels

Twitter:

- Website card: 800 x 418 (1.91:1 aspect ratio) or 800 x 800 (1:1 aspect ratio)
- Single image tweet: 600 x 335

Facebook:

- Carousel cards: 1080 x 1080
- Single-image ads: 1200 x 628 pixels
  - 20% text rule: no more than 20% of the image can be text
- Slideshow ads: 1280 x 720 pixels
- Canvas ads: (mobile only) 1200 x 628 pixels
- Facebook video
  - Format — .MOV or .MP4
  - Aspect ratio — 16:9
  - Resolution — 720p at minimum
  - Thumbnail image — 1200 x 675 pixels, 16.9 ratio

Instagram:

- Landscape image ad
  - Landscape image ad size — 1200 x 628 pixels
  - Minimum resolution — 600 x 315 pixels
  - Proper aspect ratio — 1.9:1
- Square image ad
  - Recommended square image ad size — 1080 x 1080 pixels
  - Minimum square image ad resolution — 600 x 600 pixels
  - Proper aspect ratio — 1:1
- Vertical image ad
  - Recommended square image ad size — 1080 x 1350 pixels
  - Minimum vertical image ad size — 600 x 750 pixels
  - Proper aspect ratio — 4:5

LinkedIn

- LinkedIn carousel specs
  - 1080 x 1080 pixels with a 1:1 aspect ratio

Developing a social media calendar



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Setting your cadence

Companies tend to have one of two problems with social: either they can't think of anything to post, or they've got so much material that they overwhelm their audience. Regardless of your situation, the question of what (and how often) to post on social is a very important one.

To figure out the right mix for your business, you should start by looking at your priorities and answering this question: What do you hope to accomplish with your social presence?

You probably have several objectives, which might include:

- Sharing relevant content
- Showing off your brand's personality and culture
- Promoting events
- Establishing thought leadership
- Staying on top of industry trends
- Announcing new products
- Gathering new names for your marketing database
- Acquiring new customers
- Building/nurturing relationships with your buyers
- Increasing traffic to your blog/ website/landing pages

"The process of editorial strategy starts with identifying the right cadence of publishing. The goal should always be to maximize engagement with quality updates without overwhelming the stream of each channel."

-Michael Brenner



Developing a social media calendar

Create an editorial calendar based on your priorities. Use this to inform the topics and stage that you target on each social media platform.

USE THIS WORKSHEET FOR EACH PLATFORM TO CREATE AN EDITORIAL CALENDAR. FILL IN YOUR PRIORITIES BELOW.

Priority 1: _____

Priority 2: _____

Priority 3: _____

Priority 4: _____

Priority 5: _____

Social request form

A social promotion request form gives the social team a big-picture view of upcoming posts and ensures that important promotions are properly scheduled.

Social Promotion Request Form

Here's what our form looks like; feel free to tweak for your own company's needs:

1. What would you like us to promote?
(Please include any applicable links)

2. When do you want this promoted?
(Ex. "3 times in March," "1 week before the event," "1 day before the webinar")

3. If you'd like your post to go on Twitter, please write the exact message below:
(Make sure that the messaging is under 140 characters, link included. Don't forget to include Twitter handles or hashtags if applicable.)

4. If you'd like your post to go on LinkedIn, please write the exact message below:

5. If you'd like your post to go on Facebook, please write the exact message below:
(Don't forget to include hashtags if applicable.)

6. Anything else we need to know about?
(Please write any comments, details, or notes that we should be aware of.)

Posting frequency on social networks

Each social network requires a content mix and posting frequency that matches the expectations of its audience.

Facebook

It's practically guaranteed that your audience (or a segment of it) is on Facebook, as the platform has over 2.27 billion monthly active users.[26] We recommend posting to your Facebook page no more than twice per day.

We also recommend keeping your business Facebook page open all day. If your audience is engaging with you via comments, likes, shares, and messages, it's important that you join the conversations. And if someone has a question or complaint, you want to be available to address it immediately. (Also, if someone posts inappropriate or offensive content to your page, you should delete it quickly.)

