

# Social Media Marketing



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## **1. Disclaimer**

This information memorandum is to introduce the subject matter and provide a general idea and information on the said matter. Although, the material included in this document is based on data/information gathered from various reliable sources; however, it is based upon certain assumptions, which may differ from case to case. The information has been provided on as is where is basis without any warranties or assertions as to the correctness or soundness thereof.

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## **2. Introduction to SMEDA**

Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) is an apex SME development agency working under the Ministry of Industries and Production (MoI&P), Government of Pakistan. In pursuit of its mission, SMEDA has adopted an integrated strategy that comprises SME sectors & clusters development, Business Development Services (BDS), and Policy advocacy to protect and promote SME interests.

SMEDA offers a broad spectrum of business development services to SME which include prefeasibility studies, identification of experts and consultants, delivery of need based capacity building programs in addition to business guidance through help desk services.

## **3. Purpose of Document**

This document is a demonstrative guide for new / start-up entrepreneurs who are interested in promoting their business through the use of Social Media Marketing; how Social Media can be used for the benefit of marketing and promoting their businesses, particularly businesses categorized as Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

## **4. Social Media Marketing (SMM)**

The use of websites and social media platforms to promote your product, service, brand or idea is called Social Media Marketing (SMM).

Social Media Marketing is done by creating and sharing content on social media networks to achieve a business's marketing goals. The content can be in the form of text, images or/and videos, all designed to generate audience engagement. Most social media platforms will allow you to freely market your businesses to ascertain extent, while also offering various enhanced options for paid promotion.

## 5. Develop a Social Media Marketing Plan

Social Media Marketing Strategy is driven by the type of business you have. There are a few things you need to consider before designing a Social Media Marketing plan, such as;

- What do you hope to achieve through social media marketing?
- Who is your target audience?
- How can you reach your target audience and what is their social media use pattern.
- What message do you want to communicate?

### For Example:

If you have an e-commerce business (for e.g. Alibaba, OLX), you can benefit from a strong Facebook or Instagram presence, as most of the marketing content will be visual in nature, i.e. pictures, videos, graphics etc.

On the other hand a business to business marketing company whose target audience will be professionals and other businesses, may benefit more from a strong LinkedIn or Twitter presence.

## 6. Advantages of Social Media Marketing

Following are some of the key benefits of using Social Media Marketing to promote your business;

### i. Increased Brand Awareness/Recognition:

Potential customers, otherwise unaware of your business, are more likely to come across your brand name through social media. Implementing your advertising and marketing ideas through basic social media tools; such as creating an active business page/profile on one or two select social media platforms, will increase your businesses visibility resulting in increased recognition and awareness.

**For Example:**

ABC Air Travel Services is a travel & tours agency, and it provides services all across the world. Their target market are all those people who have an interest in travelling, tourism and sightseeing. In order to attract their potential customers and to develop brand awareness the business maintains an active Facebook page and they regularly post picturesque and beautiful images from different countries and travel destinations.

As a result not only are their posts attractive and pleasing, but at the same time they capture the interest of prospective travellers/tourists. It is common for most of their customers to have planned a vacation after coming across attractive images and information regarding a destination, shared by ABC Air Travel Services through Facebook.

**ii. Higher Conversion Rates (Better Market Penetration):**

With the brand recognition that can be attained through social media, the probability of acquiring new customers automatically increases. If your social media campaign is effective, customers from competing brands will find it attractive to try out your product or switch, thereby increasing your market share.

**iii. Better Customer Satisfaction and Improved Brand Loyalty:**

Social media allows you to create a voice for your company. You can use this communication channel to respond to your customer's messages or comments, this humanizes your business and allows you to form a connection with customers. When customers feel like they have a relationship with your business, they tend to be loyal to your brand and may even promote it.

**iv. Cost Effective (Decreased Marketing Costs):**

Most social media platforms allow you to create free pages or profiles for your businesses. The time and money needed to create social media content so is so low that start-ups and new businesses can easily take advantage of this medium to promote their business. Paid advertisement on social media is also relatively cheap yet effective if you understand your target market well.

New businesses are advised to start with a basic social media presence. After getting familiar with the dynamics of this medium, you can steadily increase the time and resources you dedicate towards SMM.

**v. Gain Marketplace (Customer) Insights:**

Social media helps you obtain valuable information about what your customers want and how they behave, by observing what they say about you, your products, the competition and any other topic they seem interested in. You can modify your content, marketing strategy, as well as your products, based on the insights you get by studying customers over social media.

