

eCourse Outline

How to Create and Implement a Winning Social Media Strategy

1. **What can I expect from social media?**
 - a. Knowledge of your customers/clients
 - b. Direct contact with your customers
 - c. A place to develop and showcase your brand
2. **Planning your Social Media Strategy**
 - a. **Set big-picture goals.** Some examples are:
 - i. Create brand awareness.
 - ii. Engage with your customers directly.
 - iii. Drive website traffic and/or boost online sales.
 - iv. Collect insight and data about your customers.
 - b. **Prioritize.**
 - i. Pick one or two goals that are key to your business strategy.
 - ii. Once you're succeeding at one goal, add another.
 - c. **Survey your current customers.**
 - i. You might ask:
 1. What social media sites do they use?
 2. What websites do they visit for info related to your business?
 3. Do they listen to podcasts? Which ones?
 4. Do they regularly read any blogs or news websites? Which ones?
 - ii. Use online tools like Google Forms or Survey Monkey, or do it the old-fashioned way with pen and paper
 - d. **Determine your audience size.** Use a tool like Facebook Ads Manager.
 - e. **Research your potential audience's online behavior.**
 - i. Pew Research Center's section on social media
 - ii. Tools provided by each social media platform, e.g. Facebook Ad Manager
 - iii. Use Google – search using terms specific to your industry and the social platforms you're using or considering.
 - f. **Establish your brand identity.**
 - i. Set your brand's tone.
 - ii. Create a color palette.

- iii. Focus on your messaging.
- g. Study your competitors.**
 - i. Identify your competitors.
 - ii. Gather data about them.
 1. What social media platforms do they use?
 2. Which platforms do they prioritize, and which ones seem abandoned?
 3. What features are they using on those platforms? (For example, are they using Instagram Reels or Stories, or just regular posts?)
 4. What hashtags are they regularly using?
 5. How often do they post?
 6. How many followers do they have?
 - iii. Use platform tools, e.g. Facebook/Meta's Ad Library.
 - iv. Use paid tools like Sprout or Sociality.io.
- h. Pick your platforms.**
 - i. Focus on one or two first.
 - ii. Top-level driver of platform choice: is your business B2C (business to consumer) or B2B (business to business)?
 - iii. B2C (marketing to end consumers)
 1. Facebook
 - a. Value in deep, personal knowledge of large user base
 - b. Ad platform is main value proposition
 - c. Facebook ads can be a major driver for conversions.
 - d. Use the "lookalike audience" tool.
 - e. Create at least a minimal profile, no matter what.
 2. Instagram
 - a. User base skews younger
 - b. Highly visual
 - c. Be sure content looks great!
 - d. Use Instagram Stories.
 - e. Engage via liking, hashtagging, etc.
 - f. Use Instagram ads for photo, video, and carousel ads.
 3. Twitter
 - a. Very active user base
 - b. Wide use of hashtags provides engagement opportunities
 - c. Potential for benefits without paid ads
 - d. Text-heavy platform; brand identity is key
 4. Pinterest

- a. Visual search engine w/ heavy focus on product search/purchasing
 - b. 81% female user base, and becoming popular with Gen Z users of all genders
 - c. Most popular pins are lifestyle-oriented
- iv. B2B (marketing to other businesses)
 - 1. LinkedIn
 - a. Human resources tool, but also used as a social platform for business
 - b. Make direction connections w/ potential partners/clients
 - c. Join groups and engage directly
 - 2. Quora
 - a. Largest question/answer site
 - b. Place to showcase your knowledge/find clients
 - c. Create a friendly, clear profile with contact info/links
 - d. Especially useful if your business isn't geographically bound (e.g. you can work with clients remotely across North America)
- v. YouTube (B2B and B2C)
 - 1. World's second-largest search engine!
 - 2. Generally requires specialized skills and is time-intensive, but can have a massive impact
 - 3. Also useful for its video hosting/embeds
 - 4. Potential to pay YouTubers for product placement

3. **Creating Content – A Quick How-To**

a. **Image Content**

- i. Use high-quality, professional photos for key website or product images.
- ii. Use candid shots from your phone for social posts and casual usage.
- iii. For Instagram, be extra-picky!

b. **Video Content**

- i. Use clear, readable subtitles.
- ii. Keep it short.
- iii. Upload the video natively (e.g. upload directly to Facebook for Facebook posts, Instagram for Instagram posts, etc.)
- iv. Keep your branding clearly present.
- v. Produce relevant videos.
- vi. Use a "call to action."

c. **Text Content**

- i. Social media copy should be casual/approachable.
- ii. In most cases, keep it VERY short.
- iii. Most posts should have a call to action.
- iv. Engage with others.
- v. Stay positive!

4. General Tips for a Winning Strategy

- a. Create measurable goals.
- b. Adjust your campaigns based on goals/tracking.
- c. Be consistent – post on a schedule.
- d. Be realistic about your resources.
- e. Create a timeline for each platform.