How To Do User Growth

This blog post was translated by Mistral

We all need users for personal branding, company branding, products, and selling things. But with mobile internet developed for ten years, internet relationships becoming fixed, and traffic on various platforms tending to stabilize, how do we do user growth?

Everyone has experience with posting things that get a lot of likes in their social circle, which helps build a personal brand. Getting a lot of likes once is not difficult, but consistently having many friends who like your posts is. This can be quite tiring, constantly trying to attract attention. One answer is to post various types of content, such as selfies, lifestyle photos, travel photos, sharing life events, work, achievements, and sharing sad events. Share everything in a genuine way. In the past, I used to post a lot about my startup's events on my live streaming platform, but the likes became fewer and fewer. One day, I shared family photos and childhood photos, and shared family stories, and I received a lot of likes again. I realized, ah, I need to change it up, rotate the content. This startup thing is quite surprising.1. The same applies to managing a public account. When we run a company, we share everything about it - company introductions, team stories, experiences, and daily stories. When we belong to an industry, we share everything about it. Our target audience is who and what they want to see.

I have been experimenting with short videos on TikTok this year, publishing over 50 videos and gaining several hundred fans, with a total of 15,000 views. I have also written over 40 articles on my public account. I have been casual about my content, not really caring if anyone reads it or not. However, we all want a larger impact. One day, I realized my problem. Although my content was acceptable in my social circle, it was not particularly interesting or useful on a larger scale. I shared too much from my perspective, without considering what others needed.

In 2017, some of my articles had over 4,000 to 5,000 reads, with a few articles exceeding 10,000 reads. During my time at a knowledge sharing live broadcasting platform, I hosted several dozen live sessions, with an average of 2,000 to 3,000 visitors per session and around 300 to 400 participants. In 2018, I transitioned to software outsourcing and stopped doing media work, and I didn't make any new friends. In 2020, I casually tried again and found it difficult to gain followers or make new friends. The average number of views for my videos was around 1,000, with a few videos exceeding 10,000 views.

The articles with over 10,000 or nearly 10,000 reads were about my entrepreneurial beginnings, fundraising stories, and the transformation of my outsourcing company from losing money to making a profit. The videos with over 10,000 views were about growth stories, wedding announcements, taking wedding photos, and stories about my fiancée. The content and readership were closely related. The growth on my WeChat was also quite predictable.

How to create good content. Create content that your friends will patiently watch multiple times and like, let alone a stranger on the internet. It's even more challenging to create content that a stranger will patiently watch multiple times and like. First, create content that your friends will watch patiently from start to finish and like, let alone a stranger on the internet. I face which crowd? What will I become after doing it for a long time? What kind of content should I make to satisfy their desires? What is the desire of society? What is the desire of this industry? What are everyone concerned about? How can I make the content more interesting and useful?

I make random short videos without any intention to attract attention or seek forwarding. I have posted several tens of works on TikTok and Video. Of course, we all do it for the sake of earning some money in reality. When I started seriously intending to do it, I suddenly understood why it was like this. Every like, every view, every time I was moved, was so logical and orderly.

We face our own content, and we may not know the good and bad of our own content. But when we look at others, we know. Why don't I want to read that article? Why don't I want to watch that video? We feel that our hard-written articles and videos are not worth being so honest with ourselves, which is too harsh. However, if we evaluate others' articles and videos, we know why. Users are indeed picky, onlookers are indeed picky, and netizens are indeed picky.

This world, it's not easy to make others pay for us. We need to give first before asking for their help. If we want the audience to spread it voluntarily, we need to make the content exceptionally good. If we want friends to help share it, we need to accumulate goodwill and care for them.

Relying on personal initiative. When we work as freelancers and earn money through a certain skill, we don't need thousands of WeChat friends when we hire people or look for jobs. Having around 5000 WeChat friends makes it quite satisfying. In "How to Recruit and Find Jobs," we also mentioned this method, meeting many industry friends is very helpful.

I realized that I might not add new friends anymore, but if someone adds me, I will gladly accept. If it's a normal friend who doesn't sell things to me or immediately send me ads, I will happily make a friend. I will chat with them for a while and get to know them better. Then, based on my habit, I will occasionally check their Moments and occasionally give a like to new acquaintances.

In 2017, I mixed in some high-end groups and met some tech gurus, stars, entrepreneurs, and conference guests as friends. Of course, several years have passed, and I have disturbed some friends due to some untrustworthy actions, and some have deleted me. However, some of the friends we have helped each other, some we greet once a year, and some I silently follow.

I mentioned before that the number of WeChat friends or friends is not the key, whether we actively add each other or not, but whether we genuinely want to be friends. In life and work, we have to actively approach some people, which is normal. But what should we add people for? We need to think carefully. No one

wants to be treated as a fan, unless we are particularly influential. And as an engineer or a freelancer, we often join related groups to add many friends through hiring, looking for jobs, or seeking cooperation, which is reasonable and understandable.