Twitter

Unlike Facebook, you can post to Twitter many times a day without overwhelming your audience. In fact, we recommend posting roughly once per hour. You can start at once per day and build from there. Posting frequently is the only way you can stay top of mind since your tweets get pushed down users' feeds quickly by other activity from their networks. That's why we highly suggest using a social media management platform that allows you to schedule tweets. But just because you should tweet frequently, that doesn't mean you should always be self-promotional. Keep the 4-1-1 rule firmly in mind.

Also, take advantage of the variety of ways you can engage your audience on Twitter. You'll want to be continually favoriting, retweeting, and responding to tweets from your audience

LinkedIn

Because LinkedIn is a professional networking site, it's typically used to share articles and blog posts, new educational content, and upcoming events. Unlike Twitter, which is highly interactive (and therefore time consuming to maintain), or Facebook, which is best for fun/entertaining content, LinkedIn is the most serious, straight-to-the-point social network. It's also a powerful recruiting tool—you can post job openings on LinkedIn, and it's probably one of the first things potential employees check out. A good rule of thumb is to post to your LinkedIn page one or two times per day.

"Learn the language, guidelines, and etiquette for all the social platforms that you want to be a part of. Being nice is always in style."

-Peg Fitzpatrick

Instagram/SnapChat/Pinterest

For the social media platforms that rely heavily on images, it's OK to post more often. Test what cadence works best for your audience and your brand. You can experiment with between three and seven posts per day for Instagram and Snapchat stories, and once per day for regular Instagram posts.

"Spend 90% of your time and effort helping your audience. When you share other people's great content most of the time, your own great content some of the time, and sprinkle in some 'helpful' promotions, your audience will reward the kindness."

-Michael Brenner

[26] Facebook hits 2.27 billion monthly active users as earnings stabilize, NBC News, October 2018. https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/facebook-hits-2-27-billion-monthly-active-users-earnings-stabilize-n926391

SOCIAL NETWORK POSTING FREQUENCY WORKSHEET

Fill in the following information to build your own calendar for each social network (you can print or use this page multiple times for different networks).

Who is responsible for posting and monitoring the brand page?

_____

_____

How many times per day will you post for each social media platform?

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM:
___ x times per day
___ Monday through Friday
___ 7 days a week
___ Other

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM:
___ x times per day
___ Monday through Friday
___ 7 days a week
___ Other

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM:
__ x times per day
___ Monday through Friday
___ 7 days a week
__ Other

What upcoming releases, company/industry events, announcements, and content do you want to share?
(You may have to check with other teams—PR, content, product.)

_____

_____

List any holidays, national/international events, and trends that you want to post about:

_____

_____

Developing a social media calendar

At Marketo, we look at each day's and week's posts as a whole. Using our social editorial calendar, we can clearly see if we're over-posting about a certain topic or failing to support one of our core competencies.

Depending on your answers to the previous questionnaires for your different platforms, your content calendar can look very full. For example, here is a week's worth of posts from Marketo across four of our social media platforms (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram).



Paid Promotion

Depending on the size of your team, the person managing your social media marketing may not be the same person running your social paid advertising. It's important to develop and define a process between these people and teams to ensure there is a consistent flow of both organic posts and social paid advertising.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
INSTAGRAM	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
TWITTER	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓
FACEBOOK	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓
LINKEDIN	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓

SOCIAL MEDIA DAILY CHECKLIST

A helpful item to consider when you're trying to make sure you dot all your i's and cross your t's is a checklist. Use this to help ensure you're on track to meet your goals and set your cadence correctly.

