



How to Build a Social Media Campaign

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Introduction

It's no secret that business-to-business marketing has shifted in profound ways in the last several years. Not long ago, general consensus ruled; the best online marketing dollars were spent exclusively on then cutting-edge tools like webinars and email blasts. Now, thankfully, we have sharper tools that allow us to reach business customers more succinctly and to track the efficiency of our marketing dollars. Today it's widely recognized that talking at our business customers is not as good as talking with these customers. This is the essence of social media campaigns.

What is Social Media?

Social media is media (words, photos, videos, etc.) that is spread through social interaction chiefly using individual communication networks. Popular web-based social media technologies include Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Unlike the traditional advertising paradigm that spreads information from one source to many, social media promotes peer-to-peer communication and gives individuals the choice to opt in, or out, of virtual conversations. With social media, consumers of media turn into producers of media—either through photo and video sharing, blog posting, or other forms of content dissemination.

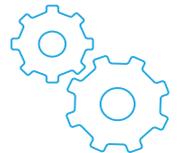


Social media sites host content created predominantly by an army of online participants—individuals devoted to and driven by diverse interests and passions. Participants are not just individual consumers at home—they are also professionals using the same tools to solve problems and succeed at work.

What is Social Media Marketing?

Conducting a social media marketing campaign means actively starting conversations online, pushing content, asking questions, driving traffic and expanding visibility. As you create links and blog mentions, interested consumers see these and click through.

Jumpstart your Social Media Marketing Campaign:



- » Use social media forums and tools to reach customers
- » Participate in online conversations
- » Listen to what people are saying about your brand, product, or company
- » Engage in relevant conversations to improve brand image or decrease brand damage
- » Comment on blog posts
- » Answer questions
- » Respond to accolades or criticisms

Social Media Campaigns - How They Can Benefit Your Business

Social referral traffic is accounting for an increasing number of companies' website traffic every day and will only continue to grow in importance. **By implementing a thoughtful social media campaign you can:**



Create Buzz

Buzz is all about riding the current wave of media—and creating buzz means adopting the latest media to promote your message. Today this means leveraging social media. You can create buzz by building a legitimate social media voice and developing influence within your community.



Generate Traffic

Optimizing your use of social media increases the probability that people will pass along your message, product or website through online social networks. Your message will be disseminated to new and diverse crowds and bring new visitors to you. Make sure you are only one click away by including social sharing buttons on all relevant pages across your website.



Generate Leads

In every industry, in every social network there are people at the center of the conversation – the influencers. You can win over your industry's influencers by engaging with them. Build a direct relationship. Let them try your product. If you win them over, these influencers will pitch your company and products online on your behalf in subtle and not so subtle ways. With their blessing, qualified leads will start to come your way.



Join the Conversation

With the recent expansion in social media, a greater level of corporate transparency has arrived. The success of consumer opinion sites like Yelp and Get Satisfaction demonstrate that individuals and their experiences matter and hold sway over other consumers. Identify social networks where consumers are already talking about your brand and engage in the conversation to learn how your brand is perceived and accepted. Or, if no one is talking about your business, research and test which channels respond best to your product or business. Not every social network is a great fit for every business.



Work with Your Customers

Social media for business means listening to what is being said about your product or company. An abundance of monitoring tools allow you to keep a proverbial finger on the pulse. In a world of co-creation, it pays to get your customers involved instead of ignoring them. For example, ratings, reviews and Q&A sites like Yelp or Quora are popular, credible sites in the eyes of consumers. Sites such as these can serve as an ideal spot for your customers' reviews.



Build Your Reputation

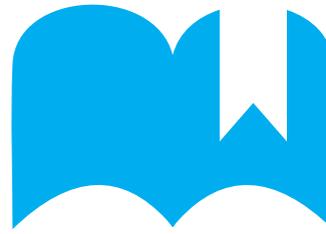
There are certain kinds of content that naturally spread in social media for business. (Just think of the last YouTube video link you were sent.) Regardless of product or service, you can always create relevant content to reach your audience. Content can be as simple as timely blog posts or as involved as short documentary videos.