Sometimes when I read recruitment articles, I read thousands, but there may only be a few dozen who actively contact me and add me on WeChat. If we all know who they are and we have actively learned about and gotten to know them, isn't it better to recruit them in person? though we may seem actively adding friends, we are quite low. Yet, this is indeed an effective method. Adding friends, either you add me or I add you, what difference does it make? The key lies in what we intend to do, whether we can bring value to the other party, otherwise adding friends is useless. This is hard to tell, as life is long and the lifetime value of customers and friends is hard to gauge at a glance. Therefore, sincere friendship is all the more important. We may have WeChat friends whom we haven't spoken to for years, but when we need them, they become invaluable. After all, let us strive to make the world a little better every day, and it might just reward us.

I have come to realize that every friend is busy with work and life, and unless it's a matter closely related to me, I won't bother with it. The friend circle is just something I casually browse when I have free time.

At first, we thought making friends online was too efficient and effective. Suddenly, we met so many people. However, time will tell us that we cannot shortcut the process. We need to make an effort to get to know industry friends, then visit and cooperate with upstream and downstream friends.

Either we create exceptional content and convert visitors, or we actively and sincerely approach industry friends. It's like courting, where one party must take the initiative.

Relying on cooperation. I collaborated with several hosts on Quzhou Live, creating and sharing several dozen knowledge live sessions with nearly a million views. This was mainly due to collaboration. I teamed up with industry influencers to co-host a live session. I put up a QR code in the live room, added them to user groups, and chatted with them. We operated through a WeChat public account website and WeChat group circles. This year, they were discussing private domain traffic. I've been doing this since 2016. For me, who had nothing back then, this was a natural method. Most of my friends were on WeChat. I also believe entrepreneurship is difficult, and after doing Quzhou Live, I might still do other products. I can't be one-dimensional. In 2014, I made a campus application called "Handheld Query Grades" for my school, which could access the school's grade system on Android phones through web crawling. I added some friends through the app using QQ numbers.

In the past, when I wanted to collaborate with industry experts to host a live session, I was shy and just sent a message to ask. Collaboration is crucial, but it's not just about sending a message. You need to tell the other party what exactly you'll be doing and how the process will go. We need to be sincere and professional. When I bring a host into many WeChat groups, some may feel confused because some might just want to share some content and enjoy a peaceful life. We consider all situations to make everyone

happier, so we can cooperate with more people.

Many times, people don't want to collaborate because we haven't even asked. We need to understand each other's desires, figure out what everyone wants, and what they need. We describe the company background and cooperation items clearly using PPT or documents. We communicate better through voice chats and face-to-face meetings.

This is a very effective method because it's sincere and efficient. In fact, dealing with people is all about cooperation. Growth through content is also cooperation. This refers to the cooperation between two people or two companies, involving resource exchange.

Cooperate to win, consider each other's interests, make things fair, communicate sincerely and openly, work together, and do your best at your own job while assisting your friends. Relying on money

Using money to buy traffic for ads is a common method for companies, especially in the current environment. I tried using Dou+ to buy a 99 yuan hot promotion, which gave me an exposure of ten thousand, let's see. They said Douyin is useless with money, it's all about content. This requires calculating costs and benefits. For a personal small team, it's basically impossible. Big companies often play the water treading game here. But why do we still use money for promotion? Because it seems there's no other efficient and effective method. Relying on money, it's a cooperation between the platform and us. In the end, everyone is smart and calculates their interests carefully. Cooperating with the platform and with influencers, we can hardly get a good deal. I think the most we can do is earn back our costs in the long run, which is a method only big companies can afford. Promotion and traffic consumption are costly.

Lastly, the first three methods can be used simultaneously. Do everything with sincerity and put effort into every task. Many things are like that, aren't they? We really want to earn money to support ourselves, and it's possible. This trillion-plus GDP, there should be a way for us to get a piece of it.

Indeed, in the current environment, it's relatively easier for individuals to support themselves. With hard work, one can earn a little more. Small and medium entrepreneurial teams are more challenging, requiring team management, everyone contributing their entrepreneurial spirit and determination to run a micro business. Big companies, with more people, experience, users, resources, money, also have advantages. In this current environment, how to do user growth and what to learn to create value and make money are experiences. Natural growth methods are not easy, as they are long-term effective methods. We need to have a selfless mindset, immersed in content creation, helping people, and immersed in things, working hard without seeking returns, and we may unexpectedly receive rewards in the end.

Perhaps one day, our content will have a stranger raving about it. Our deeds will leave a stranger in awe. Our actions truly make society better. Our content, products, or stories begin to spread naturally in the crowd. Once we reach that stage, we may no longer care about user growth and just focus on doing and serving.