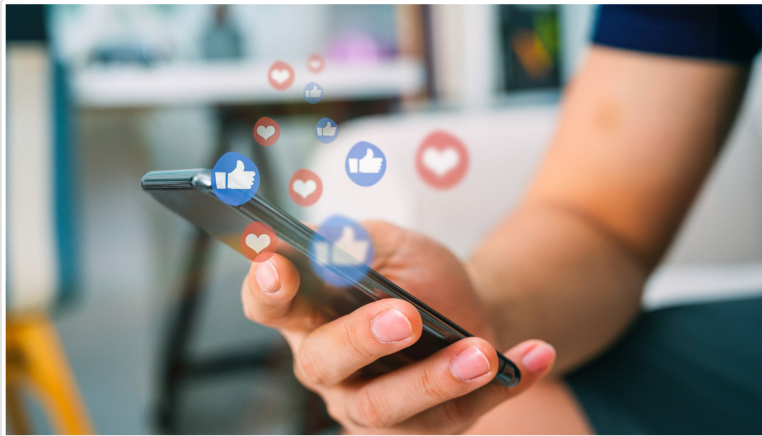


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HOW ENTREPRENEURS CAN MAKE THE MOST OF SOCIAL MEDIA

By Carolyn Alder March 3, 2020

When you're starting a business, establishing a brand on social media is usually one of the last things on your mind. But, given that **73% of marketers** say social media is effective for their business, it's important for startups to get their name on social media as soon as they can.

Establishing a brand on social media is critical for all businesses. For startups, gaining followers on social media can help build hype for a launch and increase the chances of people hearing about your business early on. Yet social media can also consume a lot of your time, which entrepreneurs are usually short on. You need to be effective with your social media strategies to get the most out of it.

Below are some tips to take advantage of the free marketing opportunities on social media. These strategies won't take up hours of your day, but they will help build an online brand and increase your customer base.

DETERMINE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Before you create an account and start posting all over social media, you should do some research on your target market. This research will help you decide what to post, when to post, where to post, and what voice you should use in your posts. It will help narrow your focus so you don't waste time building up an audience that won't actually convert into sales.

Create a few buyer personas, or fictional characters that represent your target audience. These buyer personas will help you understand the demographics and psychographics of your target audience. Using social media, you can actually pick real profiles of people who match your target audience. There are three main strategies you can use to quickly identify buyer personas.

Strategy #1: Look through your own friends list

First, write down some characteristics of people who would use the product or service you are selling. This could include their age, income, education level, gender, occupation, family status, and hobbies. Once you have a decent list, go through your friends list on Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn and find people who align with your list. Chances are that you have some friends who fit within your target audience.

Write down any other defining characteristics that you come across on their profiles. List their names, and see if you can find things in common between them. Is there a TV show or movie genre that they all seem to like? Do they all post about similar things? Take as many notes as you can.

Strategy #2: Go to Facebook groups

If your target audience is young moms, find a Facebook group for young moms. There are a lot of Facebook groups out there, so you are bound to find one that fits your target audience. You might need to get a little creative, but you should be able to find one that checks off at least some of your boxes.

In the group, you should look for...

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- How people communicate, including the words they use and their tone of voice
- What type of posts have the most interaction (videos, personal pictures, inspirational quotes, posts with questions, etc.)
- Any mention of the problem that you are trying to solve

The search tool will be a big help. Use it to search keywords describing the problems your business solves.

Strategy #3: Research your competitors

Hop over to the Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn pages of your competitors. See if any of your friends follow these pages, and take note of who they are. Then, browse through your competitors' followers, clicking into profiles at random. Just like you did with Facebook groups, you should look at how they communicate, which posts have the highest interaction rates, and how people describe their problems on the pages.

If you have a good grasp of who your target audience is, you will be more efficient in talking to them and gaining their trust. You will be better equipped to sell directly to them through your posts.

FIND THE RIGHT SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM FOR YOUR STARTUP

Finding the right social media platform for your startup is a two-fold problem. Entrepreneurs need to determine the best type of content to produce and which platform they should be posting on.

The different types of content include:

- Blogs/written word
- Photos
- Videos
- Podcasts
- Polls and quizzes
- Infographics
- White papers and e-books

Entrepreneurs (and even established businesses) don't have the resources to create all of the above content. They should pick one or two primary types of content to focus on. The type of content should align with the content their target audience prefers to consume.

Entrepreneurs should also keep their team's **own strengths and weaknesses** in mind when choosing a content medium. If they or a team member is good at writing or designing, it will be easier to create blogs or infographics rather than produce podcasts or videos.