Social marketing has a lot of moving parts. Print out or copy this checklist to make sure you're completing the necessary daily tasks:

- ☐ Check any incoming tweets/FB comments/LinkedIn mentions from yesterday.
  - ☐ Refer any support questions to the appropriate team
  - ☐ Reply to any comments
  - ☐ "Like," "favorite," or "retweet" where appropriate
- ☐ Check for friend requests and new followers; accept and follow back where appropriate.
- ☐ Double check the tweets/posts you scheduled last night.
  - ☐ Check for relevance (situations can change overnight!)
  - ☐ Check all links
  - ☐ Check for typos
- ☐ Check for new social promotion requests from your team, whether this is done via a dynamic form or an email alias.
- ☐ Check your paid promotions.
  - ☐ Are you still within your budget?
  - ☐ Is your audience engaging?
- ☐ Check your editorial calendar and colleagues to confirm any events, industry news, or announcements you'll need to monitor.
- ☐ Send tomorrow's tweets, Facebook posts/LinkedIn posts around for review.
  - ☐ Check all links
  - ☐ Check for typos
  - ☐ Check your tracking parameters (if using marketing automation or tracking platform to collect data)



How to structure your social media team

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TEAM STRUCTURE

How you structure your social media team and communicate its role and responsibilities to the rest of the organization has a direct impact on its ongoing success. Let's take a look at a few things to consider as you get started.

Creating a social media governance board

In addition to your focused social media staff, you will want to create a social media governance board made up of executives, stakeholders, subject matter experts, and key employee advocates. This is the team that determines your ongoing strategy goals and internal training initiatives, makes key decisions around your social media interactions, and serves as a chain of command for emergency situations. Your governance board should meet occasionally to reassess and innovate on processes and strategies.



When social media goes bad

Social media offers marketers a very immediate and personal connection with their audience, but it's important to remember that it's all public. While you can do everything in your power to make sure your audience and customers are happy on social media, inevitably you will run into a situation that needs a more immediate response—like an unhappy customer. For those cases, it's vital that you have a social media escalation policy that indicates who should respond and how.

"I encourage all brands to respond to all brand mentions in social media. If someone is taking time out of their day to mention your brand—either positively or negatively—it means that to some extent, they care. And therein lies an opportunity."

-Dan Gingiss



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Staffing considerations

Social media marketing takes effort, especially if you want to create an integrated cross-channel campaign strategy. So, you will want to carefully consider resource allocation. How many resources you will need to dedicate to social media marketing will depend on the following:

- Budget for new head count
- Strategic goals
- Number of platforms utilized
- Weekly social time commitments
- Content strategy
- Current and future community size

The size of your team and the scope of responsibilities will vary considerably based on your organization's size and structure. In a large, global organization, social media responsibilities may sit across many teams and paid social advertising may be a separate team.

Consumer organizations may have a lean team and outsource the paid social advertising. Start-up social teams, on the other hand, could be responsible for other areas of the business as well. With that in mind, here are some considerations for your business:

- Start by dedicating one full-time head count for social marketing management. This person will spend their time mostly on community management, social messaging, content creation, best practices, and planning.
- Hire a full-time employee dedicated to creating and managing all content.
- Add a member to your digital advertising team who is dedicated to driving effectiveness and hitting your goals with paid social advertising.

However you choose to structure your team, it's important that you cover the following responsibilities:

- Map to higher-level company goals
- Define social media marketing objectives
- Optimize social channels
- Create a content strategy
- Plan social campaigns
- Segment your social customer relationship management (CRM)
- Score/nurture on social
- Run social analytics

According to a Marketo online survey, 50% of respondents named content marketing as a top skill critical to their success.

"If you're looking for talent to run your social media marketing, look for people who are natural communicators and can carry on a conversation."

-Matt Heinz

"Marketing today is getting more and more specialized. I outsource paid media to a specialist agency who stays on top of trends and techniques. But for organic, where the real relationships form, I think it is unwise to send to an agency. We hold tightly and keep it in-house."

-**Mark W. Shaefer**, Executive Director, Schaefer Marketing Solutions, Speaker, Educator, and Author



Social media is a company-wide effort

While your social media team will do the heavy lifting, strong employee advocates on each channel will help strengthen your brand presence. You may encounter comments or questions that can best be addressed by your own employees, so it's a good idea to have a social representative from each team—sales, product marketing, support, customer success, and so on—who can engage in these conversations. These individuals will represent your company and bring their unique expertise and experiences to the table.



