

# Campaign and Social Media Marketing

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## How do you actually plan a campaign?

Regardless of the type of campaign you are working on, all of the pieces should still be planned or reviewed, and the following steps will help guide you in that direction.

### Step 1: Define or Review Your Goal(s)

For campaign types 1 or 2 above, the goals has already been set. However, you will still need to review those goals to make sure you are aligned with the business and requesters (and if not, make any recommendations that may help to further focus the goals). This will ensure you keep the campaign focused on the desired result. From this point on, campaign type #1 will primarily be reviewing the steps below as applied to your campaign.

If you aren't so fortunate and you only received ideas (campaign type 3), then you will need to meet with those requesting the campaign to help determine and define its goals. Ask broad questions like the following:

1. What do you hope to gain in the short term from this campaign?
  - a. Launch a new product?
  - b. Increase interest in a product?
  - c. Promote a live event, webinar, or podcast?
2. What do you hope to gain from this campaign in the long run?
  - a) New leads
  - b) Increased awareness
  - c) Improved conversions or purchases

Once you've defined your broader goal(s), you can narrow your focus even further by creating SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, and Relevant, Timely) to measure your success.

SMART goals can be as simple as tracking click-through, registrations, net new leads, etc. Just make sure the type of measurement aligns with the actual goal. Hub Spot has some great templates for setting up SMART goals. This is also a good point to start thinking about your target audience.

## **Step 2: Determine the Brand and/or Theme**

In order to determine the brand and/or theme for your campaign, ask one primary question:

**What are the primary goals of this campaign (both short-term and long-term)?**

This one question can help determine the run length of the campaign, if new branding is needed, if social media is needed, who should be targeted (broadly speaking), and what kind of assets are needed.

**Next, narrow down the details to determine assets, audience, etc. Questions such as the following can help:**

- Do you need new, existing, or updated assets (e.g., files, PowerPoint's, PDF white papers, blog posts, etc.)?
- Who is your target audience (e.g., set list, segmentation, and nurture from ads/social media, newsletter signup)?
- Do you need custom graphics (e.g., headshots, banners, images), or will you use a general template theme?
- Do you need social media ads/presence? Which ones?

## **Step 3: Plan Your Send Dates and Campaign Calendar**

While live and virtual events require more email sends than, say, a newsletter or one-off email, they also make scheduling pretty formulaic because you have to have everything completed by certain dates to stay on track. Event emails are also typically the easiest ones to plan for as they usually already have a standard format for deployment.

First, start with the event date and come back 3 weeks for 3 invite sends. Add all send date placeholders to your marketing calendar. Then, work on adding asset deadlines.

The format below can be extended out for longer running road shows. Events with a shorter lead time can even use this format — you'll just send out fewer invites. For newsletters and one-off emails, just use "Send Date" instead of "Event Date" and lose the additional email sends.

Once you've mapped out the timeframe, start planning and placing requests for your campaign requirements. Make sure to add all of the send dates and planning due dates to the marketing or campaign calendar so everyone has them.

#### **Step 4: Execute Your Campaign**

I am not going to spend much time here, but here are a few reminders and quick tips:

Always have someone else review your work (QA) to make sure something wasn't missed. We all get hyper focused when building, and sometimes things can slip by us. It is especially easy to happen when there is a lot going on in an office.

Have the requester review and sign off on the emails, landing pages, timeline, and list counts. I like to call this one CYA (cover your backside). This is the best way to make sure that the requester didn't decide to make changes and forget to notify you. It also helps to avoid that dreaded call to "stop the campaign!" It never fails that people find changes they want made when seeing the actual emails and landing pages. People tend to be very visual.

Send a seed list 2 hours before the main send. This one is good for that last-minute review and allows time for any emergency changes or campaign stops that may occur. It does happen as we all know, and it is best to have that 2-hour buffer before the main send so that an OOPS email isn't needed.

#### **Step 5: Review Your Results**

With the campaign complete, it is a good time to review the campaign to see how it performed overall and if you achieved your goals. If activity reports were not pulled during the run, they will need to be pulled now. If the reporting was pulled, then now is the time to review all reporting and start asking the following questions:

Were the goals defined in Step 1 met?

How can we improve?

Where can we improve?

What went wrong or what worked well?

