

Digital Platform and BRANDS



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What is Social Media Marketing?

Social media marketing is the use of social media platforms to connect with your audience to build your brand, increase sales, and drive website traffic. This involves publishing great content on your social media profiles, listening to and engaging your followers, analysing your results, and running social media advertisements.

The major social media platforms (at the moment) are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, and Snapchat.

Making Your Social Debut

Like any form of marketing, social media takes some thought. It can become an enormous siphon of your time, and short-term profits are rare. Social media marketing is a long-term commitment. So, should you or shouldn't you invest time and effort in this marketing avenue? If you answer in the affirmative, you immediately confront another decision: What form should that investment take? The number of options is overwhelming; you can never use every technique and certainly can't do them all at once.

Understanding the Benefits of Social Media

Social media marketing carries many benefits. One of the most important is that you don't have to front any cash for most social media services. Of course, there's a downside: Most services require a significant time investment to initiate and maintain a social media marketing campaign, and many limit distributions of unpaid posts, charging for advertising and distributing posts to your desired markets. The different benefits of Social Media Marketing are:

a. Casting a wide net to catch your target market:

The audience for social media is huge. By the second quarter of 2016, Facebook claimed 1.79 billion monthly active users worldwide, of which 1.66 billion were mobile users. Slightly less than 85 percent of Facebook's traffic comes from outside the US and Canada. When compared to Google, this social media behemoth is in tight competition for the US audience. In October 2016, Facebook tallied about 207 million unique US visitors/viewers, while Google Sites surpassed it with more than 246 million. Keep in mind, of course, that visitors are conducting different activities on the two sites.

- b. **Branding:** Basic marketing focuses on the need for branding, name recognition, visibility, presence, or top-of mind awareness. Call it what you will — you want people to remember your company name when they're in need of your product or service. Social media services, of almost every type, are excellent ways to build your brand. Social media works for branding as long as you get your name in front of the right people. Plan to segment the audience on the large social media services. You can look for more targeted groups within them or search for specialty services that may reach fewer people overall but more of the ones who are right for your business.
- c. **Building Relationships:** If you're focused on only short-term benefits, you'd better shake that thought loose and get your head into the long-term game that's played in the social media world. To build effective relationships in social media, you're expected to:
- Establish your expertise.
 - Participate regularly as a good citizen of whichever social media world you inhabit; follow site
 - rules and abide by whatever conventions have been established.
 - Avoid overt self-promotion.
 - Resist hard-sell techniques except in paid advertising.
 - Provide value with links, resources, and unbiased information.
- Watch for steady growth in the number of your followers on a particular service or the number of people who recommend your site to others; increased downloads of articles or other tools that provide detailed information on a topic; or repeat visits to your site. All these signs indicate you're building relationships that may later lead to if not a direct sale then a word-of-web recommendation to someone who does buy. In the world of social media, the term engagement refers to the length of time and quality of interaction between your company and your followers.
- d. **Improving business processes:** Already, many clever businesses have found ways to use social media to improve business processes. Though individual applications depend on the nature of your business, consider leveraging social media to
- i. Promptly detect and correct customer problems or complaints.

- ii. Obtain customer feedback and input on new product designs or changes.
- iii. Provide tech support to many people at one time; if one person has a question, chances are good that others do, too.
- iv. Improve service delivery, such as cafes that accept to-go orders on Twitter or Facebook, or food carts that notify customers where and when their carts will arrive.
- v. Locate qualified new vendors, service providers, and employees by using professional networks such as LinkedIn.
- vi. Collect critical market intelligence on your industry and competitors by watching content on appropriate social media.
- vii. Use geolocation, tweets, and mobile search services to drive neighbourhood traffic to brick-and mortar stores during slow times and to acquire new customers.

Marketing is only part of your company, but all of your company is marketing. Social media is a ripe environment for this hypothesis, where every part of a company, from human resources to tech support, and from engineering to sales, can be involved.