Key Tenets of Social Media Campaigns

Social media consists of three core facets:

1. **Monitoring and listening**
2. **Engaging and participating**
3. **Influencing**

The goal of any social media campaign is #3 – Influencing. However, you cannot influence without having first monitored and listened, engaged and participated. If you attempt to shortcut the process and start with influencing you will fall short. Your campaign will likely perform poorly and you may even create negative reactions to your brand.



Social media activities can happen in three venues:

1. **On your site (i.e. your blog, application, website)**
2. **On your social networks (i.e. your Facebook page, your LinkedIn Page, your Twitter page)**
3. **On the social sphere (i.e. LinkedIn groups, Q&A sites, other blogs)**

When planning a social media campaign, you control where you wish to focus your energies and how much you choose to invest in each locale. Typically a holistic approach will yield the best results. Plan a comprehensive campaign, which tailors the appropriate types of materials for each place, but always ensure your message is aligned.

Outlining Your Social Media Campaign - Seven Steps to Success



Social media campaigns are similar to other traditional marketing campaigns in that strategy, implementation and measurement each play an important role. In this white paper we'll walk you through the seven critical steps needed to execute a successful social media campaign. They are:

1. **Plan Your Campaign**
2. **Create Great Content**
3. **Set-Up Landing Pages**
4. **Create Optimal "Lure Language"**
5. **Distribute Links via Social Media Channels**
6. **Track and Monitor**
7. **Iterate and Refine**

By engaging in thoughtful social media campaigns your brand or product will become increasingly visible and relevant online, and at the same time, you will become more plugged into the pulse of your consumer base than ever.



How to create a successful Social Marketing Campaign on a tiny budget!

Social media marketing is growing by leaps and bounds and today's businesses are starting to allocate more and more of their marketing budget to social media. As social becomes even more widespread, a good marketer can't afford to ignore this channel, even if constrained by budget. Even without any resources aside from time, and imagination, the savvy marketer can extract benefits from today's social media marketplace.

Useful Tips for Social Marketing on a Dime

- » Monitor the web for conversations about your industry, product and brand. Do so via RSS feeds, Twitter, Google alerts, and other social media tools. Comment when appropriate and include your brand name and a link if possible.
- » Join the conversation—don't be promotional, be helpful—and earn trust.
- » Make a personal connection—become a face, not just a name. Use the same name (use it always), post a good picture, be as transparent as possible, and always be honest.
- » Offer help.
- » Expand your network, including fans, followers, and subscribers. Make it easy for people to find you and to join your network.
- » Create relevant and targeted content. Create the right content based on what you are hearing, and be generous with your content and links.
- » Be patient

Step 1 - Plan Your Campaign

Well begun is half done is an adage which captures the essence of a social marketing campaign. Astute marketers know that thoughtful preparation is a necessary first step in executing any kind of marketing campaign, and social media campaigns are no exception. However, there are particular nuances specific to social media campaign planning.



Follow this process and you'll be on your way:

- 1. Define the goal.** First you need to decide if your goal is to build awareness for your product or brand, drive traffic to your site, attain leads, or convert leads to customers. You may have multiple goals that are not mutually exclusive. Even so, decide which one is your primary goal. This will frame your focus and will drive all other planning decisions.
- 2. Quantify the goal.** Find a metric that aligns with your goals and set an ambitious target. Metrics that you can use include: number of impressions, visits, leads, tweets, likes, retweets, etc.
- 3. Identify your audience.** You may provide a service or product that has mass appeal but, for this campaign, perhaps you want to target your messages to one vertical industry. Before you create content for your campaign, it is important to identify whom you'll be marketing to.
- 4. Select your key message points.** What is the crux of your message? Is it a hook, an offer, a direct product placement, or perhaps a thought leadership lure? One item of note - data has shown that lures typically work better than direct product placements.
- 5. Choose your social media marketing channels.** Will your campaign be a comprehensive one focusing on multiple social media sites or will you devote your activities to one channel such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc.?
- 6. Define a project timeline.** Does your plan cover a week, a month or a year? This will surely affect the frequency and types of messages you plan to deliver.
- 7. Put mechanics in place to execute against your timeline.** Create an editorial calendar which clearly maps out the messages you intend to use, as well as where you'll use them and when.
- 8. Logistically plan how you will capture the metrics that you've already decided to use to quantify your success.** Assess various measurement tools and resources that are at your disposal and put the tools into place.
- 9. Expect the best, but plan for the worst.** Social media campaigns – for better and for worse – can have a life of their own. “Any press is good press,” no longer applies. Do some contingency planning up front, just in case your messaging goes viral for all the wrong reasons and you need to re-adjust. Think of it like insurance; hopefully you'll never have to use it, but it's there just in case.

