



Developing an Effective Social Media Strategy

Many businesses find creating a social media strategy overwhelming. There are so many networks available, and they're constantly adding new features to learn and integrate into your plan.

If you don't have a full-time team of social media experts at your disposal, it's even harder. But the fact is that your success depends on having a sensible and straightforward strategy that fits your resources and goals.

This tutorial will help develop a social media strategy that will drive traffic and quell that overwhelming feeling you get whenever you open Instagram or Twitter. Lets get started!

What is social media strategy

A social media strategy is an outline of the content that your business will post, the responsibilities of your social media team, and the social media channels you will use to promote your business. A social media strategy includes social media goals that complement your business' overall digital marketing strategy.

Your social media strategy is your master plan for how you create, post, and engage with your social media content. It encompasses your social content guidelines, posting cadence, social media marketing campaigns, creative plans, and **engagement strategy**.

Many companies use social media to connect with their customers, provide support, advertise new products and features, and promote special offers.

Social media strategies differ depending on the brand's voice and positioning, target audience demographics, and social media platform limitations. When you develop your business' social media strategy, considering these factors will help your message reach the right audiences in the right format.





For example, **T-Mobile**'s social media team capitalized on the Mother's Day holiday to promote their T-Mobile Tuesdays app. The tweet uses humor to gain users' attention and includes a timely promotion to appeal to Twitter users who haven't bought a gift for Mother's Day.

Why you need social media strategy

The **top three challenges** that social media marketers face include reaching their audience, measuring ROI, and reaching business goals.

Crafting a social media strategy can help you tackle these challenges and more. Social media strategies also equip you to set goals and guardrails, track performance, and tweak your benchmarks over time. Without a starting point, you can't measure what's working and how to shift your activity to hit your goals.

Creating a strategy:

- A social media strategy establishes clear expectations and goals for your business' social media marketing efforts. Whether you aim to increase brand awareness, create buzz around a promotional event, or launch a **rebranding campaign** for your business, a social media strategy provides a blueprint that your team can follow to keep your marketing consistent, on task, and relevant to your target audience.
- It's not enough to simply have a goal for your business' social media marketing; you also need to keep track of how you are progressing toward the goal. A social media strategy establishes **key performance indicators** that you can analyze to monitor your business' progress toward its social media goals.
- **Benchmarking** your social media marketing strategy allows you to track social media metrics and analyze your business' current social media performance compared to industry standards, your competitors' performance, and your past performance. Evaluating your performance against benchmarks helps you determine elements of your social media marketing that need improvement to reach your marketing goals.

A social media strategy also helps you set expectations for broader team involvement and get everyone aligned on what they should and shouldn't do on your social networks.



How to create a social media strategy

1. *Define your target audience.*
2. *Start blogging.*
3. *Create educational content.*
4. *Focus on a few key channels.*
5. *Develop a recipe card to guide you.*
6. *Measure your results.*
7. *Adjust your tactics.*

Let's unpack how to start building a social media strategy from scratch.

Define your target audience

If you haven't already identified and documented your **buyer personas**, start by defining the key demographics of the audience you're trying to reach, such as age, gender, occupation, income, hobbies and interests, etc.

Defining your target audience helps you create focused advertising that addresses your ideal consumer's specific needs.

For instance, the below sponsored tweet by **monday.com**, a project management platform, highlights the platform's flexibility and workflow customization feature. The tweet targets business owners and project managers who may feel limited by other project management software.

Consider your ideal consumer's challenges and what problems they're solving daily. Focus on no more than four types of people that represent the majority of your buyers. Don't get hung up on the exceptions or outliers, or you'll never get started!

Start blogging

Fresh content is the linchpin of a successful social strategy, so commit to consistently creating new, quality content. Compile a list of common questions from prospects and commit to addressing these questions with at least one new blog post per week.

Combining your blogging and social media strategies can help your content reach a larger audience. For example,

SellersFundingCorp
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Running a successful store isn't just about pulling in sales. You need healthy cash flow and flexible capital to expand your operations and prepare your business for long-term success. Read our latest blog for more: bit.ly/3LvM78k

Sellers Funding

3 Agile Ecommerce Brands that Boosted Cash Flow in a Crunch

12:52 PM · Apr 28, 2022 · Sprout Social



you can create a social media post that includes a tip for your followers and a link to a blog post that expands upon the post. The social media post will drive traffic to your blog, making it easy for readers to share the blog post with their followers and expand the blog's reach.