#### **Planning for a better (campaign) future**

In the end, we are all working and striving to drive results and meet our marketing and business goals. For those of you tasked with campaign planning and strategy, I hope this helps you with that process. If you are one of the lucky ones who get to perform the execution piece only, take a moment to be grateful. Hopefully, though, this will help you better understand all the work that takes place before it lands in your inbox.

Sometimes, it helps to get a jump-start from someone who lives and breathes demand generation processes and best practices. Demand Gen's Campaign Execution Services can remove the guesswork from campaign planning, strategy, and execution so you can focus on higher-priority

initiatives. Whether you'd like some help with planning, production, deployment, or anything in between, we can tailor our services to fit your needs and serve as a flexible extension of your team when and where you need us.

There are different types of campaign that needs to be monitored, like an email marketing campaign, social media campaign, pay-per-click campaign and so on. **There are five main ways through which campaign progress can be measured.**

### **1. Monitor Conversion Rate**

Conversion rate is the percentage of visitors or target audience that are converted into leads or customers. When the conversion rate is not satisfactory, a marketer can determine the quality of leads generated by the campaign, by measuring the actions the leads take or the time spent by them on the website. Ideally, the longer stay defines the more chances for leads to be converted into customers in the future. Measuring conversion rates enables the marketer to determine if the marketing campaign is having positive results or not.

### **2. Monitor Website Bounce Rate**

Tracking the website bounce rate is another important measurement to monitor the campaign performance. Bounce rates define the number of people who visit the company website but leave without interacting with it. So bounce rate is a tool that gives a perception of the visitor's behavior.

There might be many reasons behind the bounce rate. Some people get disgusted by pop-ups or do not like the image or the layout of the site, or just simply leave as the page takes time for loading. Bounce rate during a marketing campaign enables the marketer to get a clear view of how the audience is interacting with the website. A high bounce rate could mean that the visitors are not getting the proper content or information they are looking for, or in interacting with key pages of the website like the landing page or homepage.

### **3. Monitor the Web Traffic**

When a marketer or an organization launches a digital marketing campaign, one of the easiest ways to measure the performance of the campaign is to monitor the difference in the overall traffic. Google Analytics can help to get those data. 'All traffic sections' gives the traffic information and also gives an idea about the origin of the traffic. Constant monitoring of the overall web traffic gives a clear picture of how the campaigning influencing the traffic. The marketer receives the data on the website. If the campaigning is going well, the traffic volume will gradually increase. A marketer should consider monitoring the search engine rankings. Search rankings are very important to drive organic traffic to the website. These rankings enable the marketer to know the performance of the site when people search for terms that are relevant to the business the marketer is offering. If a marketer is monitoring a pay-per-click campaign, search ranking performance

allows the marketer to know if the marketing campaign is pushing the organic traffic to the site or not.

#### **4. Monitor Engagement Levels**

Another way to monitor the marketing campaign is to pay attention to engagements. In digital marketing, there are various aspects of engagements that a marketer can track during a marketing campaign. For example, the marketer can track the actions of the site visitors in order to push them down the marketing funnel.

The actions that were taken by customers help the marketer to monitor how customers complete desired actions like downloading content assets, images, signing up for trials, or creating an account, etc. This also gives an idea of the specific aspects of the website that people interact with the most. In any marketing campaign, low engagement levels could be a sign of a poorly designed campaign or might be the target audience is not interested in the offering.

#### **5. Monitor Campaign's Return Of Investment**

Return of Investment or ROI is a very important thing to pay attention to. A marketer needs to monitor the sales revenue that the campaign generates for every investment. Tracking the ROI during a marketing campaign gives the perspective of the campaign to the marketer. It also enables the marketer to know the number of quality leads and their effectiveness.

Marketing is one of the critical aspects of every business. Launching a marketing campaign does not automatically give access to the marketer to realize the goal. The marketer needs to monitor the progress of the campaign regularly to determine the effectiveness of the campaign.