The type of content your team is good at creating will help you choose the best social media platform for your startup. If you're going to focus on writing blogs, it will be harder to push your blogs on Instagram than Facebook or Twitter, for example.

Entrepreneurs should also be selective about which social media platform to be active on. It's best to choose one that aligns with your strengths and meets your audience where they are. Answer these questions to narrow down which platform your startup should be on:

- Where is your target market located? That is, do you own a local business that can only serve people in a certain area, or are your customers from all over?
- Which social media platforms do your target market use?
- How long does your target market spend on social media?
- What state of mind is your audience in when visiting that platform? (LinkedIn is better for B2B businesses, whereas Instagram and Facebook are better for B2C.)

Choose one or two social media platforms to start with, and then focus your energy there. Don't start an account on every single platform. You will spread yourself too thin and won't be able to give enough attention to the ones that matter. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that all businesses are on Facebook or Instagram so you should be too. Maybe Pinterest, TikTok, or LinkedIn would be better for your business model.

CREATE CONTINUOUS CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Now that you have identified your target audience and selected the best social media platform for your startup, you need to create content. This is where many startups start pulling out their hair. Either they set unrealistic goals and are disappointed when they can't keep up with them, or they just post when they want with no strategy and don't see results. The number one reason social media strategies fail and businesses don't grow their presence is because businesses stop producing content.

Posting continuous content on social media takes time, but it doesn't need to suck up hours every week. The trick is to document what you're doing along the way, not carve out time out of your busy schedule to create content.

Document through videos and photos

One of the easiest ways startups can create content along the way is to take videos. Everyone has a phone with a camera, and most of those phone cameras are able to take high-quality videos. Entrepreneurs can document their process and share it on social media. They can film videos of them actually doing the work, or they can take a selfie video providing updates on what is going on with their business.

Videos are great because they can be repurposed for several different means. Longer videos can be uploaded to YouTube, while shorter video edits can be used on Instagram and Facebook. The video could also be posted on the business' website as a stand-alone blog. If you want it to rank and improve your SEO, you could write a small blog under it with target keywords.

The video could also be used as a resource for a blog post. Entrepreneurs can hire a copywriter to write a blog post about the topic they are talking about in the video. Videos are great because they can be taken at essentially any time (except while driving in the car or in a quiet public place).

Documenting your process also means taking photos when possible. You might feel a little embarrassed taking selfie videos or posting amateur pictures with your cell phone at first, but the real content is what your customers want to see. If you include your customers in the process of growing your business, they will be cheering you on when you have successes.

Taking photos and videos as you work on your business is the easiest way to create a never-ending stream of content.

Batch your social media content

Batching is a popular social media strategy that will save you a lot of time in the long-run. Essentially, you do your social media in batches, taking a chunk of time all at once to create content for the rest of the week or the rest of the month.

The first step to batching is coming up with ideas for posting on social media. Look at other business' social media accounts for inspiration, and brainstorm as many ideas as you can think of. Because you are in the mindset of posting on social media, you're open to more ideas than you would be if you were scrambling for a post early on a Monday morning.

You can either create the posts right then and there with photos, videos or other images you already have, or you can outline it and fill it in with content later. Complete as much of the work as you can during this time. You should use a [social media scheduler](#) to prepare the finished posts for the rest of the week or month.

When you batch your social media content, you get it out of the way so you don't have to worry about it for a little bit. It also helps you see your social posts all together so you can make sure you're not being repetitive or posting the same style of content every single time.

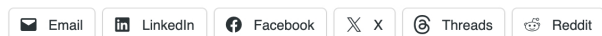
It's important to keep your eyes open for good content before it's time to do another batch. Save interesting posts that you see while scrolling on Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn. You can circle back to them when it's time to schedule out your next batch of posts.

BE EFFECTIVE WITH YOUR BUSINESS' SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

We all love social media and hate it at the same time, both for ourselves and for our businesses. It can gobble up a lot of our time if we are not careful, which is why you should create a social media strategy based on your target audience and preferred social media platforms.

Document the process of starting your business as you go — including the behind-the-scenes work of you pulling all-nighters or bringing in friends and family to paint your new space before opening day. Take a few hours to schedule posts for the future, and always be on the lookout for good posts. If done right, you can create an engaged following of people who love your brand and are rooting you on during the process of growing your business.

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July 13, 2021 at 2:26 pm

I have learned a lot with this interesting information! Thank you!

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VALERIA TAIBO says:

July 10, 2022 at 8:15 pm

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