## 7. Social Media Marketing Tips

Following are a few tips for small and medium sized businesses regarding the use of Social Media Marketing

1. You need to **make a commitment** to social media: SMM can be quite challenging and will require persistent and planned efforts. Get training and study about social media content development, or you may hire a social media content manager
2. **Show off the positive aspects of your personality:** in your marketing campaign, your personality should complement your brand to make it more relatable and desirable
3. **Pay special attention to customer feedback:** when your customers take out the time to contact you, be sure that you listen to them. You should build your media program around that feedback you receive
4. **Maintain focus:** your SMM efforts should be focused on no more than one or two platforms in the beginning
5. **Narrow your targeted audience** and focus all your efforts accordingly
6. **Find what you are passionate about** and what you stand for, then formulate your social media campaign accordingly
7. Use **short videos** wherever suitable: people have short attention spans on social media, so keep videos interesting and to the point.
8. You should provide a **consistent brand image** across all social media platforms as well as other communication channels. The colours, themes, language and approach that your brand uses should be cohesive across all platforms
9. You should monitor your Ad performance closely to **keep campaigns fresh**, but at the same time, be sure to **carefully select your content**, and focus on quality and relevance rather than quantity.

## 8. Choosing the Most Suitable Social Media Platform<sup>1</sup>

### a. Facebook<sup>2</sup>

Facebook's casual, friendly environment requires an active social media marketing strategy. Start by creating a Facebook Business Fan Page. You will want to pay

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<sup>1</sup> "Social Media Marketing for Business", WordStream, <https://www.wordstream.com/social-media-marketing>

<sup>2</sup> "Comparing Social Media Platforms for Marketing", ThriveHive (2017), <https://thrivehive.com/comparing-social-media-platforms-for-marketing/>

careful attention to layout, as the visual component is a key aspect of the Facebook experience.

Facebook is a place people go to relax and chat with friends, so keep your tone light and friendly. And remember, organic reach on Facebook can be extremely limited, so consider a cost-effective Facebook ad strategy, which can have a big impact on your organic Facebook presence as well.

45% of Facebook users are over the age of 35 and users in the 55+ age range are on the rise. So, if your target audience is on the younger side you may do better with other social media platforms.

#### **b. YouTube**

YouTube is the number one place for creating and sharing video content, and it can also be an incredibly powerful social media marketing tool. Many businesses try to create video content with the aim of having their video “go viral,” but in reality those chances are pretty slim. Instead, focus on creating useful, instructive “how-to” videos. These how-to videos also have the added benefit of ranking on the video search results of Google, don't under-estimate the power of video content!

YouTube does not provide the option of real-time private communication with subscribers. It is advisable to link your YouTube channel to some other platform, such as Facebook, if you want better customer interaction.

#### **c. LinkedIn**

LinkedIn is a social media marketing site focused more towards professionals. LinkedIn Groups is a great venue for entering into a professional dialog with people in similar industries and provides a place to share content with like-minded individuals. It's also great for posting jobs and general employee networking.

Encourage customers or clients to give your business a recommendation on your LinkedIn profile. Recommendations makes your business appear more credible and reliable for new customers. Also browse the Questions section of LinkedIn; providing answers helps you get established as a thought leader and earns trust.

If your target market is younger, below the age of 20, they are not likely to be on LinkedIn. Similarly, if you are trying to promote your brand to households (as opposed to businesses/professionals) LinkedIn may not be a suitable platform.

#### **d. Instagram<sup>3</sup>**

Instagram is a premium place to market your business and reach consumers. Demographically, Instagram users are mostly made up of 15-35-year-olds. Also, nearly half of them are professionals or have college degrees. Instagram users are 58 times more likely to share an Instagram post than one from Facebook and 120 times more likely than a Twitter post. Those numbers alone are convincing enough if you are unsure about using Instagram ads for your business.

Instagram provides the perfect arena to create your brand's voice and personality. Associating your product or service with a specific look, lifestyle or activity helps users to easily relate to it and incorporate it into their lives.

In Instagram posts and direct messages do not support clickable links, therefore, it is important to make the posts easy for users to copy and paste or remember and recall.

#### **e. Twitter**

Twitter is the social media marketing tool that lets you broadcast your updates across the web. Follow tweeters in your industry or related fields, and you should gain a steady stream of followers in return.

Mix up your official tweets about specials, discounts, and news with fun, brand-building tweets. Be sure to retweet when a customer has something nice to say about you, and don't forget to answer people's questions when possible. Using Twitter as a social media marketing tool revolves around dialog and communication, so be sure to interact as much as possible to nurture and build your following.

Keep in mind the 140-character limit per post, when considering Twitter to market your business.

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<sup>3</sup>"Comparing Social Media Platforms for Marketing", ThriveHive (2017), <https://thrivehive.com/comparing-social-media-platforms-for-marketing/>



### **Some Social Media Etiquettes for Businesses**

Following are some dos and don'ts that businesses should be mindful of when communicating through social media:

- Do not post any messages that may have political implications, it is best if businesses appear politically neutral
- Your posts should not be vague, everyone in your target audience should understand the message
- Respond to comments and messages as quick as possible
- Keep your business pages/profile separate from your personal posts/profiles.
- When sharing someone else's content, be sure to give credit and indicate the source
- Avoid posting anything that may be offensive or inappropriate for anyone in your target market
- Do not overshare; one to two posts per day are enough.