Step 2 - Create Great Content

Once you've got a plan, the next step is to create content. Social media marketing is rooted in content creation. When good content is exposed, people link to it in a multitude of ways. This act of linking often improves your search engine rankings. Social media marketing begins with content posted on a blog, page, account or profile to get a discussion started. As the poster of content, you get to control the links, keywords and often the rules of engagement. Social media marketing can happen on your site, but often happens off your site.



The creation of great content is often overlooked in the overall and sometimes overwhelming push to optimize websites. But good, and even great, content should not be pushed aside or overlooked; it is critical in a number of ways and should not be an afterthought, but a key part of any SEO and branding strategy. While the primary goal of your social media campaign may not be to improve your search optimization, it is frequently an added benefit.

Part of the challenge for marketers today is to produce content regularly—with this new dynamic, traditionally static websites no longer cut it. Content marketing means constantly generating new and relevant content as a means to connect with customers. As marketers we need to create original and compelling content to use in our search engine optimization (SEO) and social media programs. This includes asking questions, setting up polls, creating videos—really anything to get a buzz or a discussion going.

You might say a new virtual circle exists; customers succeed more often in finding timely information online, therefore they search more frequently, and the smart marketers are the ones who continuously provide fresh content to meet this demand. The marketers who stick to old ways—standing behind static and outdated content—are missing a great opportunity.



Creating and sharing thoughtful content can also position a member of your company as a thought leader in your industry.

There are great branding benefits when you are able to align your brand with a smart and incisive expert who is a member of your organization. Chances are there are individuals within your organization who have expertise they've not yet shared with a broader audience. A blog or social media campaign (perhaps via a new Twitter feed) may be the right way to build such a person into a thought leader.

Step 2 - Create Great Content (cont.)

Nine Tips for Creating Great Content:

1. **Understand Your Space:** The best way to understand your space is to read other blogs religiously (and the comments on them). Set up an RSS reader or series of bookmarks to keep tabs on relevant blogs. Also, make sure to read professional materials such as magazine articles and industry newsletters.
2. **Uncover Trends:** Read the news, use Twitter, Google, Technocrati, and other social media monitoring tools to discover and understand the trends in your space. Set up a Google Alert and browse Google Trends for further access to what is going on.
3. **Offer a Fresh Perspective:** Unless you have uncovered news that nobody else has, and you are the first to write about it, it is safe to assume that there is already written material available on the web on the topic you choose. Great content, content that people will want to share, should bring something new to the topic at hand; whether it's a different angle, a new insight or an interesting way to present the data or the topic, you should find a unique way to write about the topic.
4. **Be Clear:** Draft, edit, share internally and revise your content for best results. Great content takes time to write, and you should have a process in place that utilizes various perspectives and knowledge within your organization and allows you to tap into the collective brainpower at your company.
5. **Include Keywords:** Optimize your content using the keywords relevant to the topic and trend you are writing about, or for which you have discovered a new angle.
6. **Be Straightforward:** Though you don't necessary have to dumb down your content, you should make sure you are always reaching beyond an audience that is already informed and knowledgeable about your subject. Not everyone knows what SEO stands for or represents (Search Engine Optimization), or what real time marketing is. If you are using jargon or industry-specific lingo, you can either explain the meaning or definition in your piece, or link to a page that explains it. When you can, avoid using acronyms without spelling them out and steer clear of technical terms.
7. **Put the news upfront:** When it comes time to craft your message and put content into context, think about writing like a news reporter. The best news articles have an information-rich paragraph at the top of the story laying out the news and highlighting what is important. This lead paragraph, chock full of data, is then unpacked during the following paragraphs as more and more background is explained.
8. **Focus Above the Fold:** In a similar vein, make sure to place the most important content on your website or blog "above the fold." This way, when someone arrives at your site they will see the critical information without having to scroll down and look for it.
9. **Use Imagery:** Use images, videos and illustrations to make any piece more digestible. Because the web is a digital medium you want to make your materials easy to read and approach in a variety of formats. Illustrations and photographic images serve to break up long paragraphs and make information more palatable. Also, images and video are having more important roles in search results.

