

2013

TUNE UP *your* SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

The Do's and Don'ts for Success





Written by:

Dave Sotolotto

Inbound Marketer

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Boost your brand visibility & prove your expertise.



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Over the past decade, there has been a dramatic shift in consumer behavior.



Shift

Consumer purchase decisions have become even more involved than when people first began comparing prices online. Rather than being strictly price conscious, consumers are now looking to purchase the brands that they can connect with on a deeper level.

Social media sites have opened communication channels that allow customers to become more involved with the companies that they purchase from. This two way communication is becoming the standard in business rather than being considered “going the extra mile.” Traditional outbound methods of communication are becoming less effective as consumers seek to become more involved with the brands they love.

While marketing to your customers through social media is an excellent way to drive web traffic and create leads, it is not a simple formula. You cannot just set up an account, periodically dump content that relates to your business, and expect success. Mastering social media marketing is an art form, and it will require a different technique for every business.

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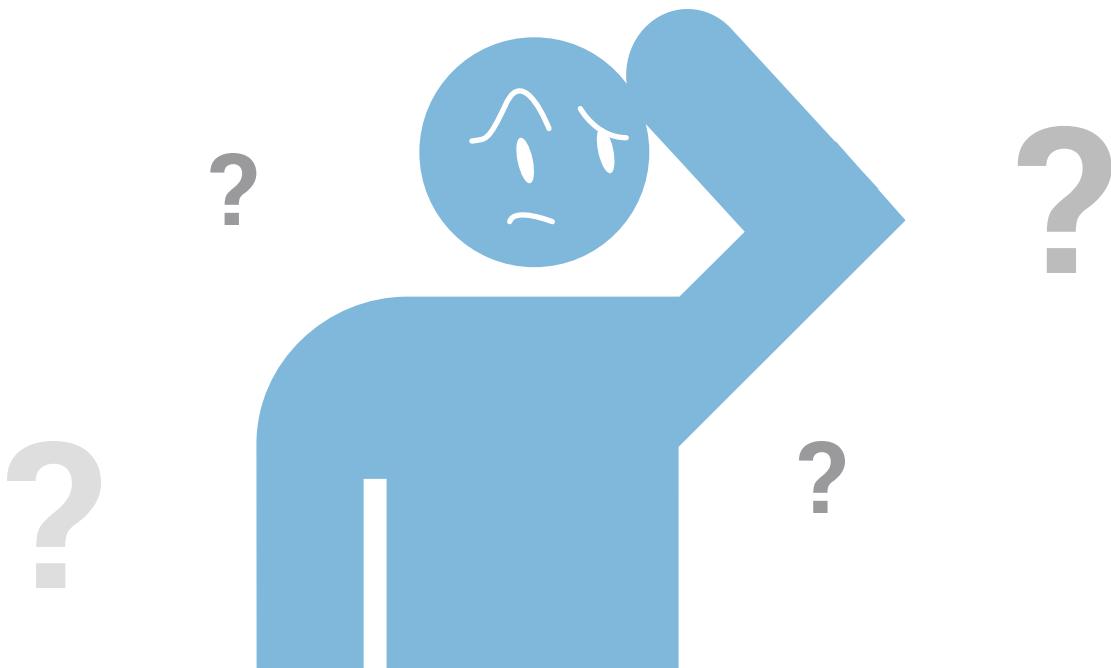
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HOW SOCIAL MEDIA CAN BENEFIT YOUR BUSINESS



If you're just beginning to research social media marketing, you may be shaking your head and wondering [why you should even bother](#).

Will all of the time and effort that you put into these campaigns actually generate revenue and impact your bottom line?

The short answer is yes; but it runs much deeper than that. Social media has been proven to increase sales for small businesses and giant corporations alike, and it is not too late to get into the game. Social platforms allow your current customers and potential customers to learn about, and truly connect with, your brand. It is a basic need of human beings to desire the feeling of belonging. When your business is utilizing social media effectively, your customer base will begin to believe that you are actually listening to their feedback, and that you value their input. This develops consumer trust and also positions your company as an industry thought leader.

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So the concept sounds great, but are there any concrete statistics that prove this idea?

It may seem shocking but there are [hundreds of statistics from all over the web](#) that provide statistical data backing social media marketing. Perhaps some of the following statistics will assure you that proceeding with social channels is the right decision.

Business Driven Through Social Media:

- Social media and blogs reach about 80% of all active U.S. Internet users (of which there are 245 million) (Nielsen)
- 91% of experienced social marketers see improved website traffic due to social media campaigns, and 79% are generating more quality leads (The Social Skinny)
- 43% of all online consumers are social media fans or followers (Harp Social)
- 20% of Facebook users have purchased something because of ads or comments they saw there (Ipsos)
- 67% of Twitter users are more likely to buy brands that they follow (iModerate Research Technologies)
- B2B businesses experience a 61% success rate in customer acquisition using LinkedIn (HubSpot)

These are only a few recent statistics, but there are [plenty more](#). As businesses adapt to what consumers want on social media platforms, these statistics will continue to improve.

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Next stop:

LinkedIn

Before you jump onboard the social media marketing train and start creating accounts with every major platform, it is best to understand which platforms are best for your unique business's needs.

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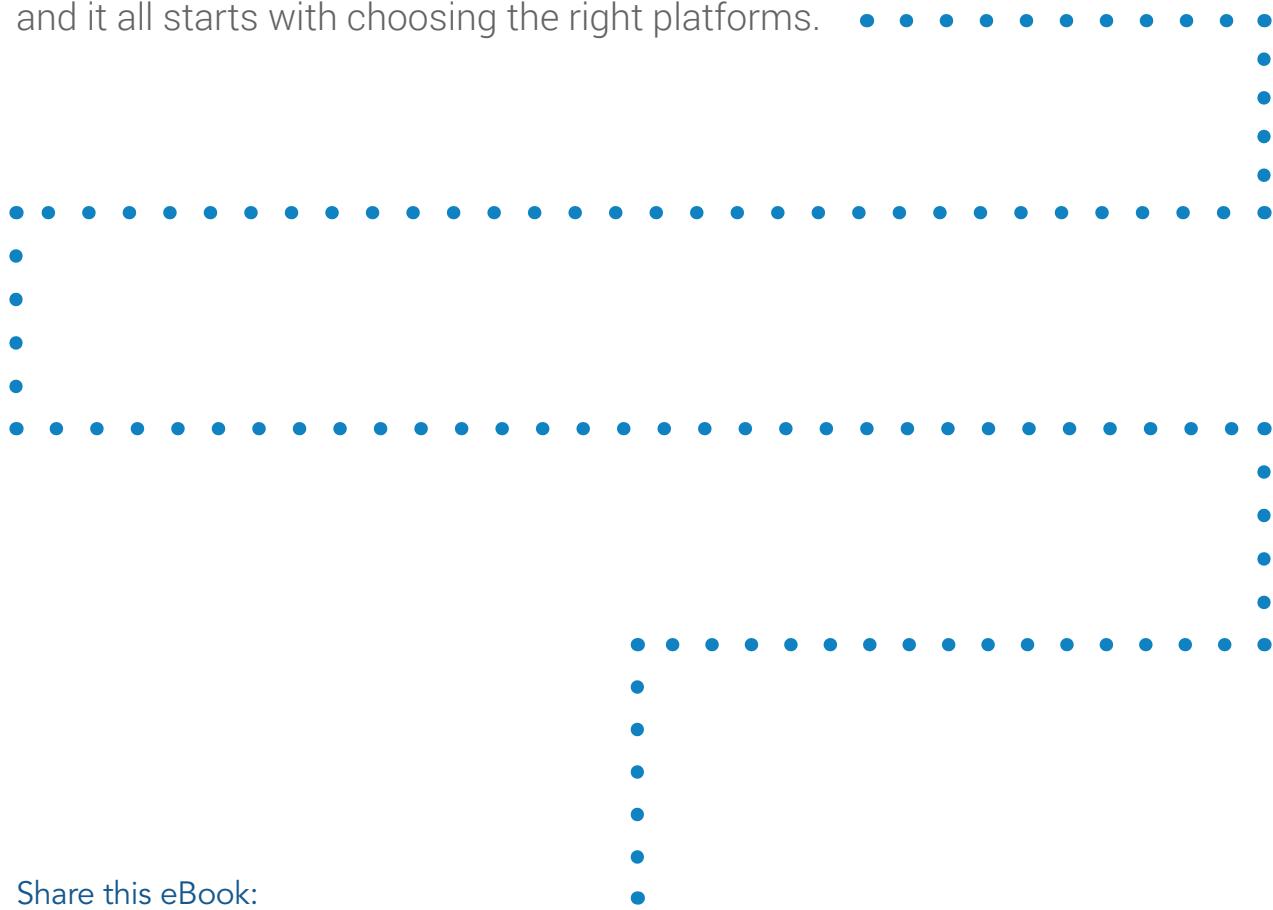
HOW TO CHOOSE WHICH PLATFORMS ARE RIGHT FOR YOUR COMPANY

As previously mentioned, social media is not a “field of dreams approach.” Just because you build it does not necessarily mean that the customers will come.

How Do I Know Which Social Media Sites Are Right for Me?

- What are your social media goals?
 - Which social media platforms are your targets using the most?
 - How many resources (employees, time, etc.) do you have available to dedicate to social media?
 - What type of content (text, images, videos) are you prepared to share regularly?

Without considering any of the above, you might as well be throwing darts in the dark. Every aspect of social media marketing needs to [have direction](#), and it all starts with choosing the right platforms. • • • • • • • • • •



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Before you begin your decision making process, you must be sure that you have well defined goals for your social media campaign.

Ask yourself what you are ultimately looking to accomplish through social media. Are you a new business attempting to build brand awareness, or are you a well-established business looking to build and/or strengthen your market share?

The key to choosing the right outlet is to go to where your customers are, rather than hoping that they will migrate to a different channel. This will require some research into the specific segments that your business is seeking to reach.

Once you know where your customers are, you will need to properly analyze the resources that you have available to pursue these platforms. Social media marketing should be an ongoing commitment rather than an afterthought.

Finally, make sure that your company is prepared to participate properly on the social media platform(s) of choice. You must respect the [etiquette of each social network](#). Otherwise you risk rejection from your targets.

Remember, the goal of social media marketing is not to shove your message down your customers' throats. It is an attempt to get your customers involved in, discussing, and sharing your content. So choose your platforms wisely, and once you are committed, be sure to follow these do's and don'ts of each network.

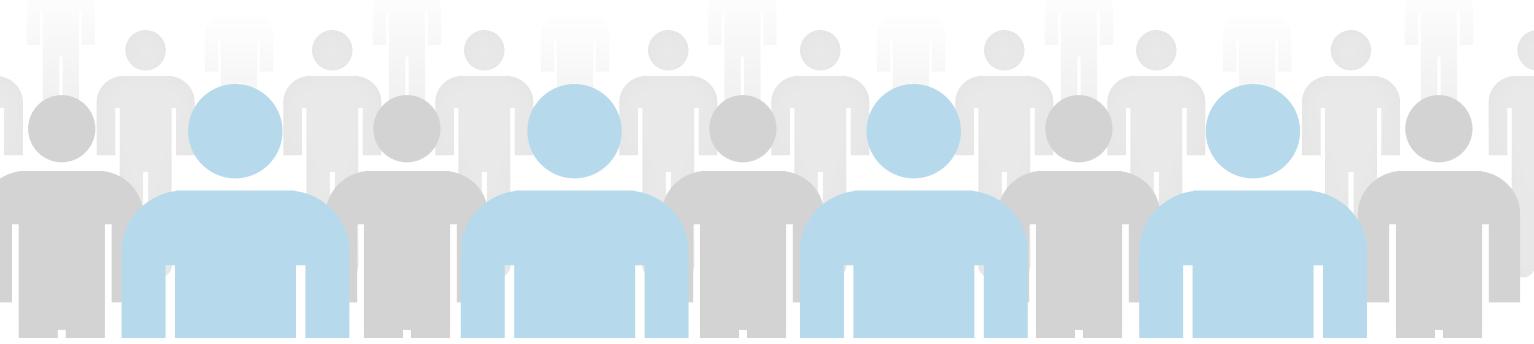
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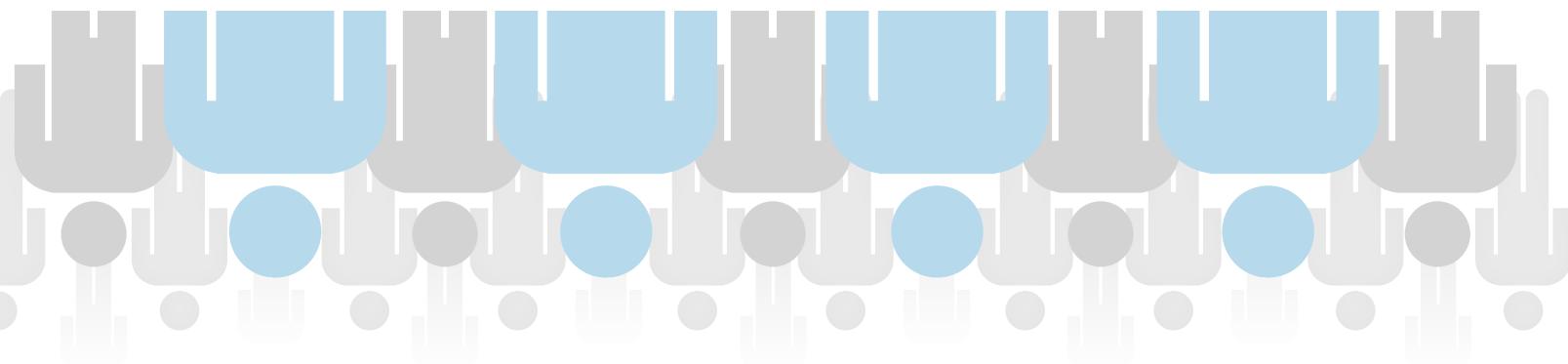


FACEBOOK

Facebook has over one billion active users and, according to HubSpot's 2011 State of Inbound Marketing Report, generates the most [B2C conversations among all social networks](#).