Integrating social media into

your omnichannel marketing strategy

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INTEGRATING SOCIAL MEDIA

The best brands weave themselves into their customers' lives—becoming part of their identity and listening and responding to each customer's needs and wants. They effectively practice omnichannel marketing: marketing that provide a seamless customer experience, regardless of channel or device.

To be successful today, brands need to look beyond disconnected vendors, departments, and strategies to make an impact and give customers a continuous experience. This means you should use diverse channels and messages that reinforce and support each other. Your audience may be following you on multiple social media platforms and also subscribed to your emails, so they don't want to be bombarded with the exact same message on every channel.

"Social media programs cannot exist in a vacuum—you need social, sales, content, SEO, and even advertising working hand-in-hand—so mostly you need a solid marketing strategy."

-John Jantsch



Integrating social media into your omnichannel marketing strategy

CROSS-CHANNEL SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING WITH MARKETING AUTOMATION

Your communications with buyers on each channel—your website, your Facebook page, emails—should not repeat each other. Rather, they should inform each other and enable you to listen and respond appropriately. The Marketo marketing automation platform gives you access to an Audience Hub with customer profiles based on demographic and behavioral data gathered across many channels.



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Nurture

Today's buyers move seamlessly—and quickly—across channels. A typical customer moves from email to social media to your website and back to social media in the blink of an eye, so they need to see an integrated experience across every channel. Your marketing automation platform and nurturing campaigns must account for all the ways a buyer will interact and engage with your brand.

Make sure your social media platforms are key elements in your customer or lead nurturing strategy. When a potential customer mentions your company on social media or interacts in a different way, you can use your engagement marketing platform's automation software to listen and respond with triggered emails and communication. You can also use sophisticated targeting with paid social media ads.

An engagement marketing solution enables marketers to target their audience efficiently by making marketing assets—emails, landing pages, forms, segmentations, and workflows—easy to replicate and implement. This fusion of planning and execution gives marketers more flexibility than ever, which helps them engage buyers quickly and personally to move them to the next stage in the customer lifecycle.

Drive social on other channels

To build your social presence, it's critical to make your profiles visible on your other channels—website, email, and beyond.

Most of your audience has a Facebook or Twitter account. Make it easy for your buyers to download an asset or register for an event by using their existing accounts to autofill forms. This will not only help ensure that you have an easy-to-use solution, but it will also capture rich data that can inform your future campaigns.

What is nurturing?

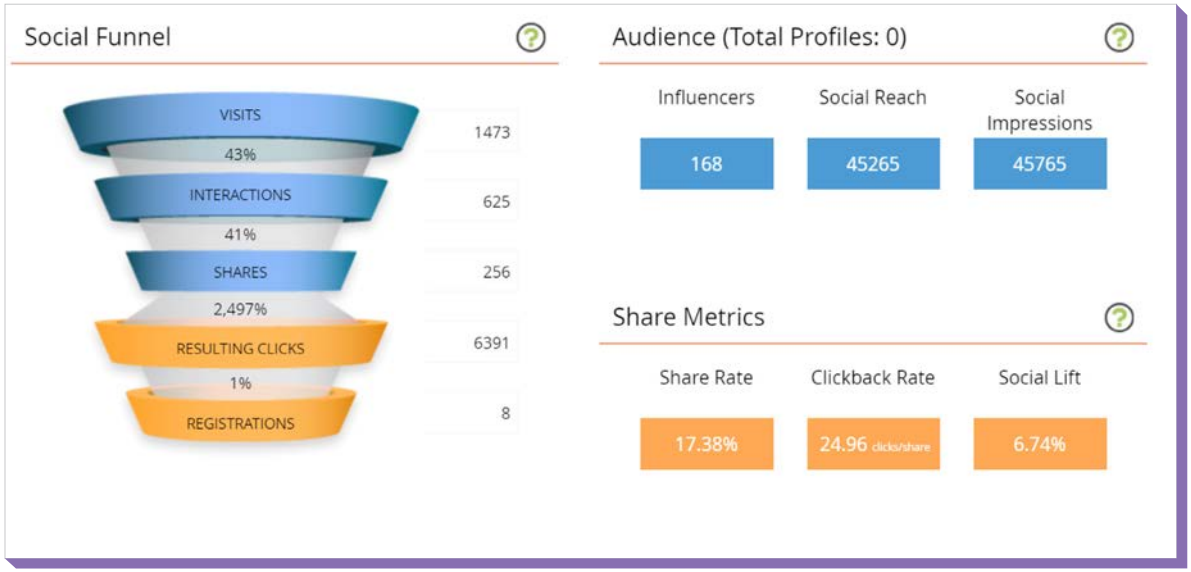
Nurturing is the process of building effective relationships with potential customers throughout the buying journey and beyond, maximizing results and revenue for your organization. It requires listening and responding to buyers on multiple channels. Marketers can now nurture anonymous visitors much earlier on in their buyers' journey, creating a more personalized, engaging, and guided experience.