The above tweet by [SellersFunding](#) highlights the main points discussed in the linked blog post. The tweet provides enough detail to pique the reader's interest and convince them to read the full blog post.

Create educational content

Create downloadable content like eBooks, checklists, videos, and infographics that address your buyer's pains. If your content is beneficial, people will likely share it on social media and extend your reach.

Focus on few key social channels

Most startups and small businesses don't have the bandwidth to establish and sustain a quality social media presence on every single channel. It's also overwhelming to learn the rules of engagement on multiple networks simultaneously.

Start small. Research key networks to learn where your target audience is spending time. For instance, if your ideal consumers are business professionals, it may be beneficial to post on LinkedIn rather than Instagram.

Focus your effort on building, nurturing, and sustaining a community on the social channels where your target audience spends most of their time before moving on to another channel.

Develop a recipe card to guide you

Social media isn't an exact science. It doesn't work the same for every business or industry. To see results for your business, create a recipe card. A recipe card is a posting and engagement schedule that keeps your team on track and helps you post content consistently.

Develop a reasonable recipe card, one you can stick to and get your team to follow. Set goals for your posting and engagement frequency and hold yourself accountable for following your recipe.

Measure results

There are countless things to track on your social media channels. Start by looking at how much traffic your social accounts drive to your website or blog.

Social media platforms offer tools to help businesses track analytics. For example, you can use [Facebook's Page Insights](#), [Instagram's Account Insights](#), and [LinkedIn's Visitor Analytics](#) to see what people are responding to and look for trends related to particular



topics or keywords that generate more interest than others. Once you get an idea of your average traffic and post-performance, set goals for key metrics, and keep a scorecard to measure your progress.

Be sure to choose metrics that are easy to gather, because if it's too time-consuming to track, you'll fall off the wagon! Examples of simple metrics include net new fans and followers, number of interactions, and visits to your website from social.

Monitor and adjust your tactics

Social media won't start working overnight. Establishing a following, stabilizing your brand, and seeing the results of your efforts takes time. So experiment to find the right combination of channels, content, and messaging that works for your audience.

Keep track of changes in your post views, audience demographics, and post interactions, and make changes as needed.

Over time, you'll be able to adjust your recipe card, content, and personas based on the information you're gathering, which will help you fine-tune your strategy and generate more consistent results.

Social media marketing strategy

Social media is a multipurpose business asset. It connects you with your audience and promotes your products, services, and brand. Both functions are equally important.

Building a social media strategy for marketing is different from the process we discussed above. How so? For example, your benchmarks and goals may be more specific to metrics you track for other marketing efforts.

When using social media to market your business, ensure the experience on your social networks is positive and consistent. All imagery and content on your social media accounts should be consistent with those on your website, blog, and any other digital real estate.

Pay close attention to any questions or comments your audience posts, and be quick to address them, as that engagement could make or break a conversion or purchase.

Take a look at these examples of what to stop, start, and keep doing to help your business' social media marketing succeed.

Lastly, align the content you post and how you post it with marketing campaigns you're running on other channels (e.g., email or ads).

Social media content strategy

Content is the crux of any social media strategy. Without content, you can't engage with your audience, promote your products, or measure performance.

The fleeting nature of social media may lead you to believe that you don't have to plan its content as much as you do for your emails or blogs. That's not true. Social media content may



not be as static as your landing pages or blog content, but it's still equally important for engaging your audience and representing your brand as a whole.

For that reason, you should also have a social media content strategy. This should include:

- Posting guidelines and specs for each network on which you're active
share GIFs on Twitter but avoid them on Facebook
- Determining the target audience nuances per network
The younger segment of your audience is more active on Instagram than on LinkedIn
- Repurposing plans for long-form content from your blog, podcast, e-books, etc.
- Identifying who on your team is allowed to post, and who's responsible for engaging followers
- Naming the companies, publications, and individuals you'll repost (and those who you won't/can't)

Social media is overwhelming; I get it. Starting your strategy from scratch is even more overwhelming. Use the attached social media templates to help you.

Time to get social

Do you still feel like social media is overwhelming? That's okay. Although I'm not sure that feeling ever fully fades, you can diminish it by leveraging the tips in this guide and the free templates above. Remember: Tackle one social network at a time, prioritize your audience, and focus on the content that works. You'll see results and traffic in no time.