#### **What Is Social Media Marketing (SMM)?**

Social media marketing (also known as digital marketing and e-marketing) is the use of social media—the platforms on which users build social networks and share information—to build a company's brand, increase sales, and drive website traffic. In addition to providing companies with a way to engage with existing customers and reach new ones, SMM has purpose-built data analytics that allows marketers to track the success of their efforts and identify even more ways to engage. Within 18 years, from 2004 (when MySpace became the first social media site to reach one million users) to 2022, the dramatic growth of interactive digital channels took social media to levels that challenge even the reach of television and radio.<sup>1</sup> At the start of 2023, there were 4.76 billion social media users globally—over 59% of the world's population. With over 80% of consumers reporting that social media—especially influencer content—significantly impacts buying decisions, marketers across industries are driving the evolution of social media marketing(SMM) from a stand-alone tool to a multipronged source of marketing intelligence on an increasingly important—and growing—audience.<sup>3</sup>

## Top Social Media Marketing Platforms

**1. Face book** Face book has more than 2.27 billion active monthly users, which makes it your number one choice for a social media marketing platform. With the Face book Ads Manager, you can create ads that target users based on factors such as age, location, gender, relationship status, level of education, interests, job title, purchase behavior, device usage, etc.

Face book also allows you to create Custom Audiences from the list of phone numbers or email addresses that you've collected to reach the current customers. You can also use Face book Pixel to target the customers who have visited your website. A Face book business page is a must for each company, but ensures that you update your page regularly.

**Twitter** Twitter has an average of 186 million daily active users.

It is a fast-paced platform, and many users visit it to get new information. It makes it a good marketing platform for companies that publish original content regularly. Twitter also makes it easy for its users to share links to new blog posts and pages, and if you do it regularly, you will send users directly to your new content. If you develop the habit of sharing useful and informative content from other sources, you will create your reputation as an authority in your industry.

**LinkedIn** LinkedIn is known as the primary social networking site for professionals.

You can use it to update your customers on your business, recruit new team members, and connect with industry partners. Since it's a professional network, it makes the best choice for B2B social media marketing. Forbes ranks it as the best platform for generating leads, and it accounts for 46% of the social media traffic that generates on company websites for B2B firms.

**Instagram** Instagram is owned by Face book, and it boasts of more than a million monthly active users. It has similar advertising options as Face book.

Instagram is a visual platform that allows you to showcase the personality of your business. It is not a text-heavy platform, and it doesn't allow links within posts. The good thing is that you have access to several tools that you can use to improve the creative experience of your audience. Instagram is the best platform for your business if you need to reach your customers through photos and videos. You can post photos of your products in use and ask your followers to do the same. Instagram hash tags are also a great way for marketers to reach a wider audience, and this audience can be expanded further, through the Instagram stories or Instagram Live Video feature. Instagram also provides advertising options for businesses, which are accessible through Face book.

**YouTube** YouTube has over 2 billion registered users. It is the best social media platform for highlighting the company culture and creating tutorials and demonstrations.

If your company is capable of creating its content, YouTube can be a great platform for connecting to users. Apart from the views that you get directly on the platform, you can also use YouTube to host videos to be embedded to your site. Visual content is an effective way of engaging site visitors. It gives you a reason to create an account on YouTube.

**Pinterest** Pinterest has over 400 million monthly active users, and it's a social media platform for sharing products.

If you have an ecommerce business, Pinterest is a MUST for you. 87% of pinners have purchased an item because of Pinterest. You can upload individual photos alongside short descriptions and links to the product page. Pinterest also has a built-in shopping feature that makes it easier for businesses to promote their products on their site.

The marketer can use rich pins to give context to a product, article, recipe, and app pins, and use their advertising options to reach more users. It gives marketers an easy way of directing traffic to their product pages and connecting with potential customers.

**Reddit** Reddit has more than 430 million monthly active users.

It is a good platform for audience or content reach and interacting with niche audiences. Reddit provides users with similar interests with a platform where they can share ideas. The users can share links, content, or ask questions on topic groups known as subreddits. The good thing is that there are subreddits for nearly any topic.

Marketers can use Reddit as a research tool to know what their audience is talking about and then create content based on that. Other than research, Reddit provides its users with advertising options to help them get their businesses in front of interested users.

**Snapchat** Snapchat has more than 238 million daily active users.

It is a good platform for sending real-time updates and promoting events. Snapchat allows its users to post photos and videos that remain active on the platform for 24 hours. It makes it good for businesses that need to promote timely events, like product launches or a conference.

It also allows marketers to create custom, branded geotags to promote events in particular locations during a particular period. Snapchat is a well-known platform for an audience that skews younger, making it the best platform to target college students.

**Tumblr** Tumblr is a micro blogging platform that does not perfectly fit in the list of social media platforms, but it's a site to help you reach a target audience aged between 16 and 34 years.