Web

As a buyer browses your website and interacts with your content, the data you collect on their behavior feeds into a master view that fuels your communication with them across all channels. If your marketing automation solution has a web personalization app, you can leverage a website visitor's lead or engagement score or stage in the buyer journey to personalize your site and your retargeting ads on social channels. For example, a potential customer may come to your website to sign up for a free trial. Later, after leaving your website, you can use that information to retarget them on social media with an offer.

You can also leverage your landing pages to promote your social media presence. With Marketo's social application, you can set up a social referral campaign to combine the power of compelling offers for referrers with a reach that extends across major social media platforms—allowing you to grow your customer base fast. These referrals can be tracked by your marketing automation system, since each shared message includes a unique link that tracks the responses at every stage.



Marketo's Social Dashboard tracks a social campaign's progression and effectiveness and reveals how prospects are helping to get the word out

Mobile

Incorporate mobile marketing by tracking mobile website visits, emails opened on mobile devices, app installs, in-app activities, and responses to push notifications and in-app messaging to inform your other marketing campaigns. And it's very important to be able to respond on mobile. Say a customer opens your email and clicks on a form, but then exits the landing page without submitting it. If they have your app installed, you can send them a push notification informing them that their form was not processed.

Email

You can easily integrate your email campaigns and social media platforms using:

- **Social connecting:** Grow your social followers with email.
- **Social sharing:** Extend the reach of your message through social channels with email.
- **Social promotion:** Grow your email list and promote your email marketing efforts with social.

You can supplement each email address in your database with the contact's social media data. Feature a Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn connect button in email opt-in confirmation messages. Add a Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn connect button to your preference center for recipients who'd rather stay in touch over social networks. Listen for keywords that are used by your audience in social media, and then send segmented emails using those keywords.

Offline

Traditional channels often take a mass marketing approach and can sometimes be hard to measure. But it's important that they are in line with your campaign goals. They can be a powerful way to augment your social media marketing campaigns and are still a worthwhile piece of your marketing toolbox.

Event marketing can be a powerful way to stand out and bring your brand to life. Gauge whether your campaign resonates with the targeted audience and their interests, and determine how you can engage them on social media before, during, or after the event. With a physical presence, like a brick-and-mortar store, evaluate how to bring your campaign to customers who visit.


Your social media
technology stack
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SOCIAL MEDIA AND MARKETING AUTOMATION

Social media marketing processes and measurement can be improved by using technology.

Simply knowing how many shares you received on Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram isn't enough. You need to know who shared your content, whom they shared your content with, and exactly what they shared. Social applications offer more insight into all your social activities, so you know who your top followers are, what content they share, and what their networks look like.

By analyzing your social sharing metrics, you can test different campaigns, content, and social media platforms against each other so you can determine what is working and what isn't. Additionally, with a marketing automation platform, you gain a single source of truth for cross-channel activities. You can provide your prospects or customers with the right message at the right time and in the right place.

