# How to Get Started with Social Media

Social media occupies an increasing slice of our time as consumers and doesn’t show signs of stopping. While it is always changing, a business owner needs to have a strategy for continual interaction and improvement of the platforms that customers interact with in their day-to-day lives.

The 4 pillars of social media marketing are: customer, resources, goals, and budget. Bearing those in mind we can begin building our overall strategy by shifting our marketing focus from ourselves to our customers. Mapping their pain points and creating content to solve their problems is a great first step in building a social media strategy. By doing market research with google search and exploring customers and potential customers profiles online you can begin to refine where to best use your resources. Meeting your clients where they are online is paramount to success. Exploring Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Pinterest, and Snap Chat to find your target market is key.

Resources available for social media marketing are plentiful. Understanding that most social media will be digested on mobile devices, allows you to create content on the same ubiquitous devices as well. Integrating your mobile device as a content tool will allow you to create, share and interact with customers in a timely manner and experience your content the same way they likely are. This is not to say more powerful desktop tools can’t be used as well, and content management systems like Hootsuite will provide a more streamlined experience as you develop your social media presence. But, utilizing the mobile first approach is a great way to get started.

Your goals should be clearly outlined and documented for social media marketing. One great place to start with this process is to craft a social media policy document. This will help set the tone and boundaries of how you’ll represent your business online. Beyond that, and with the information gathered from the first two steps, you can begin to focus more on the details. Where and how are your clients spending time on social media? How do they interact with other businesses or brands? Outline the answers to these questions and decide where to best spend your time and budget on social media.

Concerning the budget; while many social media impressions can be gained for free, it is worth noting that promotional posts will often cost money. It is important to understand that platforms like Facebook are “pay-to-play” and will require a marketing campaign budget to reach wider audiences. Determining how much to spend on these and similar campaigns will be decided by your businesses budget and where your customers are spending their time.

Overall, offering valuable content in the form of infographics, instructional videos, Q&A livestreams for products, showcasing images of products or creating written content can all be valuable to solving problems your customers have. Keep in mind that the social media landscape is always evolving and the tone of each platform is very different as well. A successful social media presence is one that adapts to trends and changes and is responsive to customer questions and feedback. Be prepared to promptly answer questions or address concerns, whether in public comments or in direct messages; while sticking to the tone and code of conduct you outlined in your social media policy.

Quiz Results:

Graphical user interface, text, application, email

Description automatically generated

LinkedIn Certificate:

Text

Description automatically generated