- e. **Improving search engine rankings:** Just as you optimize your website, you should optimize your social media outlets for search engine ranking. Now that search engines are cataloguing Twitter and Facebook and other appearances on social media, you can gain additional front-page real estate for your company on Google and Yahoo!/Bing (which now share the same search algorithms and usually produce similar results). Search engines recognize most appearances on social media as inbound links, which also improve where your site will appear in natural search results. Optimization pays off in other ways: in results on real-time searches, which are now available on primary search engines; on external search engines that focus on blogs or other social media services; and on internal, site-specific search engines.
- f. **Selling in the social media marketplace:** Conventional thinking several years ago suggested that social media was designed for long-term engagement, for marketing and branding rather than for sales. However, more and more social media channels now offer the opportunity for direct sales from their sites. In addition to selling on major social media channels such as Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter (using the Buy Now feature), and Instagram (using third-party add-ons such as Olapic), you will also find selling opportunities on smaller, niche.

Understanding the Cons of Social Media

For all its upsides, social media has its downsides. As social media has gained in popularity, it has also become increasingly difficult to gain visibility among its hundreds of millions of users. In fact, sometimes you have to craft a campaign just to build an audience on a particular social media site. The process is similar to conducting optimization and inbound link campaigns so that your site is found in natural search results.

Don't participate in social media for its own sake or just because everyone else is. By far, the biggest downside in social media is the amount of time you need to invest to see results. You need to make an ongoing commitment to review and respond to comments and to provide an ongoing stream of new material. An initial commitment to set up a profile is just the tip of the iceberg.

Keep in mind that you need to watch out for the addictiveness of social media. Individually and collectively, social media is the biggest-ever time sink. Don't believe us? Ask yourself whether you became addicted to news alerts during the 2016 presidential campaign or couldn't take your eyes off live coverage of the terror attacks in Paris. Or maybe you play Candy Crush, Words with Friends, or other video games with a passion, continuously text on your smartphone, or compulsively check email every ten seconds ... you get the idea. Without self-discipline and a strong time schedule, you can easily become so socially overbooked that other tasks go undone.

The Five Core Pillars of Social Media Marketing

- a. **Strategy:** Before you dive right in and publish something on social media, let's take a step back and look at the bigger picture. The first step is to think about your social media strategy.

What are your goals? How can social media help you achieve your business goals? Some businesses use social media for increasing their brand awareness, others use it for driving website traffic and sales. Social media can also help you generate engagement around your brand, create a community, and serve as a customer support channel for your customers.

Which social media platforms do you want to focus on? The major social media platforms, mentioned above, are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, and Snapchat. There are also smaller and up-and-coming platforms, such as Tumblr, Tik Tok, and Anchor, and social messaging platforms, such as Messenger, WhatsApp, and WeChat. When starting out, it's better to pick a few platforms that you think your target audience is on than to be on all platforms.

What type of content do you want to share? What type of content will attract your target audience best? Is it images, videos, or links? Is it educational or entertaining content? A good place to start is to create a marketing persona, which will help you answer these questions. And this doesn't have to be fixed forever; you can always change your strategy according to how your social media posts perform.

- b. **Planning and Publishing:** Social media marketing for small businesses usually starts with having a consistent presence on social media. Close to three billion people (3,000,000,000!) use social media. By being present on social media platforms, you give your brand an opportunity to be discovered by your future customers.

Publishing to social media is as simple as sharing a blog post, an image, or a video on a social media platform. It's just like how you would share on your personal Facebook profile. But you will want to plan your content ahead of time instead of creating and publishing content spontaneously. Also, to ensure that you are maximizing your reach on social media, you need to publish great content that your audience likes, at the right timing and frequency.

There are now a variety of social media scheduling tools, such as Buffer Publish, that can help you publish your content automatically at your preferred time. This saves you time and allows you to reach your audience when they are most likely to engage with your content.

- c. **Listening and Engagement:** As your business and social media following grow, conversations about your brand will also increase. People will comment on your social media posts, tag you in their social media posts, or message you directly.

People might even talk about your brand on social media without letting you know. So you will want to monitor social media conversations about

your brand. If it's a positive comment, you get a chance to surprise and delight them. Otherwise, you can offer support and correct a situation before it gets worse.

You can manually check all your notifications across all the social media platforms but this isn't efficient and you won't see posts that didn't tag your business's social media profile. You can instead use a social media listening and engagement tool that aggregates all your social media mentions and messages, including posts that didn't tag your business's social media profile.

- d. **Analytics:** Along the way, whether you are publishing content or engaging on social media, you will want to know how your social media marketing is performing. Are you reaching more people on social media than last month? How many positive mentions do you get a month? How many people used your brand's hashtag on their social media posts?