It has 507.2 million registered blogs. Tumblr has the youngest demographic of all social media sites, and its users are very active. However, if you're not familiar with the platform, it can be challenging for you to market your brand on it.

**TikTok** TikTok social media platform has more than 689 million monthly active users from across the globe.

It is a good platform to help you give users a peek behind your business scenes and take part in viral trends. It allows its users to share short videos for various purposes. These short videos can be of viral dances, quick tutorials, and comedic kits. Other than sharing videos about your business, you can also use TikTok's advertising features to promote your business.

### **Limitations of Using Social Media Marketing Platforms**

Although social media marketing platforms provide marketers with an opportunity to expose their brands to potential customers, they are associated with a number of challenges.

Some of the challenges of using social media marketing platforms include the following:

#### **Not Built for Business**

the social media marketing platforms were not built for business, but for connecting two or more people. Social media users don't have "buying-intent".

#### **Costly**

it's costly to create and run marketing ads on social media platforms. The ad costs also increase as you target a wider audience.

#### **Time-Consuming**

a lot of time is required to run social media marketing ads. One has to stay active and engage potential customers constantly.

#### **Technical Expertise Needed**

Technical know-how is needed for one to design, create, and run social media ads. If you don't have it, it may be a challenge for you to market on social media marketing platforms.

### **10 ways to optimize your social media profiles**

#### **Perfect your profile picture**

Brand consistency is important, so you likely want to keep the same profile picture across all social media sites. But that doesn't mean you can just upload the same JPEG everywhere and go for lunch. There will likely be some tweaks required for each platform.

Nothing screams "unprofessional!" quite like an ill-fitting profile picture. It's important to adjust the size of your pics to fit each site, especially since some platforms have circular profile pictures and others use squares. Try to keep them as similar as possible without sacrificing their appearance on each site.

And if you're using your logo as your profile picture, make sure it isn't cropped or cut off!

We've got a whole handy guide to social media image sizing, but here's a little cheat sheet:



**Face book profile picture:** 170 X 170 pixels

**Twitter profile photo:** 400 X 400 pixels

**TikTok profile photo:** 20 X 20 pixels (minimum)

**LinkedIn profile photo:** 400 X 400 pixels (minimum)

**Instagram profile picture:** 110 X 110 pixels

**Pinterest profile picture:** 150 X 150 pixels

**YouTube profile picture:** 800 X 800 pixels

### **Design what you can**

Geriatric millennial might remember when they could spruce up their MySpace page with browser-breaking HTML codes. These days, most social media sites have wisely avoided letting people change the cursor or embed an emo song. But there are still plenty of ways to customize your page.

Most social media sites have other image opportunities outside of their profile pictures. Think, for example, Twitter's banner or Face book's cover images.

These images are ways to continue telling your brand story. You can even incorporate your profile banner into your overall design.

On sites like Instagram, you can even plan your entire grid to fit a unified theme or color scheme. Many brands make sure everything they post fits within their visual identity, giving the whole page a sense of cohesion.

### **Write the perfect bio**

In case you haven't noticed, planning is the secret to perfecting your profile. And this is especially true with your social media bio, which is really an open-ended invitation to flex the written word.

Want to offer a straightforward description of your company on your business page? Sure, that's a good bet for beginning businesses. But if you're well-established, you can use that space to drop a slogan, highlight your latest promotion or even keep it intentionally vague.

And don't forget that SEO also plays a role in social media bios — most platforms are also search engines, after all. It's never a bad idea to work some specific and relevant keywords into your bio, as long as you can keep it natural and not be spammy.

### **Pin what's important**

Think of your profile as a homepage that people might discover while poking around online. You want to make it easy for those explorers to find your best work. You can easily do this by pinning your favorite or most pertinent posts to the top of your profile.

Plus, you can change your pinned post whenever you want. Keep an eye on that content — because it looks really bad to have Black Friday promotions at the top of your page in the middle of May.

### **Set your interests and choose your allies**

It's all about who you know, and that couldn't be more true on social media. Sure, if you're a luxury mega-brand that doesn't need to hustle for clout, you could have the elusive 0 above your "following" header. Still, who you choose to follow should be an integral part of your brand strategy.

Whether friending on Face book or following on Twitter, Instagram or TikTok, how your brand account interacts with other brand accounts will determine how the algorithm treats your profile. It will start suggesting your page to relevant people and promoting your material organically.

On sites like Face book, you can also like other pages with your brand page. This is a great way to establish your brand's niche. Don't skip this step if it's available to you!