Step 2 - Create Great Content (cont.)

Why Content Matters for SEO

Many say that great content is outperformed on search engines by crummy content with great marketing. While this might be true, consider the following: great content is easier to market. And yes, great content is becoming increasingly important for SEO.

Here's how great content affects SEO

1. The text of a given web page serves as the main data that the many search engine web crawlers view as they constantly categorize the web.
2. When you have interesting, exciting, relevant and informative content, people will read what you have written or posted.
3. If the information is great, many will link to you and you will then gain a key type of online currency — quality inbound links.
4. If you are running a social media campaign and you have a great blog or video post, your link will get shortened, linked to, posted by others, and tweeted and re-tweeted.
5. Search engines are also using link authority and link popularity as an increasingly important data point in their ranking algorithms.

Examples of Excellent Content:

- » **A whitepaper on best practices.** Whitepapers are bigger and more in-depth and can serve as both search engine content as well as an incentive for filling out a contact form.
- » **A how-to article** on the topic that explains how using your products or services solves a problem related to the target keyword..
- » **A comparison of products related to the target keyword.** End users are always searching for reviews, comparisons and brand vs. brand information. Building a page that positively highlights your product/service against core competitors enables you to both position yourself well and gain search traffic from the target keyword.
- » **A list. 10 steps to success, 5 factors to consider, etc.** are excellent ways to build content, are highly consumable and easier to syndicate through newsletters and blog posts. This is also a particularly attractive format for users looking to share content.

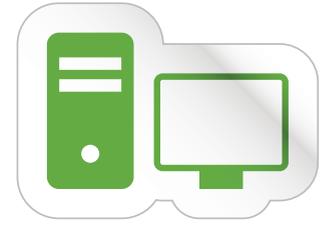
Content very much serves as a way to draw people to your site—great content can spread far and wide drawing new visitors to your site, improving your SEO and expanding your lead generation potential.

You have four main objectives in building the content to support your keywords:

1. Create content that will meet the expectations of someone searching on that keyword term. Ask yourself, would someone searching for this keyword term be looking for the content I'm posting? If not, you'll likely have more difficulty attaining and maintaining your keyword position, as you'll have a higher bounce rate.
2. Create content that is a compelling spin on your business. When a new visitor finds this page, it will more likely move them towards contacting you for a business relationship.
3. Create content that search engines will understand and index with strong ranking signals.
4. Create content that other sites will find useful and want to syndicate and link back to your pages.

Step 3 - Set Up Landing Pages

Now that you've created a great piece of content, you'll need to determine where the content will reside on your site. This decision impacts several elements including:



- » Page URL
- » Top level, footer and site map navigation and linking
- » Who is involved in publishing the content (if different sections of your site are managed by different content platforms and/or teams)
- » How users access the content
- » How search engines find and consume the content

Once the content is created, build the page with the keyword phrase in the following areas:

- » URL
- » Title Tag
- » <H1> Headline
- » <H2> Headline
- » In the body content at least twice
- » Alt text for images

Next, build the internal links to that content from important pages elsewhere on your site. A couple of considerations when doing so:

- » Use the target keyword in the anchor text for the link wherever possible – “Click Here” works well for conversion encouragement, but doesn't tell the engines anything about the link. “Learn more about <keyword phrase>” Is always a good link structure if you have space as is just the <keyword phrase> itself.
- » Try and build the link into a summary piece of content like a description of the article in addition to the site footer or navigation.
- » Use a title tag in the link. This is an element that shows up as a tool tip when you rollover the link so it adds context and accessibility to the link – especially if you can't bring yourself to put the keywords in the anchor text. The link with a title tag looks something like this for the keyword <Python>: `Dive Into Python`
- » For core pieces of content, consider putting the link to the content into your top or second level navigation, sitemap.html, sitemap.xml and footer. These are normally elements that are on all pages of your site so it quickly generates many links into this piece of content.