1,000,000,000



The odds are that your target market [will see your Facebook page](#) at some point in time, and you want to grab their attention and increase the frequency of their visits. Beyond that, you want those frequent visitors to become advocates of your company that will share your content with their friends, and potentially drive new leads to your business.

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Facebook helps you connect and share with the people in your life.



Email or Phone

Password

Keep me logged in

[Forgot your password?](#)

[Log In](#)

Sign Up

It's free and always will be.

First Name

Last Name

Your Email

Re-enter Email

New Password

Birthday:

Month: Day: Year:

[Why do I need to provide my birthday?](#)

Do's



Don'ts

Respond to customer comments, both positive and negative [READ MORE](#)

Post multiple times per day [READ MORE](#)

Share content that you are using to generate leads on your website [READ MORE](#)

Try to collect email addresses via a dedicated tab [READ MORE](#)

Use plug-ins to allow fans to like pages on your website directly [READ MORE](#)

Link to your landing page to generate leads [READ MORE](#)

Add interactive content such as discussion boards, a YouTube video box, etc. [READ MORE](#)

Remove or edit customer posts [READ MORE](#)

Come across as a salesman [READ MORE](#)

Be overly repetitive or spam posts [READ MORE](#)

Post infrequently [READ MORE](#)

Collect user information without consent [READ MORE](#)

Try to use a personal account to promote your business [READ MORE](#)



Do...

✓ Respond to customer comments, both positive and negative

People that “Like” your page and follow your business on Facebook tend to have a general interest in your company or the content that you post. When users comment on a post or write on your wall, try to recognize them. [Responding to comments](#) shows viewers that your company genuinely cares what its customers have to say, which creates a positive sentiment. The more connected your customers feel to the brand, the more likely they are to spread the word.

✓ Post multiple times per day

The concept is easy enough. [Posting quality content](#) on a regular basis will draw viewers to [your business's page](#) and keep them there. Don't spam posts for the sake of posting, but try a variety of content that relates to your business and its current events to see what your followers respond to.

Thursday

6:00am	- ✓
6:30am	-
7:00am	-
7:30am	-
8:00am	- ✓
8:30am	-
9:00am	- ✓
9:30am	-
10:00am	-
10:30am	- ✓
11:00am	-
11:30am	-
12:00pm	- ✓
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2:00pm	- ✓
2:30pm	-
3:00pm	- ✓
3:30pm	-

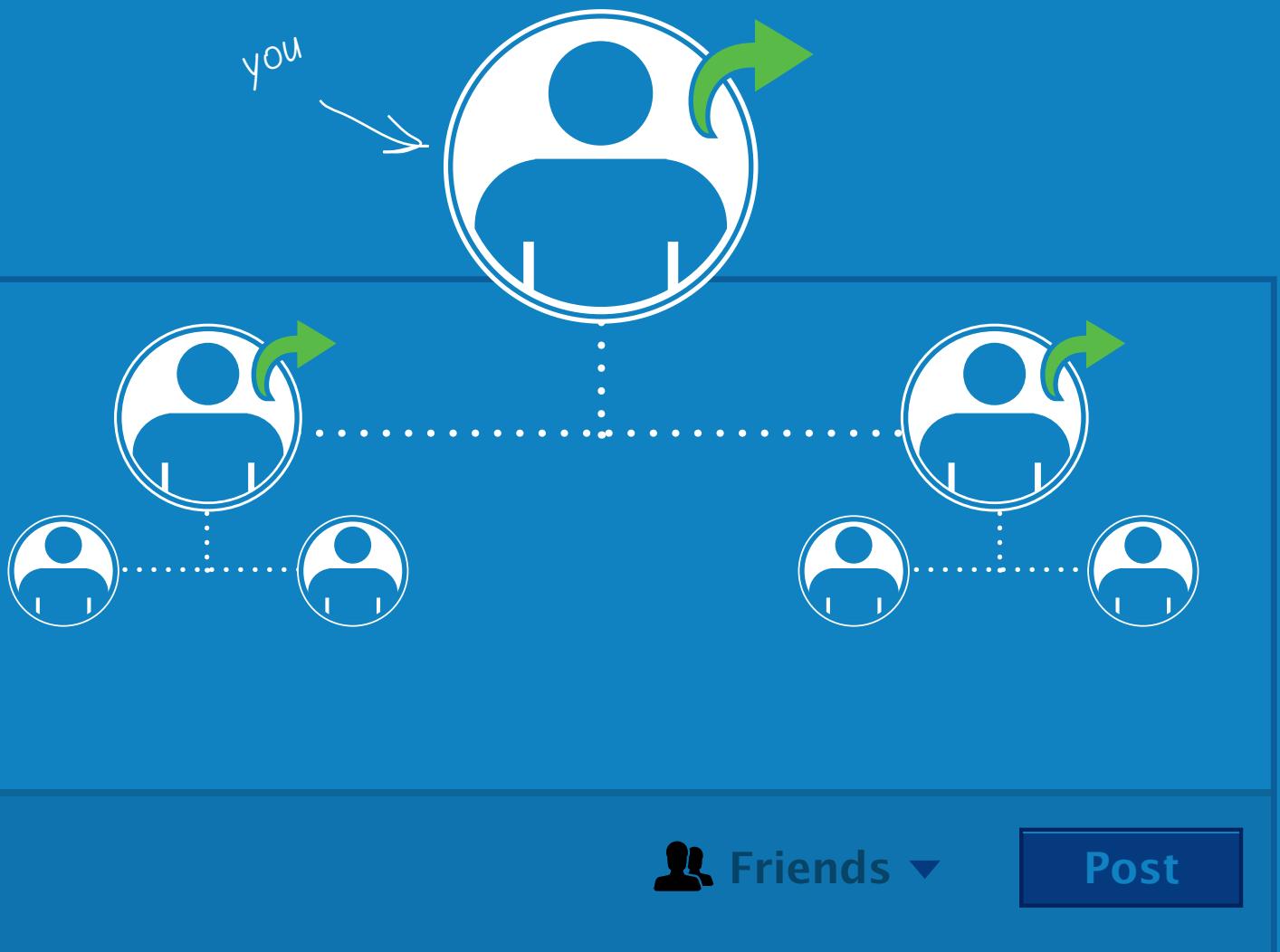
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✓ Share content that you are using to generate leads on your website

Facebook provides you with a great chance to promote content that you have generated on your company website. Feel free to link to your company blog when a new post goes live, and try linking some content to one of your landing pages. Use Facebook as an extension of your website to drive traffic back to your website and blog.





✓ Try to collect email addresses via a dedicated tab

In addition to posting content that links back to your website, try setting up dedicated tabs to collect contact information and direct customers to your CTA's. Have a section of your Facebook page that directs users to your premium content to collect information that you can use to generate leads.

✓ Use plug-ins to allow fans to like pages on your website directly

Allow customers to connect with your company on Facebook directly from your webpage. Just as you want Facebook to link customers to your website, you also want to drive customers to your Facebook page. Plug-ins that allow users to "Like" your page directly from the website will help drive customers to your Facebook page and create a closed loop.

✓ Link to your landing page to generate leads

Plain and simple, drive customers to take action. Tell the customers where to go with your content rather than letting them decide. By driving traffic to your landing pages, you are encouraging customers to access your premium content and thereby have the potential to generate quality leads.

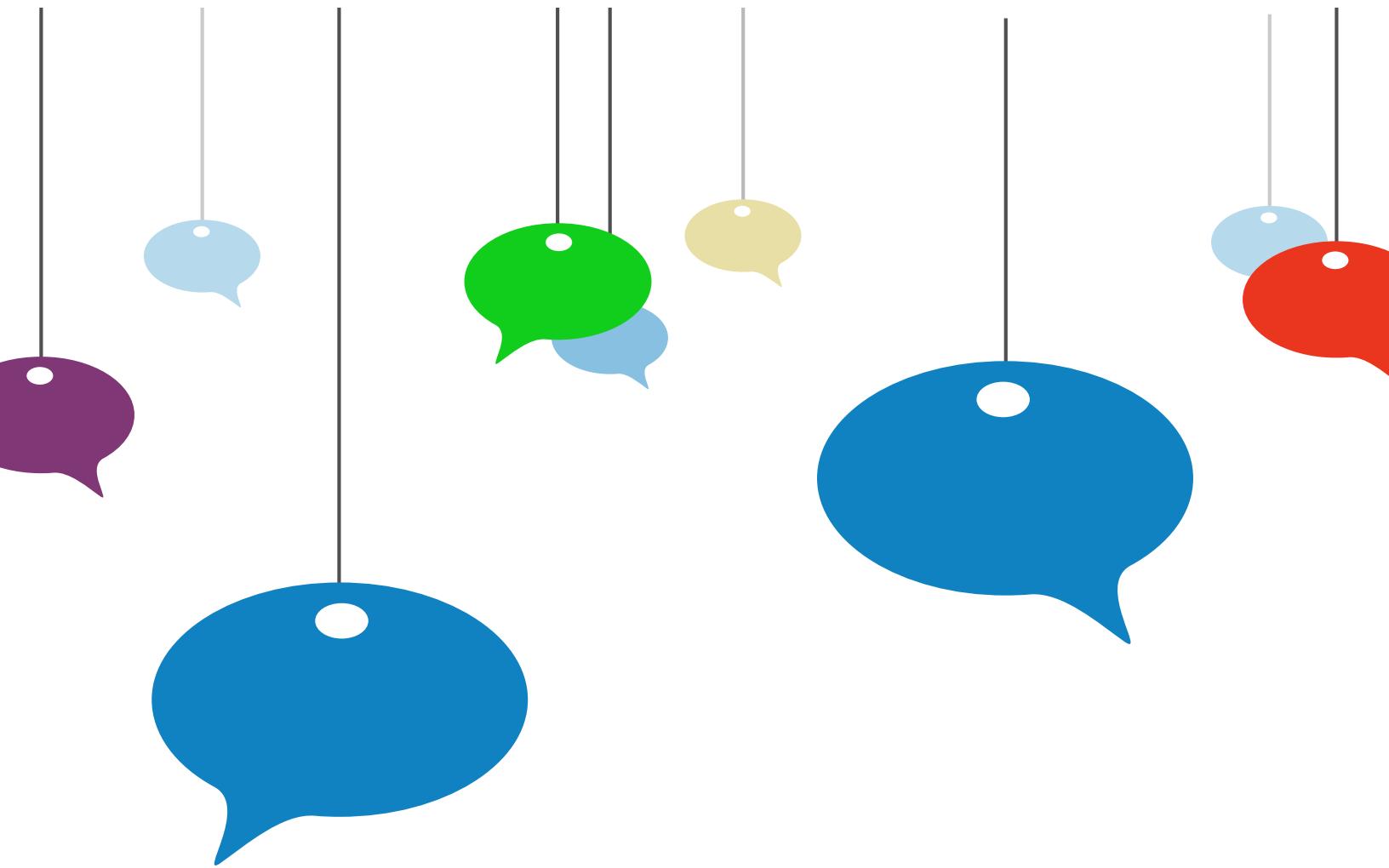
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✓ Add interactive content such as discussion boards...

Create an entertaining Facebook page. Simply posting day after day may be too bland for your followers. Let your customers and potential customers discuss your company or topics that relate to your business, and get involved in those discussions. Browse through apps and add-ons available on Facebook to see which could benefit your business.



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Don't...

✖ Remove or edit customer posts

Never get involved with editing or removing posts. Potential customers may see this as an attempt to avoid what may be considered an issue. Rather, try to be proactive and attempt to come across as a caring problem solver. Address the concern, and see if you can resolve whatever the issue is that lead to the negative comment. If you have a customer that is spamming negative comments, or “trolling” your page, you can block that user, but only use this as a last resort.