### **Set your privacy**

This one almost goes without saying, but it's still something you should double-check. If you want your social media posts to reach the maximum number of people, you should make sure they're all set to public and are easily shareable. On Face book, in particular, you want to make sure that all of your posts can be shared with the click of a button.

Ironically, there was a trend toward brands launching private Instagram accounts a few years ago in an attempt to promote exclusivity (and boost follower counts), but that trend has luckily died down.

### **Keep it clean**

Your social media profile is your space, which means you'll need to do some regular housekeeping. That might mean untagging yourself from unflattering or inappropriate photos, deleting comments that cross the line and making sure you keep an eye out for spam, which should also be reported and deleted.

A clean social media profile sends the message that you're a legit brand that cares about how you're perceived.

### **Cross-promote your posts**

Keeping your socials consistent is key, but you should also cross-promote your other social media profiles whenever possible. This might be as simple as re-uploading a TikTok video as a Reel on Instagram or a YouTube short. Or it could mean offering more distinct calls to action.

The link in your bio is prime real estate, especially on sites like Instagram, where you can only share one URL. Link tree allows you to create an easy landing page with links to your other social profiles as well as your online shop, home page, contact form and anything else you might desire.

### **Test your links**

Another one that sounds obvious but is absolutely essential! When was the last time you audited all of your social media links?

Try logging in from a different account on a different browser and click around for a while. Do all the links go where they're supposed to, or did something weird happen with the formatting? The email that's included in your Twitter bio — is it loading into the mail app properly when you click it?

We've all got clumsy fingers sometimes, and it's easy to miss weird formatting when we copy and paste. Still, a misplaced comma or quotation mark could be why you're missing out on the business opportunity of a lifetime. I mean, you never know.

### **Build trust**

While you're looking around your social media profiles, try to envision them as an outsider. Do they look legit?

If you've followed the previous steps and made sure all of your profiles are clean, consistent and professional, they likely will.

But there are even more ways you can make yourself stand out:

**Check your grammar.** While human beings are prone to typos and grammatical errors, we still associate them with untrustworthy sources online. Make sure your spelling and sentence structure are up to snuff.

**Post just enough.** You don't want to flood the feed, but you also want people visiting your profile to see that you are an active (and, therefore, legit) brand.

**Get verified.** It depends on the platform, but generally speaking, it's never been easier to have your brand page verified on a social media platform. This usually means a checkmark is added to your brand's profile, and users can rest assured that they can trust you.

## **An overview of social media analytics**

Practitioners and analysts alike know social media by its many websites and channels: Face book, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Reddit and many others.

Social media analytics is the ability to gather and find meaning in data gathered from social channels to support business decisions — and measure the performance of actions based on those decisions through social media.

Social media analytics is broader than metrics such as likes, follows, retweets, previews, clicks, and impressions gathered from individual channels. It also differs from reporting offered by services that support marketing campaigns such as LinkedIn or Google Analytics.

Social media analytics uses specifically designed software platforms that work similarly to web search tools. Data about keywords or topics is retrieved through search queries or web ‘crawlers’ that span channels. Fragments of text are returned, loaded into a database, categorized and analyzed to derive meaningful insights.

Social media analytics includes the concept of social listening. Listening is monitoring social channels for problems and opportunities. Social media analytics tools typically incorporate listening into more comprehensive reporting that involves listening and performance analysis.

### **Why is social media analytics important?**

IBM points out that with the prevalence of social media: “News of a great product can spread like wildfire. And news about a bad product — or a bad experience with a customer service rep — can spread just as quickly. Consumers are now holding organizations to account for their brand promises and sharing their experiences with friends, co-workers and the public at large.”

Social media analytics helps companies address these experiences and use them to:

Spot trends related to offerings and brands

Understand conversations — what is being said and how it is being received

Derive customer sentiment towards products and services

Gauge response to social media and other communications

Identify high-value features for a product or service

Uncover what competitors are saying and its effectiveness

Map how third-party partners and channels may affect performance

These insights can be used to not only make tactical adjustments, like addressing an angry tweet, they can help drive strategic decisions. In fact, IBM finds social media analytics is now “being brought into the core discussions about how businesses develop their strategies.”

