



Why Social Media Marketing?

10 ways social media can help grow your business

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BEST PRACTICES GUIDE | SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING



Why Social Media Marketing?

If you're a business owner, chances are you've already considered using social media to help get the word out about your business.

You're not alone. Over 73% of small business owners are now using sites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Pinterest to help grow their businesses. And if you are still standing on the social sidelines, there's never been a better time to get started.

Why? Quite simply, because it works.

In Constant Contact's Spring 2011 Attitudes and Outlooks Survey, 95% of small business owners reported that not only were they using Facebook to market their business, but 82% of those people found it to be effective. Perhaps that's why, in that same survey, 81% of those currently using social media marketing to connect with customers, members, and prospects, said they expect to increase their efforts in the coming year.

But while that's all well and good, you're probably still wondering what social media can actually do for your small business. That's exactly what this guide is meant to answer.

Here are 10 reasons why social media marketing could be right for your business.

73%
of small business
owners now use
social media to
power their brand



Why Social Media Marketing?

1

Social media does help get the word out

First and foremost—social media does in fact help get the word out about your business.

But even more important than the exposure it provides your organization is the opportunity it provides to grow the relationships with that target audience. Your Facebook Fans, Twitter followers, and LinkedIn connections are people who know your organization, have likely done business with you in the past, and will be most likely to tell their friends about you.

Social media allows you to strengthen relationships with these connections through social engagement. And because that engagement is easily visible to the connections of your current fans and followers, social media can introduce your business to a whole new audience and enable you to reach your next great customer.

2

Social media is popular—really, really, popular

You don't need to be a dedicated reader of tech blogs or an expert in online marketing to know that social media is really popular among consumers. With over 1 billion (yes, 1 billion) people on Facebook, 200 million people on Twitter, and 200 million more on LinkedIn—social media will touch nearly every customer that walks through your door.

For most small businesses, Facebook is the jumping-off point for getting started with social media marketing. With its extensive reach and dynamic functionality—there are very few businesses that couldn't benefit from having a presence on Facebook. And starting there will make it easier when you want to try something new.

Use email marketing to reach existing customers' inboxes, and social media to extend your reach.



There are now
more than
1 billion
Facebook users
worldwide.



3

Social media sites are free

There's no catch—getting started on social media is completely free. Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and LinkedIn all offer free accounts to users and businesses and signing up won't require anything more than an email address. Some sites—like LinkedIn—do offer paid accounts with features that are targeted at more advanced users, but for the purposes of getting started, there's no upfront cost for most of the social networks.

4

Social media reaches all ages and demographics

Social media has really broken down all of the age barriers that once accompanied the ways people thought about social media. In fact, according to a 2011 study conducted by IBM, Baby Boomers have demonstrated the most growth on social media sites. In 2010, 72% were using Facebook, Twitter, and other networks — up from 50% in 2009. So, no matter how young or how old your target audience may be, chances are most of them are already logging on and waiting for you to get started.

5

Social media users are active

One thing you have to know about social media users is that when they say they are on social media, they are really on social media. When it comes to Facebook, more than half of its users log on to the network every single day and 60 percent of those users say checking Facebook is one of the first things they do every day. This level of activity isn't unique to Facebook either, today more than 400 million tweets are sent on Twitter each day. While a customer may visit your store once a week—they could see you on Facebook or Twitter every single day.

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Social media encourages two-way communication.

There is no marketing tool available to small businesses today, that provides the type of two-way communication that comes with using social media. It has the power to take any of the feedback you may receive from using a tool like email marketing and supercharge it—letting customers share their thoughts, questions, and ideas quickly and publicly without having to take the time to write an entire email. And it allows you to respond just as fast, without having to pick up the phone or worry the customer isn't seeing your response.

7

Social media is perfect for customer service

Providing stellar customer service is likely already a top priority for your small business. But along with the two-way communication that social media provides, it also offers a unique opportunity to step up your customer service game and provide instant gratification to your target audience.