✖ Come across as a salesman

Facebook users understand that you want to promote your business, but don't want to feel like they are constantly being sold to. The goal is to promote your business without boring your customers. 52% of consumers say they have stopped following a brand on Facebook because the information posted had become “too repetitive and boring.” So try to find a happy medium between promotion and interest. Throw in some lighthearted or funny posts to mix things up and increase the potential of followers sharing your content with their friends. Just be sure not to abandon your social media campaign's goals by only posting humorous content.



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✖ Be overly repetitive or spam posts

Can't think of something to post? Don't post for the sake of posting or repost old blog articles. This is not to say that you cannot repeat links to your webpage; just spread them out and connect them to unique content. If you are really stuck, try a new angle. Link to an article that is relevant to your industry and connect it back to your company. Be creative, but be relevant and avoid spamming your customers.

A large graphic on a blue background featuring the word "HEY!" repeated multiple times in white. The words are arranged vertically, with some smaller "HEY!"s scattered around larger, more prominent ones. The largest "HEY!" is at the bottom center, tilted slightly, with "HEY?" written above it. There are also smaller "HEY!"s above and below the main large one, creating a sense of repetition and emphasis.



✖ Post infrequently

This may seem like a contradiction of the previous point, but don't come across as a passive company. Try to post somewhere between three and five times per day to keep your followers coming back for more. The goal is to find a happy medium in how much to post. See what your target audience responds to the most, and run with it.

✖ Collect user information without consent

It is understandable that you want to gather contact information to generate leads, but work [within the rules](#) of Facebook. Make sure that you have expressly stated that customers who fill out a certain form are giving you access to that information. Failure to do so could lead to you being banned.

✖ Try to use a personal account to promote your business

Sign your company up for a business account on Facebook. This will permit you to publish more content relating to your business and allow customers to connect with your business on an independent platform. Attempting to use a personal account will limit your ability to spread your message to a wider audience. Feel free to encourage your employees to use their personal accounts to "Like" and share content from your page, but establish your business as its own entity on Facebook.

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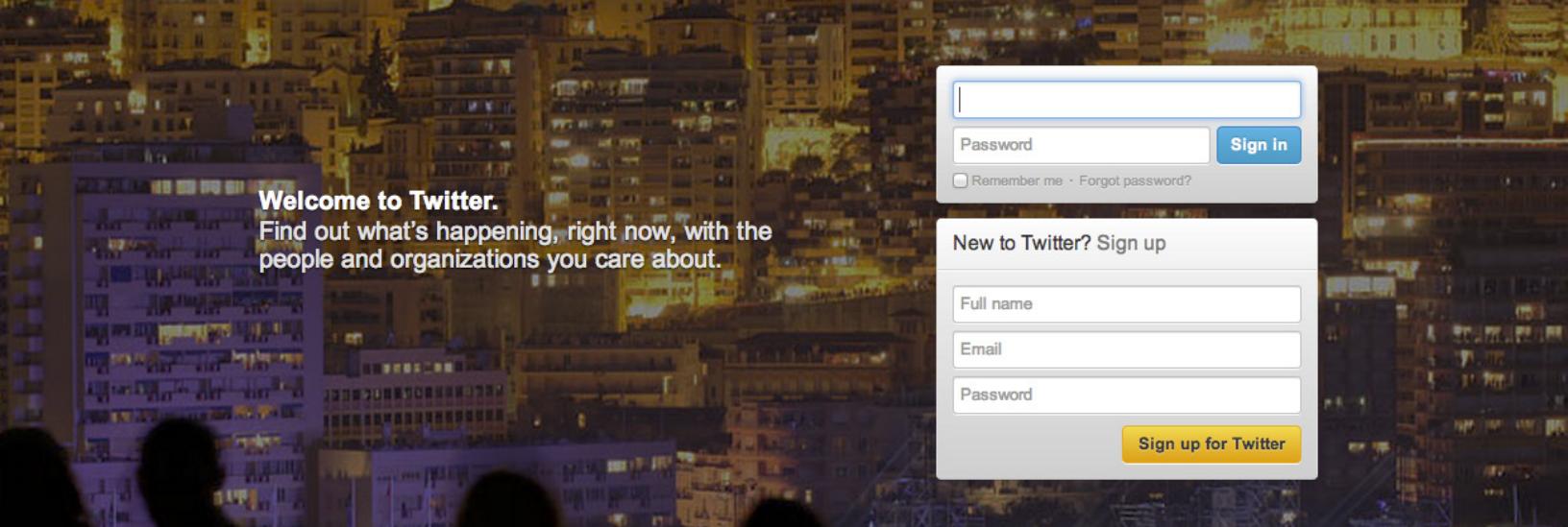
TWITTER

 twitter

With over 200 million active users (and over 500 million registered users), Twitter provides businesses yet another great opportunity to reach their customers and [increase their leads](#).

Unlike Facebook, Twitter limits its users to 140 characters in a "Tweet." That means that you have a limited space to grab a reader's attention and get your point across. Those who are the most creative will find themselves with the most followers, whereas the rest will struggle to stay afloat in the sea of tweets.





Welcome to Twitter.
Find out what's happening, right now, with the people and organizations you care about.

The image shows the Twitter sign-in and sign-up interface. It includes fields for 'Email' and 'Password', a 'Sign In' button, a 'Remember me' checkbox, and a 'Forgot password?' link. Below this is a 'New to Twitter? Sign up' section with fields for 'Full name', 'Email', and 'Password', and a 'Sign up for Twitter' button.

Do's

&

Don'ts

Use your logo as your profile picture and match the background to its colors [READ MORE](#)

Use overly bright colors as your background [READ MORE](#)

Follow others in your industry, especially industry leaders [READ MORE](#)

Leave your bio empty [READ MORE](#)

Mention those you wish to follow you in your tweets [READ MORE](#)

Ignore follower requests or complaints [READ MORE](#)

Promote new products, contests, offers, etc... [READ MORE](#)

Over-promote your business [READ MORE](#)

Give "shout outs" to those who mention you in a positive tweet [READ MORE](#)

Post a link without a headline [READ MORE](#)

Direct viewers to your website using links [READ MORE](#)

Post general tweets that do not offer your readers anything [READ MORE](#)

Include useful hash tags for searching purposes [READ MORE](#)

Use corporate jargon [READ MORE](#)

Use tools such as "Tweepi," "Tweet Grader," "JustUnfollow" to optimize your followers [READ MORE](#)

Randomly use or spam hash tags [READ MORE](#)

Try to squish long videos into a Twitter Vine clip [READ MORE](#)



Do...

✓ Use your logo as your profile picture and match the background to its colors

Set yourself up for success by having a great design for your Twitter account page. Setting your logo as your profile picture is great for recognition. Matching the background color to the logo will give the page a welcoming feel, encouraging viewers to interact with it.

✓ Follow others in your industry, especially industry leaders

Before you begin tweeting, try putting your ear to the ground and listening to what industry leaders and other influential groups are tweeting about. See what [your target customers](#) enjoy hearing about. Once you feel comfortable that you know what your segments want, try posting your own related content.

✓ Mention those you wish to follow you in your tweets

A great way to get recognized is to get mentioned in a tweet by someone reputable in the industry. Find popular companies or other referent groups and mention them in a positive tweet. This encourages that company to

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twitter

mention you back or follow you, and expose your business to their followers. Since their followers are already interested in your industry, this is a great chance for you to use your content to [generate leads](#) for your company. Even if a company does not follow you or mention you back in their tweets, continue to interact with their pages to draw more attention to your own page.

✓ Promote new products, contests, offers, etc.

Customers that follow your business on Twitter are interested in what your business has to say, and want to be kept in the loop. Tweet about what is new with your company, and get them excited about any new products or deals that you may be offering. Present this content in an interesting manner to generate retweets that expose you to an even larger audience.



✓ Give “shout outs” to those who mention you in a positive tweet

Did somebody say something nice about your company in a tweet? Recognize them! Directly mention the person or company that mentioned you in a tweet, and give them a quick thank you. If it was another company,

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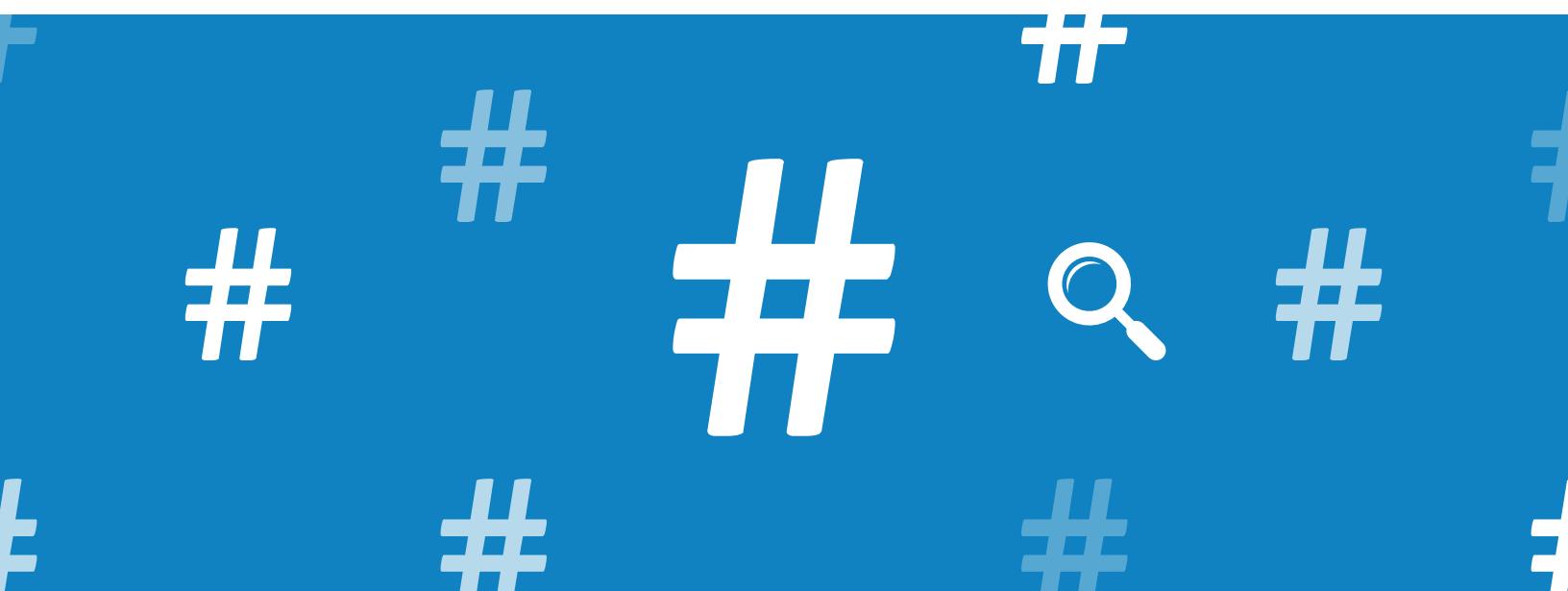
consider retweeting some of their content to encourage a mutually beneficial relationship.

✓ Direct viewers to your website using links

Just like any social media campaign, you want to link your customers back to your website or company blog. Twitter will automatically compact your links into a “Tinyurl,” so be sure to include a catchy headline to generate interest and drive traffic to your site.