### **These strategies affect a range of business activity:**

**Product development** - Analyzing an aggregate of Face book posts, tweets and Amazon product reviews can deliver a clearer picture of customer pain points, shifting needs and desired features. Trends can be identified and tracked to shape the management of existing product lines as well as guide new product development.

**Customer experience** - An IBM study discovered “organizations are evolving from product-led to experience-led businesses.” Behavioral analysis can be applied across social channels to capitalize on micro-moments to delight customers and increase loyalty and lifetime value. Branding - Social media may be the world’s largest focus group. Natural language processing and sentiment analysis can continually monitor positive or negative expectations to maintain brand health, refine positioning and develop new brand attributes.

**Competitive Analysis** - Understanding what competitors are doing and how customers are responding is always critical. For example, a competitor may indicate that they are foregoing a niche market, creating an opportunity. Or a spike in positive mentions for a new product can alert organizations to market disruptors.

**Operational efficiency** – Deep analysis of social media can help organizations improve how they gauge demand. Retailers and others can use that information to manage inventory and suppliers, reduce costs and optimize resources.

### **Key capabilities of effective social media analytics**

The first step for effective social media analytics is developing a goal. Goals can range from increasing revenue to pinpointing service issues. From there, topics or keywords can be selected and parameters such as date range can be set. Sources also need to be specified — responses to YouTube videos, Face book conversations, Twitter arguments, Amazon product reviews, comments from news sites. It is important to select sources pertinent to a given product, service or brand.

Typically, a data set will be established to support the goals, topics, parameters and sources. Data is retrieved, analyzed and reported through visualizations that make it easier to understand and manipulate.

These steps are typical of a general social media analytics approach that can be made more effective by capabilities found in social media analytics platforms.

Natural language processing and machine learning technologies identify entities and relationships in unstructured data — information not pre-formatted to work with data analytics. Virtually all social media content is unstructured. These technologies are critical to deriving meaningful insights.

Segmentation is a fundamental need in social media analytics. It categorizes social media participants by geography, age, gender, marital status, parental status and other demographics. It can help identify influencers in those categories. Messages, initiatives and responses can be better tuned and targeted by understanding who is interacting on key topics.

Behavior analysis is used to understand the concerns of social media participants by assigning behavioral types such as user, recommender, prospective user and detractor. Understanding these roles helps develop targeted messages and responses to meet, change or deflect their perceptions.

Sentiment analysis measures the tone and intent of social media comments. It typically involves natural language processing technologies to help understand entities and relationships to reveal positive, negative, neutral or ambivalent attributes.

Share of voice analyzes prevalence and intensity in conversations regarding brand, products, services, reputation and more. It helps determine key issues and important topics. It also helps classify discussions as positive, negative, neutral or ambivalent.

Clustering analysis can uncover hidden conversations and unexpected insights. It makes associations between keywords or phrases that appear together frequently and derives new topics, issues and opportunities. The people that make baking soda, for example, discovered new uses and opportunities using clustering analysis.

Dashboards and visualization charts, graphs, tables and other presentation tools summarize and share social media analytics findings — a critical capability for communicating and acting on what has been learned. They also enable users to grasp meaning and insights more quickly and look deeper into specific findings without advanced technical skills.

## **7 Steps for the Ultimate Social Media Content Strategy**

### **Set goals for your new strategy**

But before we dive in, you'll notice that most of the steps in this guide happen before you even create your first post. That's because there are key decisions you need to make before jumping into your social media accounts and posting the content you've created.

As we've already touched on, without a plan, you have no means of figuring out whether your social media strategy is working. Yet to measure the effectiveness of your plan, you'll need to set specific goals.

Like any marketing campaign, digital or otherwise, social media metrics should be in line with your business objectives. It's the best way to create a strategy that actually drives revenue.

So, what do those social media KPIs look like? Here are a few examples:

**Build brand awareness.** Whether you're establishing a brand voice or raising awareness about the causes you support, social media is a great vehicle to do so.

**Grow your audience.** Social media success is often determined by the size of your audience and the rate of growth. In general, the more people in your audience, the more opportunities you have to generate lead.

**Boost community engagement.** While your audience size can be an important metric for influencers, what matters even more is the percentage of people viewing your social media content and liking, commenting on, or sharing it.

**Drive traffic to the website.** While attracting engaged followers is great, social media channels should ultimately serve as a place to funnel people towards your website.

**Drive leads and sales.** If your social media strategy is to succeed, you'll need to be able to see growth in leads and sales as a direct result of your plan.