Step 4 - Create Optimal Lure Language

You've planned your campaign, created great content, and set-up landing pages – you are half way to the finish line! Next, you'll need to tell the world about it. But what type of language will you use to entice visitors? Users are ultimately interested in two things when it comes to sharing content via social networks:



1. Sharing content quickly, with the click of a button
2. Having a pre-packed message at their fingertips that their friends will find interesting and see them as interesting for having shared it. When you have interesting, exciting, relevant and informative content, people will read what you have written or posted.

Social Messaging: Key Tips

Although, in this section, we specifically address two of the most prominent social networks (Twitter and Facebook,) there are many other social media channels, such as LinkedIn or blogs, for which you can also effectively leverage our “lure language” tips provided below.

Twitter

Keep your tweets fresh, resonating with users. Twitter's innately part of the Realtime Web, so information outdated by a week's time or sometimes even a day will start to see less engagement pretty quickly. Refresh the content you're sharing daily, add value to the conversation and most of all, find something interesting to say in 140 characters that your followers (and their followers) will latch onto.

Use different language in each tweet

Try to avoid tweeting the same tweet or about the same blog post back-to-back. People can and will unfollow accounts that they feel are saying the same thing every day; make sure to add a fresh perspective to the Twitter stream. Use compelling, eye-catching language, but don't stray too far from your overall marketing message, or make statements that don't actually relate back to the content you're sharing. Alignment and brand messaging applies to your social media channels, just as it does with SEM and SEO.

What should your tweets say?

Here are five straightforward tweet equations that can be applied to all types of content, promotions, events, etc.

1. Simply use the headline from the piece of content you're sharing.
2. Ask an enticing question that aligns with the content you're tweeting about.
3. Ask that same question or a different one, provide a short response and a call to action (e.g. “Sign up now!”).
4. Use a teaser statement that will grab the attention of your followers, and make them want to click through to read more.
5. Add a hashtag to any of the above variations that relates back to the content you're sharing. Using an already established hashtag is best for circulating a blog post, whereas creating a designated, new hashtag makes more sense when you're hosting an event, for example.

Step 4 - Create Optimal Lure Language (cont.)

Facebook

One thing to keep in mind is that most people use Facebook for their personal life and Twitter and LinkedIn for their professional, business life. While some users will restrict updates from Pages they Like on Facebook, many will see your updates come through on their newsfeed. There's a fine line between sharing content and "Twitterizing" your Facebook.

Some consumers have listed too frequent updates and spam-like messaging as reasons for no longer Liking a brand on Facebook. While applications exist that allow businesses to link their Twitter to their Facebook Pages, this is one way you might overwhelm your fans. Think about the purpose of your page, your audience's characteristics, and how best to add value to their experience when they see messages from your company each time they log into Facebook.

- 1. When posting a link to your company's wall, try to vary what you write in the additional messaging space provided.** Facebook automatically includes both the title of the page you're posting and its meta-description (or, the first paragraph, if there's no meta-description provided) on your Wall. In short, Wall posts give you three different placements for your messaging--try not to repeat the same message twice. Simply use the headline from the piece of content you're sharing.
- 2. Use photos and videos.** Users, especially Facebook users, love photos. Even Facebook restructured pages to show users a Page's most recently posted photos at the top of the page. According to Facebook, they adjusted the design to align with what most users click on and find interesting.
- 3. Engage, engage, engage.** Ask questions and respond to comments. Especially now that Facebook allows page admins to make comments and Like other pages and conversations on their own Wall as their company, businesses can leverage this and respond to inquiries and comments with a company voice, instead of having to respond through team members' personal Facebook profiles.