✓ Include useful hash tags for searching purposes

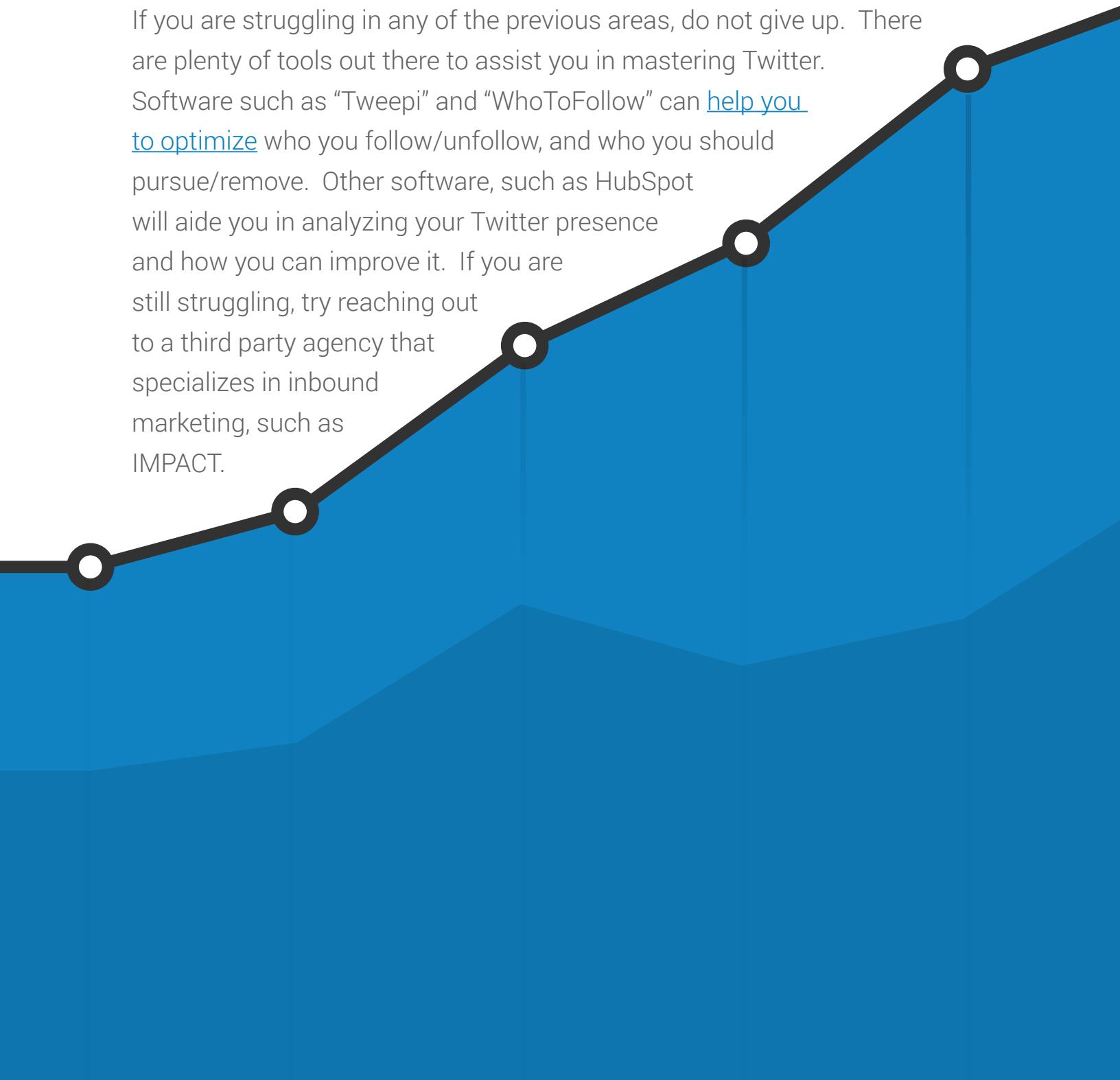
Twitter uses a feature called “hash tags” to keep track of what people are talking about. If a large amount of users are using the same hash tag it becomes a “trending” topic. Users can then search through these hash tags to find tweets on a specific topic. Try choosing hash tags that are relevant to your specific campaign, and keep these tags consistent on other social media outlets. Becoming a trending topic may be difficult, but you still want those who are interested in your company’s campaign to be able to easily find your content.



✓ Use tools such as “Tweepi,” “Tweet Grader,” and “JustUnfollow” to optimize your followers

If you are struggling in any of the previous areas, do not give up. There are plenty of tools out there to assist you in mastering Twitter.

Software such as “Tweepi” and “WhoToFollow” can [help you to optimize](#) who you follow/unfollow, and who you should pursue/remove. Other software, such as HubSpot will aide you in analyzing your Twitter presence and how you can improve it. If you are still struggling, try reaching out to a third party agency that specializes in inbound marketing, such as IMPACT.





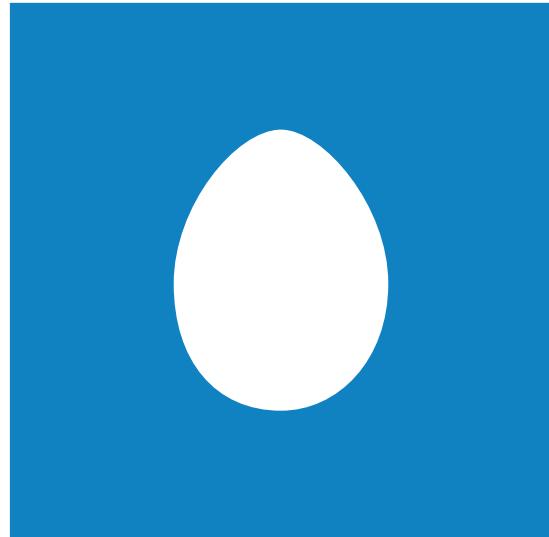
Don't...

✖ Use overly bright colors as your background

While consistency with your logo can create a welcoming page, you need to be sure that those colors still have a visual appeal. Colors that are extremely bright, such as a neon color, will leave visitors squinting and trying to find the back button on their browser. If your logo is comprised purely of bright colors, consider adding a wallpaper related to your products/services that is easy on the eyes.

✖ Leave your bio empty

Remember that people on Twitter may be very unfamiliar with your business, and may even be seeing it for the first time. Tell people what your business does, so that they will know who they are following. Twitter users who fill out their bio have over 6x times as many followers as those that do not. Don't come across as lazy and leave potential followers on the table due to uncertainty about what your business does.



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✖ Ignore negative tweets or complaints

Just as you don't want to ignore negative comments on Facebook, you do not want to avoid negative tweets. Addressing negative tweets in a proactive manner can show your company's personal side and help you establish rapport. Letting these comments go may appear as your company trying to sweep a problem under the rug.

✖ Over-promote your business

Customers want to know what is going on in your business, but they do not want you to shove your business down their throats with constant self-promoting tweets. Follow the 80-20 rule as a baseline. Dedicate 20% of your Twitter activity to self promotion and spend the rest of the time interacting with your customers and others in the industry. These activities still generate awareness for your business, and offer you the opportunity to show what you know outside of your own profile. If you are struggling to find an effective balance, see what [your followers](#) respond the most positively to, and adjust those percentages as you see fit.

US!
MYSELF!
HEY!
ME!
HEY!
ME!



✖ Post a link without a headline

Would you click a link without knowing where it is attempting to direct you? Neither will your followers. Twitter compacting your link is great for spatial purposes, but removes any security or interest that seeing your company's name in might offer. To combat this, simply create an attention grabbing headline to generate more clicks for your links.

✖ Post general tweets that do not offer your readers anything

In all of this tweeting, do not lose sight of your company's goals. Tweet [with a purpose](#). Do not simply post general content such as, "Spring is finally here." These types of tweets do not offer your customers anything. Instead, try generating traffic to your website to move potential customers deeper into the sales funnel. Tweet, "Spring is finally here, and this is a great time to clean up your webpage" with a link to relevant information on your website. Remember, the most creative content will win the day.

✖ Use corporate jargon

Just because people are interested in your company or industry does not necessarily mean that they have a thorough understanding of it. Using corporate abbreviations or advanced terminology will generate confusion amongst your followers, and may even cost you some of them.

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✖ Randomly use or spam hash tags

While hash tags provide users with a way to search Twitter for a specific subject, they are meant to be used efficiently. Spamming hash tags will cause you to lose credibility on Twitter, and may even get your banned. Rather than completely relying on your hash tags, feel free to retweet your own content at a different time of day to reach customers who may have missed it the first time. Avoid spamming your tweets, but proper testing will help you find what your followers prefer.

✖ Try to squish long videos into a Twitter Vine clip

Twitter recently launched a video service called “Vine.” [Twitter Vine](#) allows users to post six second clips to get their messages across. Vine can be a great way to offer more engaging content to your followers, but must be used correctly. Trying to compress a 30 second commercial or product overview into a six second video will not appeal to customers. Instead, use Vine to create brief “sneak peeks” into new products or events to generate excitement about your brand. Remember, Vine is just another luxury of Twitter, but it is not a necessity. Use it only if it makes sense for your business.

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Inbound Marketing Checklist

Quickly identify what you're missing in your inbound marketing campaign.

PLANNING YOUR CAMPAIGN

- 1. Know Your Goals**

Before starting any inbound marketing program, it's important that you know your goals. If your company has moderate goals, then you need to develop a moderate inbound marketing program and allocate resources accordingly. If you have aggressive goals, then you need an aggressive inbound marketing strategy.
- 2. Know your Prospect's Sales Cycle**

Your goal of your inbound marketing campaign is to fill your sales funnel, assist in the sales process, and ultimately improve sales. Analyse your prospects' typical sales cycle, as well as your company's typical sales process, to identify how content can help educate prospects, assist sales efforts, and improve sales readiness.
- 3. Market with Your Strengths**

When building your campaign, identify what you do well and implement it into your marketing process. If you're a good speaker, create videos of yourself; if you're a strong writer, build a campaign that's very written content heavy. If you're a strong graphic designer, build visual content. Be creative and market with your strengths.
- 4. Collect Your Assets**

You don't have to start from scratch. If you're a business that's been around for a few years, collect any assets you may have to include in your inbound marketing campaign. This can include old brochures, recorded videos, pictures, case studies, customer testimonials, slideshows, whitepapers, software demos and trials, coupons and discounts, etc. This can all be implemented into your inbound marketing campaign.
- 5. Analyze Competition**

Your competitors play a big role in your inbound marketing efforts. Performing a thorough analysis of your competitor's website, content, social media strategies, search presence will provide you with valuable insight. You can use this insight to develop your inbound marketing strategies, differentiate yourself, and overtake your competition.

Download

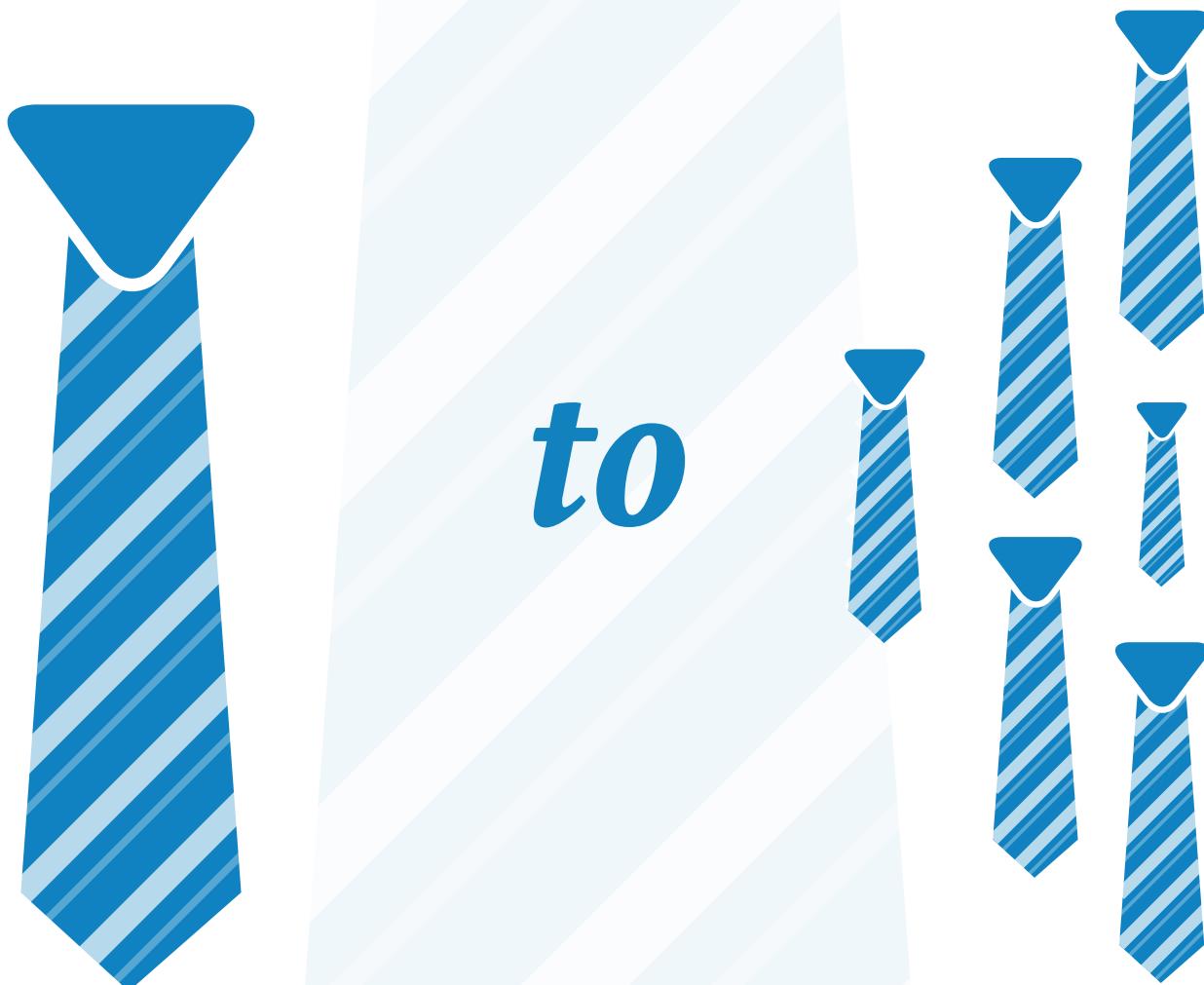


LINKEDIN

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a social network comprised of over 200 million users. Unlike Facebook and Twitter, LinkedIn has a more professional attitude, and should be treated as such. Despite this fact, it is still a great place to form connections and generate leads. According to a recent HubSpot study, LinkedIn has the highest conversion rate out of all major social media sites.

