

Real-time marketing

The news cycle in the age of social media is fast-paced and ever-changing. A story might break on Twitter and—in what feels like an instant—the discussion might suddenly end. In this reading, you’ll learn how to market in real time so that your content remains fresh and interesting to your audience as the news cycle on social media changes.

The importance of real-time marketing

Real-time marketing (RTM) is marketing that is happening in real time. RTM is often implemented on social media because of how quickly commentary and engagement takes place there. If millions of users are talking about a big story on social media, brands will want to be a part of the conversation in an attempt to boost engagement. Capitalizing on these moments can have a huge payoff for brands that do it right. Real-time marketing is an opportunity for companies to connect with their audiences and position their brand wherever they want in certain discussions. So, the question is, what does it take for a brand to effectively market in real time?

Effective RTM

Effective RTM can be incredibly powerful for your brand. To successfully market in real time, your content must be:

- **Relevant:** What is happening right now? What is most of the discussion about on social media at this very moment?
- **Clever:** How can you package your content in a way that shows your brand’s personality and wit?
- **Fresh:** If the trending topic happened Wednesday and you weren’t able to turn around a piece of content until Thursday, is it still fresh enough to get engagement?
- **On-target:** Is this trending topic or current event of interest to your audience?
- **Attention-grabbing:** What will it take for people to see your post, stop scrolling, and engage with it immediately?

RTM strategies

Now that you have an idea of what makes a real-time post engaging, follow these tactics to capitalize on trends and successfully market in real time:

Always be listening. A company’s social media manager will typically be the first to know about trends that are relevant to any real-time marketing plans, so keeping communication open with the social team is important. If you are a member of the social team, aim to be present on social media as often as possible so you can catch any trending topics that might be worth capitalizing on.

Use your brand’s resources. If you have a design team and a copyediting team, enlist their help to create quick, clever posts of the highest quality possible.

Leverage social media influencers. If your brand partners with social media influencers, ask them to help amplify your RTM assets by reposting them or interacting with them.

Know where the conversation is happening. There will be moments that happen on one social media platform that may not be a topic of discussion on others. Make sure you engage in the conversation where people are talking about it.

Promote some of your posts. Since algorithms determine when and to whom your organic posts are shown on different platforms, your RTM post may not reach a large enough audience in time to still be relevant using organic means alone. This could be a good opportunity to promote the post to generate more engagement and potential new followers. A **promoted post** is a social media post that you pay the platform to make more visible.

Key takeaways

Social media users can become desensitized to current events and trending topics quickly because of the fast-paced nature of the news cycle. The best way to stay relevant and boost engagement is to capitalize on those moments through real-time marketing. Aim to create content that your audience will find relevant, clever, fresh, on-target, and attention-grabbing.

Mark as completed