"Technology can help social media marketers figure out what works and what does not."

-Michael Stelzner



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Choosing a smart tech stack

As you look to streamline your editorial calendar, more effectively listen on social networks, and track your key metrics, you will discover a multitude of options.

Build a Solid Foundation

Many of these solutions are great, but the key to choosing one (or more) is understanding what you are trying to accomplish—not just in a specific channel, but as a marketing team, department, and organization as a whole. Building your tech stack is an important decision, so carefully evaluate how each new tool and its capabilities will sync with your current systems—especially your foundational systems of record, like your CRM. Document your data flow, rules, and data hygiene processes. Understand APIs (application programming interfaces) and what solutions are truly out-of-the box.

Understand where you are and where you're going

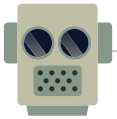
You need to know what the current state of your business is and where you plan to go. Most businesses are trying to grow—so make sure you consider this as you evaluate new solutions. It's critical to think about tools that will grow with you. You should also understand your business needs versus wants.

Identify solutions to integrate into your tech stack

After you identify your core components and define your road map, evaluate new solutions that align with your strategy. You'll want to make sure these solutions can integrate with your core platforms. Social media management platforms, like Hootsuite, allow you to schedule and publish posts across different social media platforms and profiles and analyze your social campaigns. And through an integration with your marketing automation platform, you can gain context into your buyers' real-time interactions with your brand across all channels.

"I've tested and optimized just about every social software that's been given to me because without the science side, you really don't know what's going on around you and where you should be concentrating."

-Bryan Kramer



Avoid a "Frankenstack"

A "Frankenstack" is a set of siloed tools that an organization tries to force into working together and ultimately results in a mess. It is often time consuming and expensive to fix. The key to avoiding it is to have a plan, involve IT, and be honest about the resources you need to maintain and manage the solutions. This thoughtfulness will save you a lot of time and money in the future.



Measure the ROI of your social media campaigns

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MEASURE THE ROI OF YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

To demonstrate how social media marketing contributes to business growth, you need to understand how to connect the right data points. But that is not always straightforward. You need the right set of tools to accomplish this across all your channels.

Without the right metrics, it's nearly impossible to know what to optimize in future campaigns to drive the best ROI for your business. More importantly, without the right metrics, you can't even determine the ROI of your social channels in the first place, which makes it hard to make the case for more budget or head count.

As you plan your social media campaigns, it's important to determine how you will evaluate success. Just as you would with other marketing campaigns, you need to take specific steps to make your social media efforts measurable. The best marketing campaigns have deliberate measurement strategies planned in advance.

"Content creation is obviously a big deal but perhaps even more important is analytics. We need to be able to dig into data and emerge with insights and truth."

-Mark W. Shaefer

"So much of social media used to be simply about monitoring brands and basic KPIs like network size, reach, and engagement. The role social media plays horizontally across the customer lifecycle requires far more comprehensive analytics. There are now far more opportunities for connecting the dots between social awareness, engagement, and conversion."

-Lee Odden

EARLY-STAGE METRICS

Early-stage content is typically fun, entertaining, or educational and works to build brand awareness and affinity, so you should be measuring data that indicates how successful your campaigns are at doing this.

Your social media platforms may have native analytics dashboards with soft metrics that help you evaluate and understand early indicators that are precursors to conversions, like brand awareness and recognition, influence, and mindshare. These metrics—followers, engagement, and reach/impressions—are especially important for your organic posts, since your objectives there are to build brand awareness and amplify your voice.

Followers: Tracks the size of your audience on each channel over time to understand how many people are interested in your brand and what you have to say.

Engagement: Notes the interactions social media users have with your social media accounts, such as clicks, likes, shares, and comments on your posts and time spent watching your videos.

Reach/Impressions: Measures the number of people who have seen your posts and is an important indicator of brand awareness.