Step 5 - Distribute Links via Social Media Channels

Now that your content is built, landing pages set, and lure language planned, it's time to promote the content externally through syndication. The goal is to start building inbound links that go directly to the new piece of content (instead of linking generically to your site's homepage).



Here are seven specific suggestions for how to distribute links to your content via social media channels:

- » Promote the content through your newsletter to your customers.
- » Post a blog entry about the content and link to your content on the blog.
- » Announce the content through Twitter using the keyword in the tweet. Also, have everyone on your team do the same through their networks.
- » Reach out to your partners and friends with the idea of getting links into the site. If someone is interested, give them the code for the link itself (with keywords, title and link back URL).
- » Create a press release about the content. Publish the press release to your site and push the release out to PRWire or a similar service that offers SEO value.
- » Tweak the content to be in the form of an article and publish to an article database like www.ezinearticles.com or www.docstoc.com

Link Out and Link Back

The web is all about links and connecting series of articles and information. When you mention sources and websites on your blog post or Twitter feed make sure that you link to those mentions. In addition, when you syndicate your content remember to include links back to your website with tracking parameters that will tell you what asset and link generated the visit. This will help you analyze and understand what content is resonating with your audience best.

Determine High Relevancy Sites for Link Acquisition



Here's an easy way to find those sites:

1. Go to www.google.com
2. Type in your keyword phrase.
3. See who shows up for it - don't be afraid to go deep.
4. Look for non competitors who have written an article about the subject and approach them with your service, product, story.

See where your competitors are getting links. Here's how:

1. Go to www.yahoo.com
2. Type in "site:www.<your competitor>.com"
3. Click on the inlinks button
4. On the show InLinks dropdown, select Except from this Domain
5. This gives you a list of inbound links to that domain that you can peruse for relevant sites to engage for links.

Step 5 - Distribute Links via Social Media Channels (cont.)

Pursue Onsite and Offsite Social Media Optimization

Onsite optimization refers to what you do to optimize your social media presence on your website, whereas offsite optimization is everything that helps with your different social media channels.

Onsite and offsite optimization achieve different goals. Onsite SMO aims to encourage people to share your content with their own social networks. Offsite SMO endeavors to continue sharing your content and encourage conversation offsite, increasing your visibility and ultimately expanding your network. Try to encourage consumer generated media; it's better to have other people advocating your business than you yourself.

Onsite Social Media Optimization Tips

» Place your social media communication front-and-center on your website:

This provides another way for people to discover your social media channels and increases your visibility. You want to be as many places as possible, and social media lets you do that in a scalable way. In addition, this will allow you to provide users with fresh, compelling content in an easily manageable way with just a few simple plug-ins. Consider adding the following to your homepage: tweet stream, a link for users to “Like” your Facebook Page, blog reel and consumer feedback. Publishing customer testimonials in the form of tweets or short sound bites is a great way to offer this feedback to your audience.

» Make your content easily shareable with single-step social sharing options:

Ensure that your social sharing options are easy-to-use, visible to users and included across your website, blog and marketing emails. Providing users with quick and easy sharing options will increase the likelihood that they'll choose to share your content with their social networks. The most popular sharing features are Facebook's Like button, Twitter's Tweet and LinkedIn's Share option, as well as others like Digg and AddThis. Post a blog entry about the content and link to your content on the blog.

» Encourage Facebook Likes off Facebook, as well as on Facebook:

In striving to gain Likes on your Facebook Page, be careful not to dismiss the importance of Facebook Likes on your website. In fact, when a user “Likes” content on your website it reappears in the form of an update to their profile Wall, whereas when they “like” content on your Facebook Page it doesn't post to their profile. Consumer advocacy such as Facebook Likes helps you to expand your social footprint exponentially from one user's feedback to their entire social network.

» Create shareable, interesting content:

People aren't as interested in promoting brands across their social networks as they're in promoting themselves. As mentioned earlier, users are looking for easy-to-share, attractive content in a neat, pre-packaged format. Write concise, eye-catching headlines and tweets that include links back to your site. The catchier and more compelling you make your headlines, tweets or Facebook updates, the greater your chances become for users to republish your content via their own social networks.