These are more general goals, but you'll want to create specific SMART goals tailored for your business. If you're a DTC ecommerce brand, for example, "grow Instagram revenue by 20% over the next quarter" is a great foundation that guides your plan of action going forwards.

### **Research your target audience**

A strategy to help you meet your new social media goals requires a solid understanding of who you're trying to reach. If you don't know who you're talking to, your target customers won't either—and no one will listen.

You might already have a few ideas of your target audience, but the best buyer personas aren't formed on guesswork. They're formed around real, accurate data from your website and ecommerce platform.

Chances are, you already have Google Analytics installed on your website. Treat it as your best friend. With its Demographics Overview report, you can narrow down your demographics by location, age, gender, interests, and language.

Certain social media tools—including Facebook Page Insights and Instagram Insights—also provide brands with a deep dive into their existing audience. You're able to see information about your followers, such as:

The times of day they're most active

The content formats with the highest engagement rate

Where people find your social media content

However, if your business is new and you don't have existing data to use, you can try some traditional methods of audience research: surveys and reviews.

### **Choose your target platforms**

A clearer understanding of who you're targeting makes it 10x easier to prioritize the platforms your business should be actively posting on.

For example, if you know that your buyer is a B2B professional, you'll most likely want to use LinkedIn. A quarter of its monthly active users are senior-level influencers.

If your target audience is Gen Z, however, your choice of platform changes. Younger audiences are more likely to spend time watching online video content, making video-heavy platforms like Snapchat or TikTok a bigger priority than LinkedIn.

### **Set up metrics tracking**

Regardless of which platform you're using, the only way to judge whether your content strategy is working is to rely on a social media management tool like Buffer, Hoot Suite, or Later.

Of course, depending on your business and the types of content you create, some metrics may be more important than others. But as a general rule, you'll want to track the following metrics to start with:

**Reach.** This metric measures how many users have seen your social media post. The higher your reach, the more "viral" your content is.

**Clicks.** If you're linking out to a landing page or blog post on your website, see how many people click on the link. This is what's called your "click-through rate": the percentage of people who see a link and click it.

**Engagement.** Track the social engagement levels on your post to see how effective it is at making your target audience do something. Social media algorithms like to prioritize content that sparks conversations. The higher your engagement rate, the more involved your audience is.



**Hash tag performance.** If you're using hash tags as part of your content strategy, judge whether the terms you're using are driving more eyeballs to your social media post. By monitoring your hash tag performance, you can see which ones work best for your brand—so you can double-down on them.

**Sentiment.** Tracking sentiment is also super important. To keep on top of your brand reputation, you need to know whether people mention you positively or negatively across social media.

## **Create engaging content**

Now we're onto the really fun part: Creating high-quality content.

But before you rush into filling up your content calendar, remember that you don't need to create new content from scratch. You likely have a library of content that you can repurpose on social media, saving you time and effort.

If you partnered with an influencer a few months ago, for example, that's perfect curation material to fill your content queue.

Each type of social media content fits within one of four categories—each of which has different goals and purposes. The four content types are designed to move users through the sales funnel and towards the end goal: A purchase.

This is the content strategy we use at The Social Shepherd for all our clients, to ensure they're consistently delivering valuable content that resonates with their audience

## **Plan content on an editorial calendar**

By this point, you likely have tons of social media content ideas flying around your brain. We need to create a plan for delivering that content to your target audience.

There are two phases for this stage of the content strategy process: Planning and delivery.

One of the easiest ways to plan your new strategy is to create a social media content calendar. Being able to visualize how your content will play out in future weeks (or even months) helps you plan what your profile will look like in a few weeks' time.

Using a calendar also helps you to prepare well in advance for national holidays, which always provide helpful themes to create content around.

## **Measure and improve**

What good is your new social media content strategy if you're unsure on whether it's working?

The final step in the process is to revisit the goals you set. Whether that was to drive sales or increase your follower count by 20%, grab data from your social media analytics tool and compare it against your pre-strategy data.

Let's put that into practice and say you're evaluating whether your new Instagram content strategy is working. You've been posting more educational content to your profile. Before, you treated any new post as an opportunity to make a hard sell.

Using data from your Instagram Insights, you discover that educational content has proved to be more popular than promotional. The new content you're posting has influenced 1,000 more people to follow your account. Your post engagement rate is also up across the Stories, posts, and Reels you're posting.

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