The social media platforms themselves provide a basic level of such information. To get more in-depth analytics information or to easily compare across social media platforms, you can use the wide range of social media analytics tools available, such as Buffer Analyze.

- e. **Advertising:** When you have more funds to grow your social media marketing, an area that you can consider is social media advertising. Social media ads allow you to reach a wider audience than those who are following you.

Social media advertising platforms are so powerful nowadays that you can specify exactly who to display your ads to. You can create target audiences based on their demographics, interests, behaviours, and more.

When you are running many social media advertising campaigns at once, you can consider using a social media advertising tool to make bulk changes, automate processes, and optimize your ads.

Plotting Your Social Media Marketing Strategy

We talk about making the business case for social media marketing, looking at the question of whether you should or shouldn't get involved. That chapter is about strategy, goals, and objectives — this one is about tactics. It helps you

decide which social media services best fit your marketing objectives and your target market.

Let your customers and prospects drive your selection of social media alternatives. To see the best return on your investment in social media, you need to try to use the same social media as they do. This principle is the same one you apply to all your other marketing and advertising efforts. Social media is a new tactic, not a new world.

Fish where your fish are. If your potential customers aren't on a particular social media outlet, don't start a campaign on that outlet. In this chapter, we show how to use online market research to assess the match between your target markets and various social media outlets. After you do that, you're ready to start filling out your own Social Media Marketing Plan, which appears at the end of this chapter.

Locating Your Target Market Online

Nothing is more important in marketing than identifying and understanding your target audience (or audiences). After you can describe your customers' and prospects' demographic characteristics, where they live, and what social media they use, you're in a position to focus your social marketing efforts on those people most likely to buy your products or services.

Because social media techniques focus on inexpensive ways to reach niche markets with specific messages, they're tailor-made for a guerrilla-marketing approach. As with all guerrilla-marketing activities, target one market at a time.

Don't dilute your marketing budget or labour by trying to reach too many audiences at a time. People still need to see your message or brand name at least seven times to remember it. Trying to boost yourself to the forefront of everyone's mind all at once is expensive.

Focus your resources on one niche at a time. After you succeed, invest your profits in the next niche. It may seem counterintuitive, but it works.

Don't let setting priorities among niches paralyze you. Your choice of niches usually doesn't matter. If you aren't sure, go first for what seems to be the biggest market or the easiest one to reach.

Segmenting Your B2C Market

If you have a business-to-consumer (B2C) company, you can adapt the standard tools of market segmentation, which is a technique to define various niche audiences by where they live and how they spend their time and money. The most common types of segmentation are

- Demographics
- Geographic location
- Life-stage-based purchasing behaviour
- Psychographics or lifestyle
- Affinity or interest groups

These categories affect not only your social media tactics but also your graphics, message, content, offers, and every other aspect of your marketing. Your messages need to be specific enough to satisfy the needs and wants of the distinct subgroups you're trying to reach.

Suppose that you want to sell a line of organic, herbal hair care products using social media. If you described your target market as “everyone who uses shampoo” in your Social Media Marketing Goals statement, segment that market into different subgroups before you select appropriate social-marketing techniques.

When you're creating subgroups, keep these concepts in mind:

Simple demographics affect your market definition. The use of fragrances, descriptive terms, and even packaging may vary by gender. How many shampoo commercials for men talk about silky hair? For that matter, what's the ratio of shampoo commercials addressed to women versus men?


Consider geography. Geography may not seem obvious, but people who live in dry climates may be more receptive to a message about moisturizers than people who live in humid climates. Or perhaps your production capacity constrains your initial product launch to a local or regional area.

Think about how purchasing behavior changes with life stages. For instance, people who dye their hair look for different hair care products than those who don't, but the reason they color their

hair affects your selling message. (Teenagers and young adults may dye their hair unusual colours in an effort to belong to a group of their peers; older men may hide the grey with Grecian Formula; women with kids might be interested in fashion, or colour their hair as a pick-me-up.)

Even lifestyles (psychographics) affect decisions. People with limited resources who are unlikely to try new products may respond to messages about value and satisfaction guarantees; people with more resources or a higher status may be affected by messages related to social grouping and self-esteem.

Affinity or interest groups are an obvious segmentation parameter. People who participate in environmental organizations or who recycle goods may be more likely to be swayed by a green shampoo appeal or shop in specific online view.