» Leverage Facebook's Open Graph:

Facebook's Open Graph protocol allows you to incorporate social sharing options directly into your website pages. When users “Like” content on your website, their “Likes” are then added to their “Likes & Interests” within their Facebook profiles and shows up in their friends' news feeds. Website owners can also publish updates and target ads to users who have “Liked” their content. The Open Graph is yet another way businesses can leverage their Facebook fan base and expand their social footprint.

Step 5 - Distribute Links via Social Media Channels (cont.)

Offsite Social Media Optimization Tips

» **Grow your Twitter follower and Facebook fan base:**

The larger your follower/fan base, the more expansive your reach will become across these social networks. The new Twitter is great for getting suggestions for who to follow. Each time you follow a user, Twitter now suggests two more similar users to follow. Twitter tools like Twellow are helpful to find relevant users based on keywords found in their Twitter bios, as well as seeking out top Twitter influencers. Users with a large “following” base are more likely to follow you back, than users who are only “following” a few accounts. Responding to mentions and RTs with a simple call-to-action, like “Enjoying our content. Follow us for more updates,” is an effective approach to encouraging others to follow you. As for Facebook, growing your “Like” base requires a different strategy. One approach is to build a Facebook Ad campaign that encourages users to “Like” your company, or by running a contest from your Facebook Page. Promotions and contests are a great way to quickly grow your fan base on both Facebook and Twitter.

» **Facilitate conversation with Facebook status updates & Twitter:**

Instead of just using your Facebook Wall or tweets to syndicate content, make sure you’re engaging your social media audience. Ask questions about a blog post you’ve just published, rather than just tweeting the headline. Engaging your fans not only serves as excellent lead nurturing, their feedback will also be broadcasted across their own social networks and may serve as an effective business lead generation tool. While it’s fine to carry on conversations with consumers on your Facebook Wall or Twitter, try encouraging the conversation in the direction of your website (e.g. the comments section of your blog).

» **Tweets: Avoid self-promotion, be helpful and generous:**

Being overly self-promotional in the social media space is a surefire way to lose your audience’s attention. Tweets should include a range of: relevant, interesting content; RTs of your followers, customers, top influencers; your own content (recycle old content too); and, self-promotion.

» **Create alignment between your social media channels and website:**

Treat your social media channels as an extension of your website. There has to be some alignment between the channels. Strive to keep your brand messaging the same, at least at the meta level, such as using your same overall marketing message, brand colors and company voice.

Step 6 - Track & Monitor Your Campaign

Once a campaign is up and running, determining a return on time and money invested is the obvious next step for any social media marketing effort.



It's critical to find out just what kind of results your online efforts are having. Has traffic grown with the volume of Twitter feeds? Has the new corporate Facebook fan page expanded the conversion rate and generated leads overnight or taken two months? Social media monitoring answers these questions.

Why Even Monitor Social Media Campaigns?

The chief reason to monitor social media campaigns is to quantify a return on your investment of both time and resources. Another important reason is to see the reach of your efforts—have your rather simple efforts on Facebook led to widespread traffic boosts perhaps, or has your time-consuming blogging yielded few RSS subscribers? It's valuable to know what works.

As with any other marketing channel, it's important for you to establish success metrics for your social media efforts. The metrics you set should be a reflection of the goals you've set up for your social media campaign strategy. The measurement tools you pick should be able to easily track and present those metrics, so you won't have to spend time collecting and analyzing the data.

Businesses don't have to start from scratch in developing these tactics, but can instead utilize many of the same metrics already in place, such as leads, clicks, cost-per-lead and cost-per-click.

Direct Measures

In order to effectively measure social media ROI, companies should keep these metrics categories in mind: Transactions and ROI, Social Stats, Buzz and Sentiment. Routinely track your progress using a set list of social media key performance indicators.

Indirect Measures

As you no doubt know from using social media tools like Facebook and Flickr, social media isn't always about numbers and equations—there is a softer side that is less numbers driven and more about the perceptions and emotions of customers or those you affect.