LinkedIn is an especially great tool for [generating B2B connections](#). B2B businesses experience a 61% successful conversion rate through their activities on LinkedIn. By following some simple do's and don'ts you should be able to successfully harness the draw of LinkedIn.



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Be great at what you do.



Get started – it's free.

Registration takes less than 2 minutes.

First Name

Last Name

Do's

Don'ts

Publish company status updates regularly

[READ MORE](#)

Use LinkedIn Signal to stay informed on current discussion trends

[READ MORE](#)

Encourage your employees to connect to your page

[READ MORE](#)

Have an attractive cover photo

[READ MORE](#)

Join industry groups and subtly slip links into your answers

[READ MORE](#)

Ask for endorsements from followers

[READ MORE](#)

Listen to comments, learn about your customers, and establish rapport

[READ MORE](#)

Stream other social media outlets to LinkedIn

[READ MORE](#)

Treat status updates like Facebook or Twitter

[READ MORE](#)

Leave parts of your profile blank

[READ MORE](#)

Place links where they do not belong

[READ MORE](#)

Use LinkedIn as an independent email service provider

[READ MORE](#)

Use bots to automate your updates

[READ MORE](#)

Excessively share repeat content from other social media sites

[READ MORE](#)

Do...

✓ Publish company status updates regularly

Similar to the other social media outlets, if you're going to make a commitment to using them, make sure you are active. Update your status regularly, but keep it focused and try to listen to what your connections are asking for. You still want to focus on creating amazing content, but you cannot lose track of your audience.

✓ Use LinkedIn Signal to stay informed on current discussion trends

So how do you make connections on LinkedIn? A good way to start is to join industry related groups and LinkedIn's Signal feature to learn what the current topics are. Once you know what people are looking in regards to your industry you have the tools to target your content to meet these desires.

✓ Encourage your employees to connect to your page

Since you are operating on a network of professionals, try using the professionals that you already have available: your employees. Encourage your employees to connect to your company, so that their connections will

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LinkedIn

be drawn to your page. This is a great way to generate interest in your page, and potentially even generate interest in employment.

✓ Have an attractive cover photo

Once you draw customers to your company profile, be sure to keep them there. Make sure that you have an attractive cover photo, preferably one that provides a little information about your company. Your cover photo is your first impression to visitors, so you want to make sure that people know what they are looking at and that they like what they see.



✓ Join industry groups and subtly slip links into your answers

As soon as you establish yourself on LinkedIn, be sure that you are [getting the most out of it](#) by being active. Posting to industry group discussions can be a great way to show your expertise and attract customers to your page. When you are posting in a group discussion, try to subtly place a link into your post/answer. Avoid spamming links, but try directing traffic to a blog post or similar content that is relevant to the discussion.

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✓ Ask for endorsements from followers

Think of an endorsement as a customer confirming that you can do what you say you can do. The more you can gain, the more credible you will appear. Don't be afraid to ask for endorsements, but don't push or hassle your connections. Instead, try to build strong relationships with connections and current customers to increase the likelihood of an endorsement.

✓ Listen to comments, learn about your customers, and establish rapport

The most important thing you can do to optimize your content is listen. Hear what your connections are saying, and relate your content to their ideas. When replying to a connection, try to relate on a personal level. Check out your active connections' profiles, and try to learn about their interests so that you can connect with them on a deeper level. This will increase the likelihood of these people sharing your company's content with their connections.

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✓ Stream other social media outlets to LinkedIn

Just because LinkedIn is a network of professionals does not mean that these individuals are not on other social networks. Encourage your LinkedIn connections to visit your other networks by linking to your content updates on those sites. Be sure not to spam these updates or use them in place of status updates on LinkedIn. Supplement your LinkedIn content with your other content so you can give your followers what they want and [dominate your competition](#).



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Don't...

✖ Treat status updates like Facebook or Twitter

The easiest way to think of LinkedIn is as Facebook in a suit and tie. More personal status updates that may be acceptable on Facebook, and posting every couple of hours like you would on Twitter, is much less likely to be successful on LinkedIn. In fact, your connections may see these types of posts as spam, and in turn may drive them away. The key is to update your status regularly, but keep it focused and try to listen to what your connections are asking for.

✖ Leave parts of your profile blank

Think of your LinkedIn as a résumé for your company. Leaving out information about what you can do could cost your business, so leave no stone unturned. Fill out your profile in its entirety. Let potential customers know all of your company's product and service offerings, and include a compelling bio. [Inform visitors](#) about what your company does and generate interest at the same time.

✖ Place links where they do not belong

While it is perfectly appropriate to include links in your status updates or

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LinkedIn

in group discussions, you need to be careful not to come across as a link spammer. If your company is found to be spamming links you risk being banned from the website. By simply surrounding your links with quality content you should be able to avoid this issue, and generate more traffic to your website.

✖ Use LinkedIn as an independent email service provider

LinkedIn's messaging system allows connections to contact the business in a more personal manner than a Facebook wall post. It may be a great place for early communication with potential leads, but it should not act as a substitute. First off, it looks much more professional to have an email address that ends with your company name. Beyond that, attempts to mass email through LinkedIn are considered a misuse of service and could result in the termination of your account.

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✖ Use bots to automate your updates

If you are going to be on LinkedIn, or any social media outlet for that matter, do not try to use automated services for your status updates. The messages generated by bots tend to sound exactly as you would expect an automated message to sound. Focus on your content and make sure that it sounds like something your connections will want to interact with.

✖ Excessively share repeat content from other social media sites

It is great to connect LinkedIn with your other social media sites, but you do not want to become repetitive. Ideally, your customers will be following you through your different channels, and do not want to be bombarded with reminders that you just updated your Facebook or Twitter. It is fine to share the same blog on multiple outlets, but present it in a different manner. Have a consistent campaign without simply dumping the same information in seven different places.

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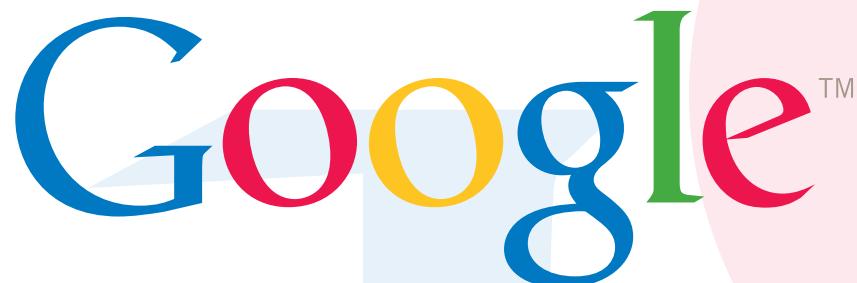


GOOGLE +

Google +

Considered Google's answer to Facebook, Google+ has already attracted 400 million users, with over 170 million of those considered active. Google+ offers businesses a great way to connect with their users, much in the same way that they can with Facebook, but with an added bonus. Google+ offers companies a great opportunity to increase their organic search results.

Google+ has introduced the “+1” button, which is very similar to Facebook’s “Like” button, but with more power. If a page generates enough +1’s it will rank higher in Google’s algorithm and thereby show up sooner in searches. So rather than living in Facebook’s shadow, Google+ has established itself as yet another unique tool that businesses can use to connect with potential customers.



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Google+

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Share with just the right people

Share some things with friends, others with family, and almost nothing with your boss.



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Video chat with up to 10 people from your computer, tablet, or mobile phone.



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Do's



Don'ts

Use the URL of your homepage in your Google+ local listing [READ MORE](#)

Assume your page has already been verified by Google [READ MORE](#)

Join and participate in active communities

Have employees link directly to your page [READ MORE](#)

Have employees share your content on their personal pages [READ MORE](#)

Post bland, text heavy content that comes across as "salesy" [READ MORE](#)

Take advantage of Circles to target specific segments [READ MORE](#)

Run contests or create promotional offers directly through Google+ [READ MORE](#)

Use images regularly in your posts

Be overly aggressive in creating circles [READ MORE](#)

[READ MORE](#)

Utilize hash tags to get involved in trending topics [READ MORE](#)

Use Google+ if you are in a regulated industry [READ MORE](#)

[READ MORE](#)

Incorporate Google+ into your other web pages [READ MORE](#)

Do...

✓ Use the URL of your homepage in your Google+ local listing

Think of Google+ as your ticket to improving your company's visibility on Google search. It is possible to use Google+ to get your website to rank twice. Simply include the URL of your homepage in your [Google+ local](#) listing when initially setting up your page. This will cause you to show up in both Google Maps and a regular Google search.

Get together with Google+ Communities

- Join public communities around your interests
- Start private communities with just the right people
- Plan events, start hangouts, and share from anywhere

[Create a community](#)[Learn more](#)

✓ Join and participate in active communities

The methods of gathering followers on Google plus is very similar to those of the other social media sites. To start out, try joining active communities and sharing content that is of interest to the group. Focus on creating strong relationships with your biggest engagers and any VIPs that may

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Google +

have interest in your brand. Share information that these users post in an attempt to generate a mutually beneficial relationship. Content that a person shares is seen by everyone in their selected circles, so share and be shared.

✓ Have employees share your content on their personal pages

Just as on LinkedIn, employees can utilize their personal Google+ pages to benefit your business. Have employees link to your posts so that their circles will be exposed to your content. This is where your quality content will have its opportunity to shine. Rather than having your employees directly recommend your business, let your content speak for itself.

✓ Take advantage of Circles to target specific segments

What makes Google+ truly unique is their "Circles" feature. Circles allows you to sort your followers into different groups, and share information directly with an individual (or multiple) group(s). Try to segment your followers into targeted groups so that you can appeal to certain followers on a more personal level than other social media platforms in order to [generate leads](#).

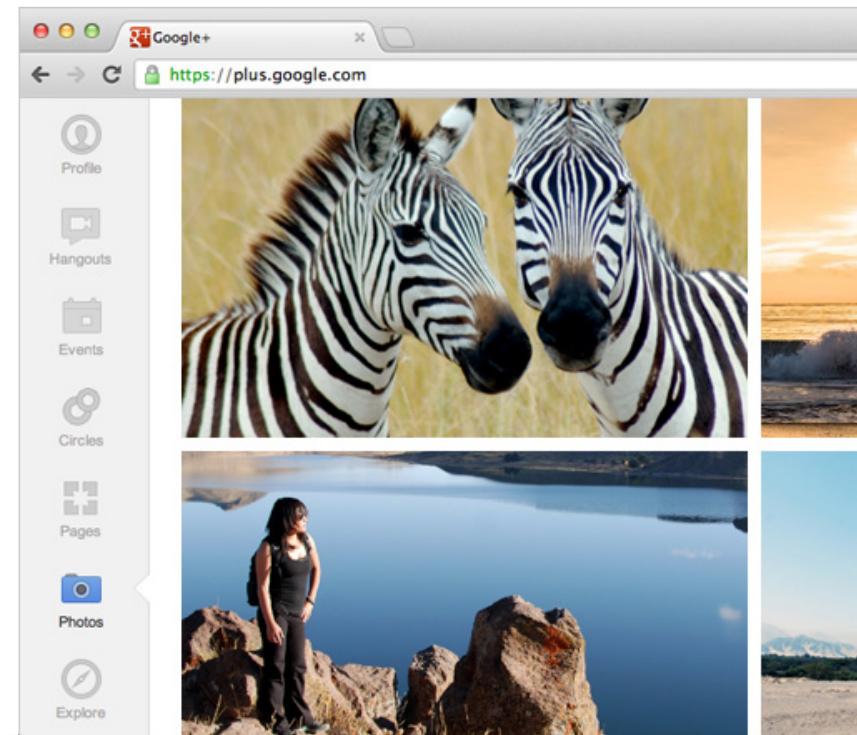
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✓ Use images regularly in your posts

When it comes to posting content that directly relates to your company make yourself stand out. Google+ makes it very easy to share images, so do not be afraid to use this. If you find a cool picture, post it and link it to a relevant blog post. Try posting [infographics](#) that relate to the services that your company offers. Users tend to prefer the visual stimuli and will be more likely to engage with, and share, your content.



✓ Utilize hash tags to get involved in trending topics

Google+, just like Twitter, utilizes hash tags to organize content and determine what is trending. Ideally you would like to get involved in the trending conversation, but you also do not want to lose sight of your marketing goals by just trying to appear in trending discussions. Use relevant hash tags that are consistent with the tags on your other social media sites so that similar information can be found on each platform.

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✓ Incorporate Google+ into your other web pages

The main goal on Google+ is to generate as many +1's as possible. Think of a +1 as an endorsement for your product. Whenever another user +1's your page, their contacts become exposed to your content. The +1 also helps your authority on Google's search page, thereby improving your SEO. Just think about the results over time. Incorporate Google+ into your blog and other content to draw traffic to your Google+ page. Websites using the +1 button generate three and a half times the Google+ visits than sites without the button.

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Don't...

✖ Assume your page has already been verified by Google

Since you are setting up your company page through Google, they should be automatically verifying you, right? Wrong. Google requires that the company take the initiative to have their page verified as the official page of that brand. Verify your page as soon as possible after signing up to protect your credibility.