Facebook

Facebook, Inc., is an American multinational conglomerate based in Menlo Park, California. It was founded by Mark Zuckerberg, along with his fellow roommates and students at Harvard College, who were Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes, originally as TheFacebook.com—today's Facebook, a popular global social networking service. It is one of the world's most valuable companies. It is considered one of the Big Five companies in U.S. information technology, with Google, Apple, Microsoft and Amazon.

In addition to being the largest social network on the planet, it's the most active. In fact, as of June 2014, 829 million people use Facebook every day!

Think about this: Most smartphones and tablets are preloaded with a Facebook app or at least have features that allow for Facebook sharing. Facebook continues to grow at a staggering rate because it continues to fit the needs of both consumers and businesses.

Consumers use Facebook to connect with friends and share their lives in the form of updates and activity. All Facebook users have a Facebook profile, which includes a main image, or avatar; a Timeline listing their latest activities and comments from friends; and a sidebar that includes tabs for photos, personal information, and other apps.

Businesses use Facebook to engage customers and prospects by using Facebook plug-ins to make their websites more social, publishing useful content on their Facebook Pages, and running highly targeted ad campaigns within the Facebook community.

Why Is It So Popular?

The social networking site Facebook was launched in 2004 by a kid at Harvard University named Mark Zuckerberg. It started with the name Thefacebook and was available only to Harvard students or anyone else who had a harvard.edu email address. The social network spread quickly throughout Harvard because it was exclusive.

Although it was launched as a network for Harvard students, Facebook was eventually made available to students at other universities and finally to anyone with access to a computer. Now, just a few years later, it has become the largest social networking site in history. As of the publication date of this book, Facebook has more than 1.3 billion users worldwide.

Here are a few reasons why Facebook has blown past all other social networks:

✓ Facebook has used existing social connections to promote the platform. From Day One, the sign-on process has included inviting anyone you've emailed! Its assumption is that if you've exchanged an email with someone, there's a good chance that you have some kind of relationship with that person and may be inclined to invite them to join you on Facebook.

✓ Facebook is heavily covered by mainstream media. Whether it's a newspaper article about a teacher getting fired for making thoughtless comments about a student or a TV interview with two siblings who were separated at birth but reunited on Facebook, not a day goes by without some kind of mention of Facebook in the news.

✓ Facebook keeps us connected. Young people famously use Facebook to stay connected, but they're not alone. One of the fastest-growing segments on Facebook continues to be people over 55. Many of them use Facebook to keep up with their children and sometimes grandchildren.

Building Your Facebook Presence

Getting Started with a Facebook Page

Facebook Pages give your business a presence on Facebook where you can promote your products or services. Facebook Pages are the business equivalent of a Facebook member's Timeline.

Facebook users can like your Facebook Page, find out about new products and promotions, post content on your Timeline (photos, videos, and links), send you private messages, and even converse with others in comments on your Page posts. You can also add branded custom tabs with various features to engage customers, capture email addresses, and even sell your products or services, such as the tab offered by Bordentown Guitar Rescue, a music store in New Jersey.

With all these features as well as exposure to thousands of potential customers, the Facebook Page has become a central tool in the marketing toolbox of thousands of brands.

Understanding the Differences among Pages, Timelines, and Groups

Facebook is using the wrong Facebook tool. Many starts by creating a Timeline, which is really intended for people to share personal information on Facebook. Or they start by creating a Group, which is intended for people to connect with one another on very specific goals and interests.

Each of these Facebook tools serves a very different purpose:

✓ Timelines: Timelines (otherwise known as Facebook Profiles) represent people. They allow Facebook users to connect with friends, upload and share videos and photos, and store their activities over time. If you use Facebook personally, you're using a Timeline.

✓ Pages: Pages represent businesses, brands, non-profit organizations, public figures, and celebrities. Pages allow you to create awareness of your product or service within the Facebook community, engage with customers and products, and even sell your products or services.

✓ Groups: Groups allow people (using Timelines) to organize around shared goals or topics of interest. People can join Groups; Pages can't.

Creating a Facebook Page from Scratch

Here are the steps for creating a Facebook Page (I recommend reading all the steps before you begin):

1. Go to www.facebook.com/pages/create.
2. Select the business type that best describes your business. You can choose among six types of Facebook Pages:
 - Local Business or Place: These Pages are meant for businesses that would benefit from a strong local market presence: a museum, a pizza shop, or a movie theatre.
 - Company, Organization, or Institution: These Pages are meant for large national businesses, which could include non-profit organizations and large companies. Apple and Dell are good business-to-consumer examples; Avaya and Oracle are good business-to-business examples.