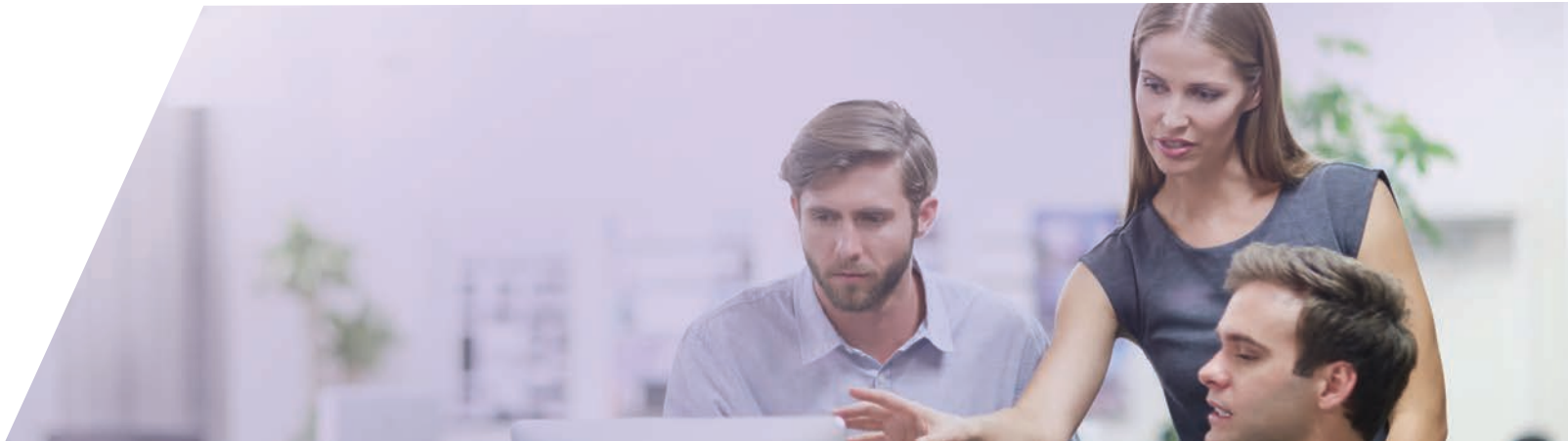
To demonstrate your total impact on the business, you need to measure hard metrics, like conversions, revenue, and ROI. There are two types of conversions you should track:

New names: This is the number of people your campaign brought into your database. It can help you measure how successful your social media campaigns are at acquiring new leads or how many purchases your campaigns generate.

Existing: When your campaigns convert known names, your marketing automation platform measures how they converted (e.g., downloaded a whitepaper), which adds to their lead score.

For your paid social media campaigns, you'll want to track:

Cost per lead/acquisition: B2B marketers typically track the cost per lead through their paid social campaigns, while consumer marketers may track the cost per acquisition. To calculate cost per lead/acquisition, divide the cost of your paid social campaign by the number of leads or acquisitions it brought in.



Measure the ROI of your social media campaigns

As you can see, conversions are critical for tracking how successful your social media campaigns are. For B2B marketers, they reveal how effective your social campaigns are at bringing in leads. For consumer marketers, they indicate how good your social campaigns are at driving purchases.

Your social media platforms' native analytics alongside website analytics platforms, like Google Analytics, can reveal how many conversions each campaign generated.

For deeper insight, set up campaigns inside your marketing automation platform with a smart list or smart campaign that tracks specific parameters and reveals how many conversions each of your campaigns brought in. Once a social media user clicks on a unique URL and takes an action on that page (for example, downloading an infographic), it counts as a conversion, and this information is captured on the back end. You can track who converted, which channel the conversion came from, the type of content used, the specific campaign that brought it in, and much more.



Retention, upsell, and cross-sell

If you're a consumer marketer conducting transactions on your website, the next set of metrics may not apply to you, since a conversion usually indicates a sale. However, remember that the customer journey doesn't end post-sale. According to eMarketer, it costs 10 times more to acquire new customers than to sell to the ones you already have.[27] And based on data from Bain & Company, a 5% increase in retention yields a 25% to 95% increase in profits.[28] Plan a strategy around customer marketing—retention, cross-sell, and upsell—to maximize the lifetime value of your hard-won customers.