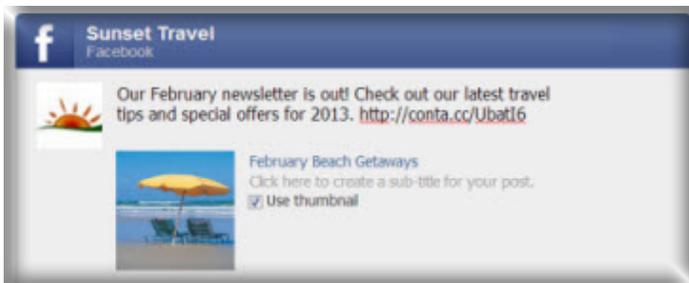
This will allow you to showcase just how much you care about providing a memorable experience and will ensure that no customer inquiry goes unnoticed. And by monitoring social media for customer feedback and offering a response, you can drive real business results. According to a 2011 InboxQ survey, 64% of respondents said they would be more likely to shop with a business after receiving a response via Twitter.

Customer service through social media is quickly becoming an expectation of consumers. If customers are already searching for you on Facebook or Twitter and not finding your business—you may already be missing opportunities to win new customers.

Twitter users send more than **400 million** tweets every day.



Sharing your
email
newsletter
across your
social networks
can open your
content up to
a whole
new audience.



8

Social media lets you share A LOT about your business

Social media sites are becoming the go-to place for consumers who want to learn more about a business. That's because these sites allow businesses to offer the most up-to-date information about anything from products, services, or upcoming events.

Also, much of your activity and profiles on social media sites can be made "public," meaning they can be indexed by search engines — one more way to make sure your business or organization comes up as the answer when someone is searching for a local solution to a problem.

9

Social media can make a big difference for your email marketing

Social media has completely changed the game when it comes to how small businesses think of email marketing. Sharing your email newsletter across your social networks can open your content up to a whole new audience and finally generate the type of buzz you've been looking for. Not only that, but you can also use sites like Facebook to attract more readers by including a "Join My Mailing List" form right on your Page.

Together, these two powerful tools have reshaped the marketing landscape and have really leveled the playing field for small businesses trying to better connect with current customers and reach new audiences for their business.

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Social media is everywhere.

Today, more than half of all Americans are smartphone users and more and more businesses are offering mobile-friendly experiences. The benefit of the increased presence of mobile activity in our daily lives is huge for small businesses. Every major social network (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, etc.) offer free mobile apps that let business owner manage their presence on-the-go.

More importantly, these apps let customers connect to their favorite sites wherever they are. For a site like Twitter, 60% of its entire userbase is connected via their smartphones, tablets, or other mobile devices. These users aren't just sharing updates from their own lives, they're searching for businesses, products, and services, and connecting with brands through their social channels.

If your business is running late when it comes to making your content "mobile-friendly," social media can be an easy and cost-effective first step to marketing in the digital age. Plus, it can improve the chances of your business getting found when someone is searching for a place to eat or a product to buy, while on-the-go.

60%
of Twitter users
connect to the
site via a mobile
device



Why Social Media Marketing?

These are just 10 of the many reasons why social media marketing is a worthwhile investment.

So what do you think? Don't you think it's time you get off the bench and join the millions of business owners that are already growing their organization with social media marketing?

It won't cost you a dime to get started and you'll have plenty of time to decide which networks are right for your business.

Plus, we'll be here to help you every step of the way, with step-by-step instructions on setting up your business on any of the major social networks, and plenty of practical advice to help you.



Get the help you need!

Check out our free online resource, **The Social Media Quickstarter** which will walk you through setting up your business on any major social media sites.

Or visit the **Constant Contact Blog** to learn best practices to help you supercharge your online marketing efforts.

Already on Twitter? Share this guide will your followers today!

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and shared by your
audience fast.



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way and find your
next great customer.



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