- **Brand or Product:** These pages are meant for large brands. Think Starbucks and Coca-Cola.
- **Artist, Band, or Public Figure:** These Pages are good for politicians, artists, TV celebrities, or musical groups, such as Jimmy Kimmel, Barack Obama, and Lady Gaga.
- **Entertainment:** These Pages are meant for brands and companies in the entertainment industry, such as Broadway shows and cable TV networks.
- **Cause or Community:** Community Pages are intended for Facebook users who like a topic or experience and are owned collectively by the community connected to it. You can find an example of a Community Page at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Hugging/115576608453665>. Because you want to have administrative control of your business presence on Facebook, I don't recommend using a Community Page as a primary way to market on Facebook.

3. Type your business name in the Company Name field to secure your organization's name on Facebook. When you name your Page, it's much more difficult to change after you've acquired 100 fans. (After you have 100 fans, you can request a name change by clicking a "request change" link next to your page name on the basic information tab, but it's up to Facebook whether to grant the request). So choose a name that you want your fans and customers to associate with your business. In most cases, this name will be the name of your business. If you select a Local Business or Place, you also need to enter your address and phone number.

4. Select a category for your Page. Depending on the Page type you select, you have a variety of choices regarding your Page category. Choose a category based on how your customers think about your business rather than how you think about your business. A museum of science would choose Museum as its category even though its executive director might think of the museum as being a non-profit organization, which is another category choice. Choosing a customer-oriented category makes it easier for users to find your business on Facebook. Although you can always change the category of your Facebook Page, try to get it right from the

start. You can also request to change the name of your Page, but there's certainly no guarantee that Facebook will approve the request.

5. Click the Get Started button.

When you click Get Started, you automatically agree to the Facebook Pages Terms. Read the terms for Pages at https://www.facebook.com/page_guidelines.php.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is an American business and employment-oriented online service that operates via websites and mobile apps. Launched on May 5, 2003, the platform is mainly used for professional networking, and allows job seekers to post their CVs and employers to post jobs. As of 2015, most of the company's revenue came from selling access to information about its members to recruiters and sales professionals. Since December 2016, it has been a wholly owned subsidiary of Microsoft. As of June 2021, LinkedIn had 756 million registered members from 200 countries and territories.

LinkedIn allows members (both workers and employers) to create profiles and "connect" to each other in an online social network which may represent real-world professional relationships. Members can invite anyone (whether an existing member or not) to become a "connection".

Why is LinkedIn Marketing important?

According to LinkedIn's About Us section, it currently has more than 675 million members. This is a huge audience for any business. But what makes LinkedIn unique is that most of those who have signed up in LinkedIn are professionals. These are people who really want to know about the brand.

This feature of LinkedIn's users makes it easier for businesses to market their brands. Since most of the users are really interested in knowing about the business, marketers do not need to initiate any aggressive marketing strategies to gain leads as they do in other social media networks. In fact, one study by Econsultancy found that 64% of corporate website visits coming from social media links come from LinkedIn alone.

But it's not only about the number of dedicated users available in LinkedIn. LinkedIn has features- both paid and free, that can be used by business to generate leads, build relationships and deliver value. LinkedIn Analytics gives business free detailed data analysis of user visits to the business's official page. LinkedIn Pulse gives businesses the opportunity to post content both text and videos, And InMail feature helps businesses build relationships with potential customers.

LinkedIn Analytics, Pulse and InMail are few of the many features of LinkedIn that marketers can use for their business. This blog post will provide you with information on a bunch more tools and features.

Considering the user base and the features available, LinkedIn is undoubtedly important and useful for any marketer to brand their business. So if you are convinced about the importance of LinkedIn marketing for your business, read more below on how to develop a LinkedIn marketing strategy.

How to start LinkedIn Marketing for your business?

Having understood the effectiveness, let's start making a LinkedIn marketing plan for your business. Before planning, make sure you have a LinkedIn account yourself. Then follow these steps to market your business through LinkedIn.

1. Define your company goals

The age old maxim "Know Thyself" of Socrates applies even in 2020 when you create a marketing plan for LinkedIn. You need to define your company goals and objectives first. Defining your company goals and objectives is what will guide you in marketing your business. As you will see in the next sections, you need to provide details, post content and build connections as part of your marketing. For this, your goals and objectives will be your reference. So begin your plan by first defining your company goals and objectives.