✖ Have employees link directly to your page

Think of this as more of a suggestion than a set-in-stone "don't." While it is great to have your employees share your content, it is not as good of an idea to have them directly recommend your company. An employee telling you that their company can do what they say they can comes across like a parent insisting that their child is a great athlete. It looks more like an obligatory referral than one generated by interest. Instead, have your employees share and +1 your content, and let your content prove what your company can do to their circles.

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✖ Post bland, text heavy content that comes across as “salesy”

When posting content to Google+, feel free to get creative. Google+ is much more like Facebook in the sense that your viewers are okay with seeing humorous content that does not necessarily relate directly to your business. Showing a sense of humor can still increase the likability of your business, and can help improve your following. Posts that come across as strictly sales-related are unlikely to keep followers because it continually offers them the same thing. Boring content will be ignored, so have some fun and give your followers what they want.

✖ Run contests or create promotional offers directly through Google+

Unlike Facebook and Twitter, Google+ does not allow you to run contests or promotional offers directly through their site. Attempting to do so violates the terms of usage, and could result in your company profile being removed. This does not mean that you cannot advertise these types of promotions on Google+. Just include external links in your Google+ posts, and you will be able to utilize this engaging content.

✖ Be overly aggressive in creating circles

In the same way that other social media sites have restrictions in gathering contacts, Google+ will punish any user found being overly aggressive in

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generating connections. Excessive circling of other Google+ members will result in your profile being flagged, and potentially shut down. Encourage users to connect to your business by offering them amazing content, and sort those connections appropriately.

✖ Use Google+ if you are in a regulated industry

One final, but very big, rule of Google+ is that companies in regulated industries cannot have an account to market their products. This means that those in tobacco, pharmaceutical, and similar industries should focus their efforts elsewhere. There is no point in spending time trying to develop content that is acceptable to Google+ just to have your account frozen.



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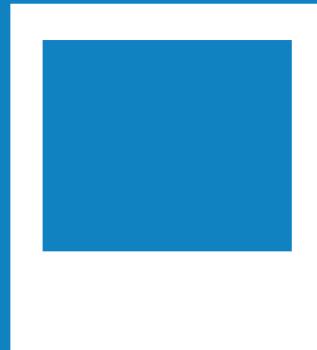
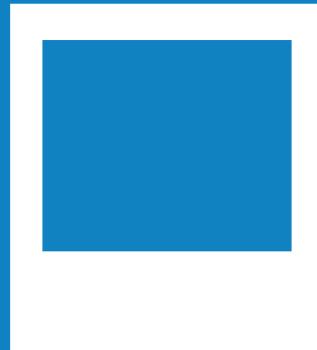
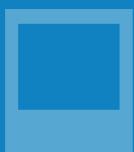
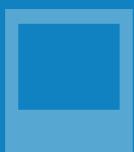
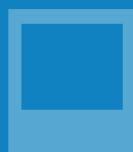
PINTEREST

Pinterest

Founded in 2009, Pinterest has experienced quick success, and is already considered the third most popular social network behind Facebook and Twitter. Its 48+ million users have helped to generate roughly 25 million unique visitors per month.

Pinterest is built on the foundation of quality visual content. Each business is given an account where they can create Pinboards to group and share their content. It is a trending social media platform that is already producing promising results for businesses.

Pinterest customers have been found to purchase 10% more often than Facebook and Twitter users, and spend more when they do so. The average e-commerce order from a Pinterest user is \$179, compared to \$80 for Facebook and \$69 for Twitter (PinLeague). We've all heard the cliché "a picture is worth a thousand words," but Pinterest is starting to make businesses wonder how many dollars each picture can be worth.



[Log in](#)[Join Pinterest](#)

Do's

Don'ts

Verify your company Pinterest board

[READ MORE](#)

Ask questions through Facebook that drive traffic to your Pinterest board

[READ MORE](#)

Use hash tags to sync campaigns with Google+, Twitter, and Instagram

[READ MORE](#)

Pin different types of images (pictures, video, infographics, etc...)

[READ MORE](#)

Use hash tags and creative captions

[READ MORE](#)

Pin back to content on your website, blog, and other social media outlets

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Be keyword conscious

[READ MORE](#)

Conduct contests on Pinterest

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Use tools such as Pinpuff and Pinreach to analyze your campaign

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Pin without a purpose

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Focus completely on self promoting

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Create uncategorized boards

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Post content without any text at all

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Post links outside of your pins

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Pin copyrighted content

[READ MORE](#)

Do...

✓ Verify your company Pinterest board

Exactly like on Google+, you want to make sure to verify your company identity. Pinterest will verify your business and give your page a red check mark so that visitors understand that they are on the official company page. [Don't leave anything to chance](#). Secure your page and secure your credibility.

✓ Ask questions through Facebook or other social media to drive traffic to your Pinterest board

Driving traffic to your Pinboards may seem a little more difficult than generating traffic for other social media sites. Try driving traffic to your Pinboards through your other social media platforms, and let your content speak for itself. Ask questions to your Facebook followers, and request that answers be shared as images on Pinterest.

✓ Use hash tags to sync campaigns with Google+ ,Twitter, and Instagram

Since hash tags have not been officially trademarked, multiple social media sites utilize them. By using consistent hash tags across the different

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Pinterest

platforms that employ them, you can allow your business to be found easily across all four. That way, if a viewer sees interesting content from your campaign on Pinterest, they can follow it to Instagram, Google+, or Twitter, and vice versa.

✓ Pin different types of images

At first glance, Pinterest may seem to pose a challenge to [creating quality content](#) since it is heavily image based. The key to keeping your content fresh is to mix up the types of images that you are using. Use standard pictures, videos, and infographics from time to time to make sure that your content can stand out from the crowd.

✓ Use creative captions on your images

Pinterest is not completely opposed to text. In fact, you should be creating captions to go along with your images. Despite being a primarily visual website, potential leads still want some context as to what they are looking at. Give them some idea as to why you are posting the image so that if it relates to a campaign they may look to gain more information.

✓ Pin back to content on your website, blog, and other social media outlets

Simply posting pictures won't get your potential customers anywhere without a push. Link back to your company website or blog through your pins to drive traffic and further explain your content. If you are running a contest on Facebook, make sure that a related image links the viewer to Facebook. Make visitors' decisions of what to do next easy.

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keyword

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Search

yword

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keyword

✓ Be keyword conscious

Even on Pinterest you should be considering your SEO. If you post your images into general categories with generic keywords, you will be buried under the content of those who are more established. Try focusing on the keywords that your targets will be looking for to drive quality leads to your page.

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✓ Conduct contests on Pinterest

Good news! Pinterest is contest and promotional offer friendly. These activities can be a great way to generate interest in your brand and get your material “re-pinned” (shared). The farther your contest spreads, the farther your brand awareness spreads.

✓ Use tools such as Pinpuff and Pinreach to analyze your campaign

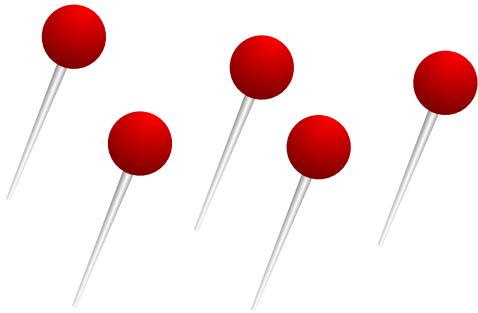
Wondering how to track your “Pinfluence?” There are a [variety of tools](#), including those provided by Pinterest that can help you to analyze your Pinterest campaign. Pinpuff will provide you with information on your number of followers, the number of pins and repins you have, and your number of likes, among other statistics. It will generate a total score and break it down based on activity, reach, and virality. Pinreach provides similar information in the form of graphics and related visual content. There are also browser extensions and add-ons that can help you to break down your Pinterest campaign.



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Don't...



✖ Pin without a purpose

It is very easy to get sucked into Pinterest, but you cannot lose focus of your marketing goals. Think of what your campaign is trying to achieve through Pinterest and pin content that will advance these goals. It is great to pin an image that goes viral, but it is even better to pin an image that goes viral and directly relates to your business.

✖ Focus completely on self promoting

Nobody likes a narcissist. Use Pinterest to promote your company, but don't focus completely on self promotion. Rather than directly promoting your business, try posting content that relates to what your business does. Post interesting images that represent things that inspire your business or reflect your company beliefs. Give your viewers images that they will want to see, and find a way to link to places where potential customers can learn more about what you offer.

✖ Create uncategorized boards

Think of each Pinboard on your Pinterest page as a collage. It is a collection of similar images that follow a common theme. If you mash a bunch of collages together you may have a lot of interesting images, but you will also have a lot of confusion. [Organize your Pinboards](#) to have common themes,

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Pinterest

so that people can look at the posts that interest them the most.

✖ Post content without any text at all

People like viewing images, but they usually prefer to know what they are looking at. Creating or posting thought provoking images can be great for generating excitement, but may not get your viewers thinking about your company. Images without a caption are the equivalent to an abstract painting. Don't leave your images completely to interpretation. Let your audience have some context.

✖ Post links outside of your pins

Play by the rules on Pinterest. Links are okay as long as they are attached to an image, but they are not meant to be posted elsewhere. If you do not follow these rules you risk being banned from Pinterest. While this may not seem like a big deal, Pinterest is a little less forgiving than other social media sites and will not allow you back.

✖ Pin copyrighted content

Seems pretty easy, right? The fact is, it can be difficult to know what images are copyrighted and which are not before posting to Pinterest. Verify that the image you are posting is not copyrighted, and always give credit where credit is due. Otherwise, you will risk being banned. Mistakes happen, but mistakes can also be prevented.

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The image shows two versions of an 'Inbound Marketing Gameplan' side-by-side.

Left Side (Generic Template):

- Section: Driving Traffic
- Section: Quality Leads
- Section: Business Goals
 - Goal #1:** Last year, XYZ Company did \$2.40 million in sales. Within the next 12 months, XYZ Company would like to increase sales by 15% to \$2.76 million.
 - Goal #2:** XYZ Company has recently developed a new service to help widget manufacturers optimize their value proposition. This service will average sales of \$200,000. XYZ Company would like to sell 7 of these packages, 4 to existing client base and 3 to new customers.
 - Goal #3:** Last year, XYZ spent \$224K in marketing. This year, they would like to maintain the same marketing budget, however, would like to increase their marketing spending on inbound marketing in order to lower their cost per lead, improve their ranking SEO, and generate a larger return on the same annual spend.

Right Side (Professional Version - iM PACT branding & design):

- iM PACT** branding & design
- INBOUND MARKETING GAMEPLAN**

Get an inside look at how we strategize winning campaigns for our clients.

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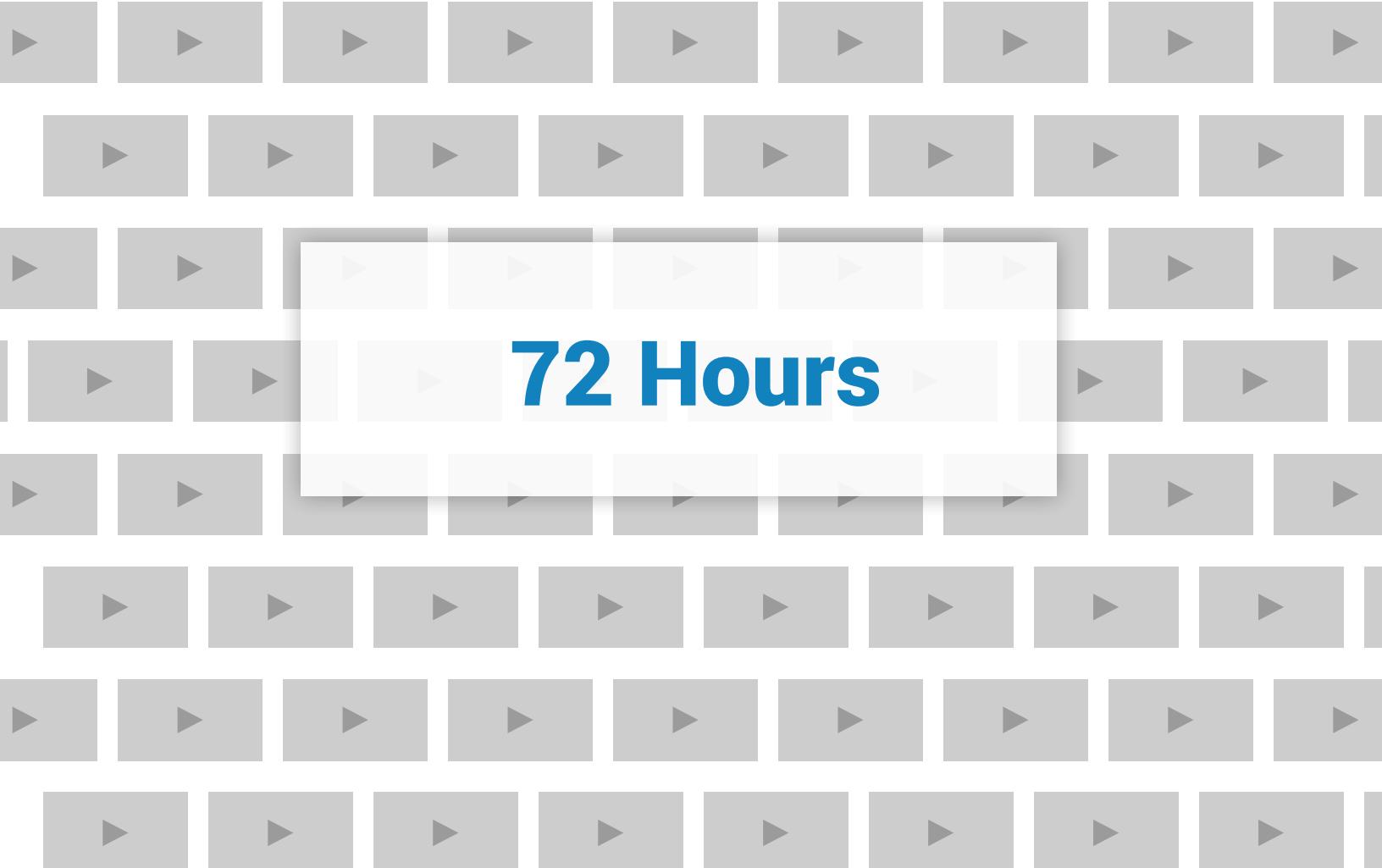


YOUTUBE

YouTube

With over 72 hours of content uploaded every minute, YouTube is the [king of online video](#) content. YouTube generates one billion unique visitors per month, and, if used correctly, can provide businesses with a great opportunity to reach their targets in an engaging manner.