[27] How to Unlock the Full Potential of Your Customer Base, Marketo. https://blog.marketo.com/2016/07/how-to-unlock-the-full-potential-of-your-customer-base.html

[28] Customer Retention Should Outweigh Customer Acquisition, Retention Science. https://www.retentionscience.com/blog/customer-retention-should-outweigh-customer-acquisition



MID-STAGE METRICS

Your mid-stage content should be educational and engaging to drive your audience toward interacting further with your company. The data you previously collected on your social media campaign conversions will be critical to measuring your mid- and late-stage metrics.

At this stage, you'll need a marketing automation platform to help power your prospects through their journey and your pipeline with ad targeting. You'll need to track the following metrics:

Marketing qualified leads (MQLs): Prospects who have reached an agreed-upon threshold based on your lead scoring, which takes into account their overall fit, behaviors, and interests.

Sales qualified leads (SQLs): Prospects who have been qualified by sales as good leads.

Opportunity: Once a potential customer becomes an SQL, they get further qualified by sales. If they deem that there is a sales opportunity, they'll become an official opportunity in your system. Although opportunities can take a while to develop since they factor in a buyer's interactions with your brand, it's important to fill your pipeline with as many good leads as possible to generate more customer opportunities.

Pipeline: This indicates how many leads your social campaign brought in. At Marketo, our golden metric for a good campaign is one that generates pipeline at least five times the amount of cost.



Measure the ROI of your social media campaigns

LATE-STAGE METRICS

At this point, you will begin to see how your social media campaigns contribute directly to revenue. Track the following late-stage metrics to tie your social campaigns to ROI:

Opportunities won: Indicates the number of closed-won deals that your campaign achieved.

Revenue won: Refers to the dollar amount of the deal size that your campaigns brought in.

Customer lifetime value (CLV): Represents the total value that your relationship with a customer brings your company, across the entire customer lifecycle.

As buyers engage with your brand more and more, make the most of the information you've collected by targeting them with a narrower focus. In the early stages, you'll want to focus on a broad approach that can reach many buyers. But once you have their attention, you can hit on their unique interests and needs with powerful marketing technology solutions.



ROI



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CONCLUSION

Today, it's not enough just to be on social media. You need to be actively engaging with your audience—building your network, sharing content, asking your audience to share, participating in conversations, and responding to comments.

As social media adoption continues to rise, an omnichannel social media marketing strategy is essential to your brand's success. You can't afford to be absent from conversations about your brand, especially when your competitors are part of them. Now that you understand how to develop a social media marketing strategy, you'll be able to engage your customers at each stage of the journey and create content that's relevant and drives your objectives forward.

A solid strategy doesn't shy away from experimentation to achieve your goals. Technology will help your team adapt and iterate quickly, and it will enable you to understand how your cross-channel, continuous conversations with your audience on social media platforms ultimately contribute to reaching your objectives.

Change is constant in social media. Ensure your strategy can stand the test of time by defining your goals, testing, and adapting the activities you do to support them over time. The right strategy for one brand may be different than another, so craft a strategy that aligns with your goals and make sure it's attainable based on your resources.

With the right strategy—one that guides buyers further along the customer lifecycle and identifies social marketing tactics and platforms that are right for your organization—you'll ultimately bring more revenue to the table.



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Marketo, an Adobe company, offers the solution of choice for lead management and B2B marketing professionals seeking to transform customer experiences by engaging across every stage of complex buying journeys. Natively supporting both lead and account-based marketing strategies, Marketo Engage, as part of Adobe Experience Cloud, brings together marketing and sales in a comprehensive solution designed to orchestrate personalized experiences, optimize content, and measure business impact across every channel, from consideration to conversion and beyond. To learn more about Marketo Engage, the vast community of passionate marketers in the Marketing Nation, and Marketo's robust partner ecosystem, **visit www.marketo.com**.

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