2. Create your company profile through LinkedIn Pages

After setting out your company goals and objectives, your task will be to create a company profile for your business. To do this, go to the LinkedIn Pages section available at LinkedIn Marketing Solutions. You will find a button for creating a LinkedIn profile for your company. Fill out the next page by entering the name of your business as well as providing a LinkedIn Public URL. The URL will help users to find out your company's profile easily. Make sure the LinkedIn URL is simple yet unique.

3. Fill out the details of your profile

Having created a profile of your business, it is now time for you to fill out the details of the profile. Head out to the Overview section of your company profile. Then fill out the details. A complete Company Profile must have the following details filled out-

- Logo
- Company Description
- Company website
- Industry

- Company Size
- Headquarters
- Company Type
- Founded
- Specialities

3. Best LinkedIn Marketing Strategies

Even if LinkedIn doesn't need the aggressive marketing strategies that other social media networks require, you still need to be active on this network. This is because you will still need to engage with the users here. So, you cannot claim your LinkedIn Marketing is done after creating your business profile. The best strategies are:

a. Optimize your search

There are plenty of companies out there having their profile on LinkedIn. Some might be

in the same industry as yours. So it is necessary for you to optimize your search so that users can search your business easily. To optimize your search, use the following steps:

- Step-1: Use SEO keywords tools to find out keywords users use in searching for related businesses.
- Step-2: Use those keywords in the Company Description section of the company profile. This way, Google can show your business's LinkedIn Profile at the top of searches.
- Step-3: Link your LinkedIn profile to your company website. This way, users will engage with your company website as well.

b. Regularly creating engaging content

The best way to engage users in LinkedIn is to create content regularly. By creating content, users will be able to view, comment and share them. This will drive awareness of your business. Moreover, Google often ranks profiles based on their activities- a

company that does not regularly maintain activities are often ranked down.

LinkedIn has features that give you the opportunity to post content. When you want to post, you will see there are options to post articles, videos and images. This is much like Facebook except LinkedIn has the option to post articles.

However, unlike Facebook, you should not use LinkedIn to post articles about your products or services. According to LinkedIn Marketing Solutions, LinkedIn users find articles on new ideas engaging. These ideas are mainly based on thought how does your company solve problems? So, if you wish to create engaging content, create content on thought leadership and engagement will follow.

You can also post content published by other companies as well. This is often a good strategy as it showcases your brand's humility. If you can't find new content, you can share your old ones again to drive further engagement.

c. Add and maintain connections

The more followers you have, the more you will appear on user's searches and on their suggestions. So try to add more followers to your LinkedIn profile. The easiest way to add followers is through your employees. Encourage your employees to follow your company profile. And if they engage with your content, their connections will also be aware of your profile. In this way, you can increase your number of followers. Another way to add followers is to promote your profile. You can promote your company profile on your website with a follow button. You can highlight your company's LinkedIn profile on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other networks. You can also encourage your customers to follow through your newsletters and emails.

d. Tools to enhance your business LinkedIn Marketing Strategy

Fortunately, LinkedIn provides marketing tools for businesses that can help them generate insights and develop strategies. Some of them like LinkedIn Analytics are free whereas others such as InMail are paid. Here are three LinkedIn Marketing Tools that you can use for your business's marketing.

i. Message Ads for personalized connections

Message Ads (formerly Sponsored InMail) is a paid marketing tool of LinkedIn that you can use to send personalized messages to people outside your connections. This tool can be useful to reach prospective customers and to generate leads. Utah State University used LinkedIn's Sponsored InMail in order to attract better candidates. It delivered messages to regional professionals about its MBA and MSc programs through the tool. The initiative led to an ROI of 20:1 and conversion rates of 70%.

ii. Advertising to increase reach

LinkedIn provides a wide array of advertising solutions for your business. This ranges from Sponsored Content to Text Ads and from Dynamic Ads to Message Ads. All these options give you the chance to optimize your advertisement on this professional network.