YouTube visitors view an average of two billion videos per day. If you follow the tips below and create quality content, you can generate interest in your business and avoid being buried in the sea of videos.



72 Hours

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Do's

&

Don'ts

Share webinars, interviews, and video responses [READ MORE](#)

Create customer service answers that link to your FAQ [READ MORE](#)

Post customer video testimonials [READ MORE](#)

Engage with YouTube community in industry related videos [READ MORE](#)

Tag your videos with relevant keywords [READ MORE](#)

Run video contests to generate interest [READ MORE](#)

Create playlists for related videos [READ MORE](#)

Ask users to subscribe, comment, and rate your video [READ MORE](#)

Create a watermark URL for your video and embed a direct link to your site [READ MORE](#)

Add captions to your videos [READ MORE](#)

Use YouTube Insight to analyze your videos [READ MORE](#)

Create a YouTube video on a whim [READ MORE](#)

Blatantly market yourself [READ MORE](#)

Overuse annotations [READ MORE](#)

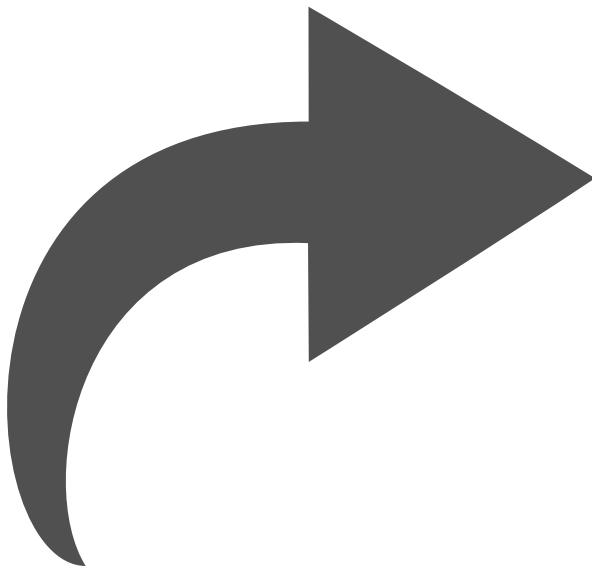
Create a video for the sake of posting content [READ MORE](#)

Submit a low quality video [READ MORE](#)

Do...

✓ Share webinars, interviews, and video responses

So what type of content can you put in video form? The good news is there is plenty. Use your YouTube channel to share webinars, slides to PowerPoint presentations, or a video response to an industry related video. You can also hold internal and external interviews that relate to popular topics in your industry to drive traffic to your channel.



✓ Create customer service answers that link to your FAQ

Go the extra mile for your customers on your YouTube channel. If a customer comments about a problem that they have been having that involves your product or service, respond with a YouTube video. If they are having installation troubles, give them a how-to video that is easy to follow. Or, if you are just trying to answer a frequently asked question, link the video directly back to your FAQ page for more answers.

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 YouTube

✓ Post customer video tutorials

Put a face to your testimonials. If you have a customer that was extraordinarily happy with your services, ask them to record a short video testimonial of their experiences. A well-organized customer testimonial is undeniable and will help to increase your credibility.

✓ Engage with the YouTube community in industry related videos

Remember that you are not confined to your own YouTube channel. Being active in other industry related videos is a great way to gain some recognition for your own channel. Offering praise to another individual or company can increase your likeability, and contributing valuable information to a discussion in the comments could help bring customers to your channel.

✓ Tag your videos with relevant keywords

Make sure that your video is easy to find both on and off of YouTube. Include your targeted keywords somewhere in your title to optimize your SEO. There are ways to include keywords and still have a creative title (such as using a colon between an original thought and keyword), so get creative. In your description, include your full URL and continue to be keyword rich. Finally, include your relevant keywords in the tags field. The more effectively you do this, the more likely it is that your video will be found on both YouTube and Google.

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✓ Run video contests to generate interest

Let your customers and fans get in on the video making fun. Create a video based contest for your subscribers that relates to your company. Have them creatively showcase a new product, or create a how-to-video on something your company offers. The more involved you can make the YouTube community feel, the more luck you will have with your channel.

✓ Create playlists for related videos

Stay organized. Once your company has posted a large number of videos, things can become very disorganized if left to chance. Sort related videos into specific playlists so that customers can more easily find what they are looking for.



[Prev Video](#) – [Next Video](#)

 YouTube

✓ Encourage users to subscribe, comment, and rate your video

You are trying to engage the YouTube community, so do not try to silence the community. Encourage your users to get involved with your videos and let your company know what they think. Similar to the other social media outlets, try to address your comments to seem more personable. Give thanks for the good and see if you can do something to reverse the bad comments. To avoid trolls, consider posting comment guidelines so that constant violators can be banned with a good reason.

✓ Create a watermark URL for your video and embed a direct link to your site

Not every viewer will read the video description or comments. Watching your video is nice, but you want your visitors to go one step farther. Try embedding a link to your website or a related blog to drive your potential customers into your sales funnel. Another option is including a watermark URL, usually of your homepage. This watermark will show up in a corner of the video, but should be light enough that it does not compete with your content. Make sure that viewers know where the video came from, and encourage them to visit the source.

✓ Add captions to your videos

Keep in mind that your potential customers may be hard of hearing, or

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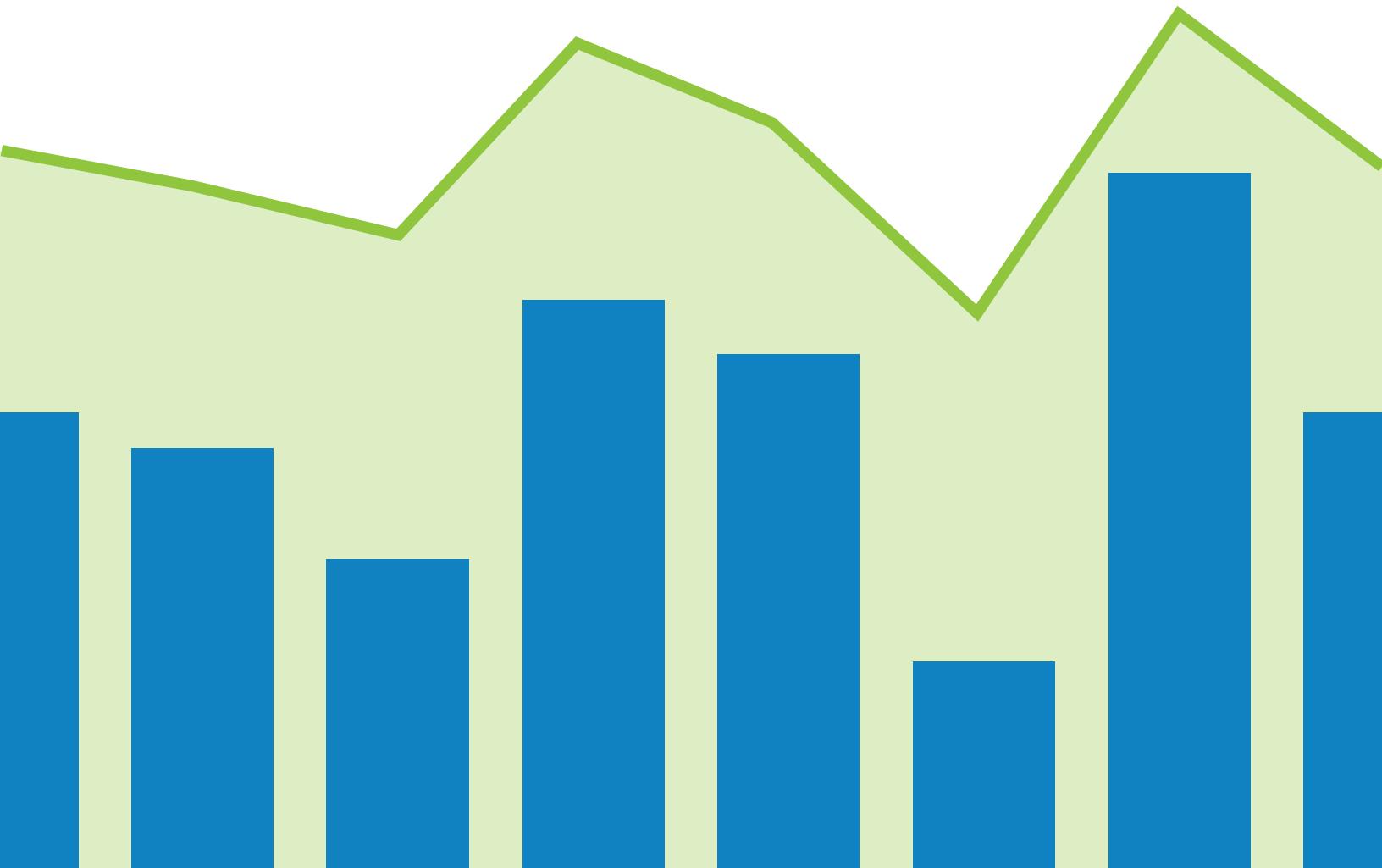


YouTube

even deaf. Be considerate of your entire customer base and include a captioning option for your videos. YouTube has speech conversion software that makes this easy to do, so there is no excuse. Just be sure to edit the content before it goes live to avoid any embarrassing typos in the subtitles.

✓ Use YouTube Insight to analyze your videos

Like many of the other social media sites, YouTube offers businesses a software to track and analyze the success of their YouTube channel. YouTube Insight will provide your business with some valuable information about your viewers. Insight will provide you with how many viewers you had, a demographic profile of those viewers, and how those viewers were interacting with and sharing your content. Use this information to improve your YouTube channel and really reach your target audience.



Don't...

✖ Create a YouTube video on a whim

Just like you wouldn't launch a social media campaign without setting goals and planning, you don't want to create a YouTube video on a whim. Shooting from the hip will more than likely produce low quality content, and that will reflect poorly on your company. When you decide to make a video, plan and then execute. Create a script, practice, and edit to create a high quality video that your targets will find useful and enjoyable.

✖ Blatantly market yourself

Don't just be a salesman rattling off stats about how great your company is. A video is your chance to be creative, so don't blow it. You can explain the benefits that your product or service offers, but make the video enjoyable. Videos that come across as a blatant sales pitches are very unlikely to hold a viewer's attention. Most YouTube viewers have a short attention span, so grab it, hold it, and attempt to go viral.

✖ Overuse annotations

Annotations can be a great way to encourage viewers to subscribe or visit your website, but use them appropriately. Annotations are text overlays that you can place on your YouTube videos. They pop up at a certain time in the video and usually encourage your viewer to take action. While this can be

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YouTube

a great tool, annotations can be seen as distracting, so use them sparingly. Having text popping up multiple times during a video will annoy your viewer and lead them to go elsewhere.

✖ Create a video for the sake of posting content

You want to be active on YouTube so that viewers will periodically check back with your channel, but don't post a pointless video. Post content that will be beneficial to your customers and targets. If you are unable to come up with an idea for a video just actively participate in the community. Searching through videos related to your industry to see what is trending may spark your next video idea.

✖ Submit a low quality video

Your YouTube channel is a product of your company. Low quality video will reflect the standards of quality that your company holds, whether it is true or not. Poor lighting, camera work, or audio will drive your viewers to another channel, and it is very unlikely that they will return. Make sure that the videos you produce are professional and of high quality so that customers will connect high quality video with high quality products and services.

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INSTAGRAM

Instagram



Similar to Pinterest, pictures rule the world of Instagram. The 90 million people who actively log on to Instagram each month are looking for engaging pictures that tell a story. With 40 million pictures uploaded daily, it is very easy to get lost in the clutter.

Despite having fewer users than the other social media networks, many signs indicate that Instagram users are more engaged than Facebook and Twitter followers. Instagram's 90 million users manage to generate 8,500 likes and 1,000 comments per second. For comparison, Facebook's 1.06 billion active visitors generate 37,037 likes and comments combined. This means that Instagram users are very engaged with the site, and offers your business a chance to create a similar engagement with your brand.

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Instagram
Fast beautiful photo sharing

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Meet Instagram

It's a **fast**, **beautiful** and **fun** way to share your photos with friends and family.

Snap a picture, choose a filter to transform its look and feel, then post to Instagram. Share to Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr too – it's as easy as pie. It's photo sharing, reinvented.

Oh yeah, did we mention it's free?

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Do's

&

Don'ts

Keep your content fresh [READ MORE](#)

Get your customers involved in content creation [READ MORE](#)

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Take generic or “posed” photographs [READ MORE](#)

Instagram

Do...

✓ Keep your content fresh

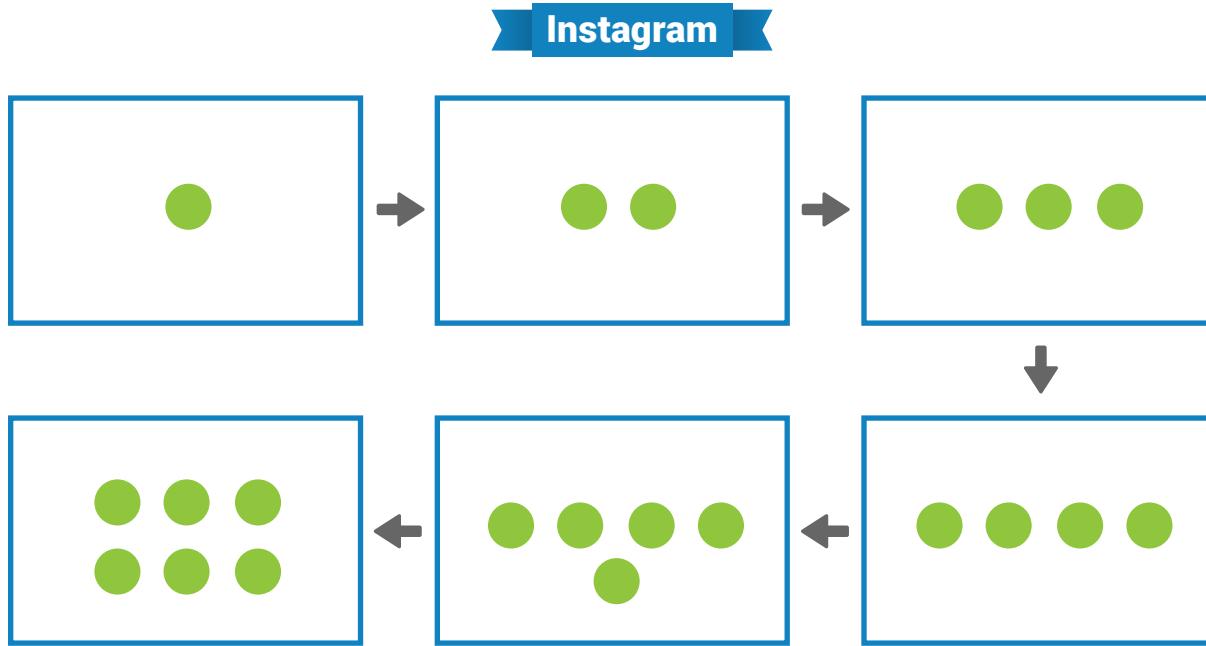
Since Instagram users are so active, you want to make sure that they are engaging with new content on a regular basis. Get creative with your content. Consider trying to frame your products in an attractive manner or share some behind the scenes pictures of your office's daily operations. There are endless opportunities for creating pictures that users will want to engage with. Just be sure that the images you post align with the image you want for your brand.

✓ Get your customers involved in content creation

There is really no better way to create engagement with your brand than to let your customers get involved in promoting your brand. Encourage your followers to generate content for your company. Consider trying to host image contests as incentive to [create some buzz](#) around your brand. You really can't lose with getting the customers involved. They will feel more connected to your brand, and perhaps their ideas will help you to generate your next big idea.

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✓ Tell a story with images

Having trouble trying to think of what type of content to post on Instagram? Consider telling a story. Post an image or two per day that builds off of the previous days' images. You do not need to tell chapters at a time. Keep your users coming back daily to generate the most excitement for your business. Group your stories into separate folders so that they will be easily accessible at a later time.

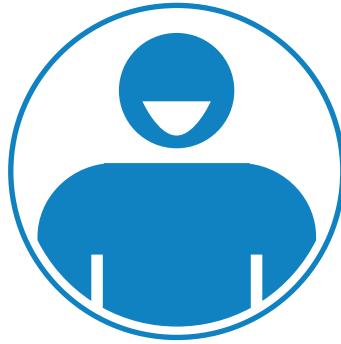
✓ Include promotions in your images

Instagram does not allow clickable links in your images or comments, but that does not mean that you cannot promote your business in your image descriptions. Try throwing a promo code into the description of your image to reward your most involved followers. This will encourage users to click through more of your images, and give your content a greater chance to shine.

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Instagram



Customer of the Month!

✓ Feature and interact with your customers

Show your followers how your customers are interacting with your brand. This will automatically give you some fresh content, and show off your brand's personality. Post images of your customers interacting with your product or services, and give them an idea of what it is like to do business with your company.

✓ Use your Twitter handles as your username

By using your Twitter handle as your username, you can promote two of your social media outlets at once. Your Twitter handle will make you easier to search for on Instagram, but Instagram can also lead back to your Twitter. If your picture is uploaded to Twitter and you are tagged, the tag will automatically link to your Twitter feed. If you are creating engaging enough content on both platforms, this tip may be unnecessary, but it never hurts to give your users a little extra direction.

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Instagram

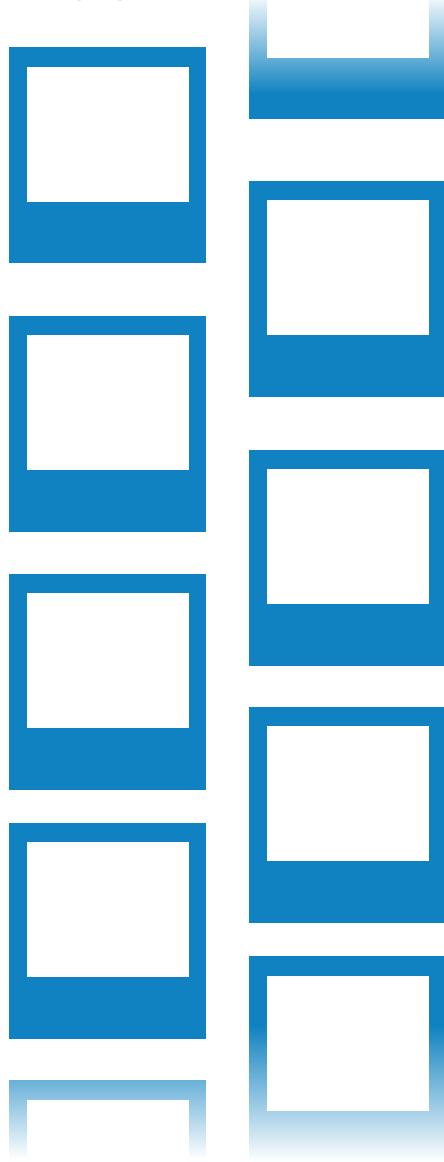
Don't...

✖ Use Instagram solely for advertisements

You understand that you should never over promote on any social media outlet, but use extra caution on Instagram. It may be tempting to post nothing but advertisements since they can be visually appealing, but try to avoid this. People on Instagram have plenty of images to look at, and advertisements are not what the users are searching for. Be creative and post striking or humorous pictures that users will want to engage with.

✖ Post too many times per day

Instagram is not like Twitter where you want to post a large amount of content daily. Users that follow a lot of people and companies do not want their feeds to be bogged down completely by one account. One or two is fine, but a good rule of thumb is a couple per day will not drive them away. Use this to your advantage. If you gather a fair amount of content, spread it out over multiple days and you will not have to worry about trying to generate new content for that week. Don't get lazy and become inactive, but don't feel pressured to post multiple times daily.



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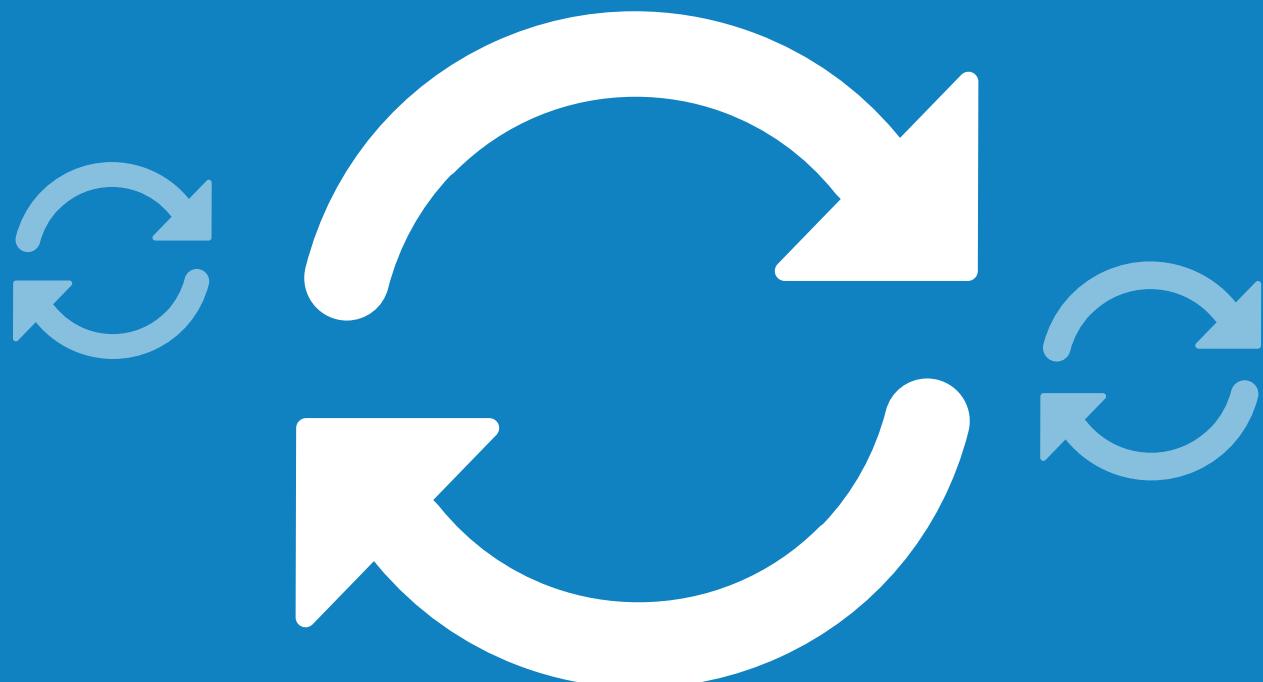
Instagram

✖ Repost all of your photos to other social media sites

There is nothing wrong with sharing some of your Instagram updates to other networks, but don't come across as a spammer. Facebook owns Instagram, so it is very easy to share directly to the site, but pick and choose your battles. Sharing every picture you post on every network may turn off your followers on those networks. Post your most compelling images to other networks and see how users respond. Testing user engagement will be the best way to determine how often you should be posting to other networks.

✖ Post images that are not your own

Not violating copyrights should be common sense to any business, but on Instagram it may be a little fuzzy what you can safely share, and what you need to give credit for. The easiest way to avoid any problems is to only



share pictures that you take. If you are going to share an image that you did not create, be sure to give credit for it. Instagram users are ruthless when it comes to calling out those trying to take credit for an image that they did not produce. Don't get noticed for the wrong reasons.

✖ **Spam the hash tag feature**

Yes, Instagram also allows the use of hash tags. They are just as useful in categorizing your images and making them easier to find, but do not overuse them. While Twitter is able to limit the amount of hash tags used due to character limits in tweets, Instagram allows users much more freedom. Instagram allows very simple hash tags, such as colors, to be used, but that does not mean that you need to. Use hash tags that are specific to your brand and consistent with your other accounts.

✖ **Take generic or obviously posed photographs**

You want your brand to have some personality on Instagram. Don't post generic pictures that look to be carefully staged (i.e. an image of a pristine storefront). Show off a little bit of a wild side. Take pictures that show some spontaneity and fun. You don't want to come off like a stick in the mud on Instagram. Accurately portray your company, but don't feel required to follow a specific formula.

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