Moreover, there are various options plans available. Moreover, you can also control your costs. To advertise, you just need a credit card and bid for space.

iii. LinkedIn Analytics for data driven results

LinkedIn Analytics is a free tool that enables you to look at your company's post, campaigns and advertisements performances over time. Using metrics like leads, click rates, views etc., you can measure the ROI of your marketing efforts on LinkedIn. Moreover, LinkedIn campaign demographics help you to understand the audience of your advertisements.

e. Additional features your business can use for LinkedIn Marketing

If you are not satisfied with the wide range of marketing tools LinkedIn offers, there are more. There are some features of LinkedIn which you can use for further marketing your business. Here are two important of those features- Groups and the Marketing Solutions Blog.

i. LinkedIn Groups for more connections

LinkedIn Groups help people with interests in similar topics to meet and communicate. This is an excellent way for your company to meet your target users and build connections with them. Post content on such LinkedIn Groups which your business deals with. This way, you develop connections as well as develop a reputation for expertise.

ii. LinkedIn Marketing Solutions Blog for staying up-to-date

LinkedIn Marketing Solutions Blog contains information on the latest trends on marketing on LinkedIn. If you subscribe to their newsletter, you will receive updates every day. The blog is written by LinkedIn Editors- so you will know that what they post is credible and based on insights on their huge user base.

LinkedIn Marketing provides lucrative opportunities for your business to market your brand. Its tools and features are undoubtedly very helpful. So if you want to improve your business's marketing in 2020, LinkedIn is your solution.

Pinterest

Pinterest is an American image sharing and media service designed to enable saving and discovery of information on the internet using images and, on a smaller scale, animated GIFs and videos, in the form of pinboards. The site was created by Ben Silbermann, Paul Sciarra, and Evan Sharp and had over 400 million monthly active users as of August 2020. It is operated by Pinterest, Inc., based in San Francisco.

Why Pinterest Matter?

Any business that relies on driving a high-volume of website traffic to increase sales, should consider joining Pinterest. In fact, early research indicates that Pinterest is more effective at driving traffic compared to other social media sites, even Facebook.

In October, the website of Time Inc.'s Real Simple magazine got more traffic from Pinterest than Facebook.

Eye glass retailer Warbly Parker reports that 11% of their social traffic is coming from Pinterest compared to 18% from Twitter.

After blogger Kate Bryan started pinning her work, she has had more than 10 million page views and has attracted 16,000 blog subscribers.

How to build your Pinterest following?

Once you get started, you'll want to create a few pin boards before you start trying to build your Pinterest following. Just like any social network, building reach via a follower base is key to long term sustainability for that network as a traffic and lead source.

This way, new followers will have a reason to follow your pins; it's the same reason why you would populate a brand new blog with a few posts before you start promoting it.

However, Pinterest functions a little differently than the typical" follower world" we know in Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. For example, on Pinterest, there are two 'follower options' a user

can take when someone likes a piece of content he or she found. A person can follow a specific board by a Pinterest user or a user's account. What's the difference?

When following a board you only will be notified (via your stream) when a user pins a new piece of content to that board. When following a user, you will be notified every time a user pins content to any of his or her boards.

Pinterest for Your Business

Pinterest is used by many businesses – but also ignored by many as well. By not taking advantage of what Pinterest has to offer in terms of marketing for brands, you're missing out on some tremendous opportunities.

Because marketers are always in the hunt to know where the attention is, they often tend to look at the number of users across the various social media platforms and choose the ones with the highest numbers.

Pinterest allows you to optimize your pins and include tags to attract users with keywords. You can track Pinterest traffic in Google Analytics, and you can also track the number of repins from other users also.

There are a variety of ways that Pinterest can benefit your business:

- a. Drive Traffic to Your Site:** Pinterest is a great way to drive traffic to your site. As long as your site contains high quality, interesting images, people will want to pin them. These pins or recommendations will ensure larger numbers of people see your pins and can be directed back to your site with minimum fuss.
- b. Boost Your Keyword Strategy:** Get found for the phrases that matter to your business. Pinterest boards and profiles are indexed by Google which means that you can optimize your boards with specific keywords to help you appear in the search results.
- c. Identify Pins that Convert:** Google Analytics allows you to identify which pins convert into sales. In doing so, you will get a better feel for the types of images your target market is likely to pin and the products they will be interested in purchasing.

d. Encourage Natural Links: Content assets are a great way to encourage natural links to your site. However, if people do not know they are there or cannot find them through traditional search methods, it may be wise to pin things like infographics on Pinterest. This will enable your target market to find your content assets and pass them on quickly to other people, making them highly visible in a short space of time.