Goals	Metrics
Increase Brand Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach • Followers • Branded Mentions
Drive Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits
Generate Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Leads
Nuture Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits and Returning Leads
Improve Customer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversions • Positive Mentions • Changes in customer satisfaction polls
Use as Help Channel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Conversations • Number of DM • Number of Mentions of Your Help # • Changes in visits to your help section on site • Changes in number of contacts received via other more expensive support channels

Step 6 - Track & Monitor Your Campaign (cont.)

From Buzz to Bucks

A Framework to Make B2B Social Media Profitable and Measurable

Just as your objectives and activities change from one stage in the social media funnel to another, so do the metrics and tools you choose to track and measure. Set the appropriate objectives, plan activities and determine the best metrics for each stage, then pick the tools that will best allow you to report on your social media ROI.

	MONITOR	ENGAGE	PROMOTE	NURTURE	ACT
OBJECTIVE 	Discover trends & uncover discussions about your industry, company, brand and product	Become a valuable member of the group & expand your network	Generate leads	Keep your leads engaged	Drive registration and sales
ACTIVITY 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen Monitor the Social Web Set up Alerts Track Keywords 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to groups, forums, online discussions Build relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use campaigns Tell your company story Send people to your website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use offsite networks to drive people back to your website Inform Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align call-to-action with state of mind
TRACK & MEASURE 	Most tools let you track and measure activity over time	Manually extract data from tools. Some have built-in reports	Most tools can't show you what happens after visitor left their site. Use software like Optify to track leads from social media	Nurture offsite and measure results onsite. Manually track activities and tag results with your analytics software	Attribution analysis. Only few tools support lead attribution
METRICS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of mentions of your brand Keyword trends Hash tag trends Popular discussions on LinkedIn Popular posts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of followers, fans, members # of discussions you participated in or initiated Traffic to your online profiles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of direct/indirect leads generated from social media Traffic from social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of comments on your blog # of re-visits to your site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of closed deals with any contribution from social media # of registrants/free trials/free accounts with any contribution from social media
REPORT 	Paid tools offer reporting capabilities. Most free tools don't	Very limited reporting capabilities. Manually extract data and generate your own report	Use software such as Optify to report on social media lead generation	Manually create your own report or repurpose basic reports to show correlation between offsite activity and onsite results	No tools available as of today. Check out Optify for specific lead detail reports
TOOLS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Google Alerts HowSociable Omgili Position 2 Radiant 6 Sentiment Metrics Twitter Search 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Docstoc Facebook Forums LinkedIn Slideshare Twitter Yahoo Answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Docstoc Facebook Forums LinkedIn Optify Slideshare Twitter Yahoo Answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blog Facebook Company Page LinkedIn Company Page Ping Twitter List Webinars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Omniture Optify Salesforce.com

Step 6 - Track & Monitor Your Campaign (cont.)

Sentiment analysis is a methodology used to measure people’s perceptions and feelings towards your brand based on trending positive and negative social signals. Sentiment analysis, also called brand monitoring, social media analysis, sentiment metrics, opinion mining and ‘listening,’ has been around in computer science circles for some time, but is increasingly becoming more sophisticated and therefore useful to marketers.

These sentiments can serve as a leading indicator of trouble in the field or opportunity to focus on for your business. There are a number of sentiment tools available in the marketplace (see sidebar.) However, it doesn’t take much to employ a sentiment tracking mechanism for your business. Some companies have implemented a crudely simple but effective daily listening program to identify social media messages about their product or brand. Through the process of measuring detractors via expressions of dissatisfaction and promoters via expressions of happiness or endorsement, companies are able to perform a basic sentiment analysis.

Six Sentiment Analysis Tools to Check Out:



- 1. OpenAmplify** <http://www.openamplify.com/>
 In the company’s words it is a “technology company specializing in natural language processing and text analysis.”
- 2. Social Mention** <http://www.socialmention.com/>
 “Social Media Alerts: Like Google Alerts but for social media.”
- 3. Amplified Analytics** <http://www.amplifiedanalytics.com/>
 This tool is geared primarily toward product reviews and marketers interested in tracking those reviews across multiple sites. Free trial, no registration required.
- 4. Lithium** <http://www.lithium.com/what-we-offer/social-customer-suite/social-media-monitoring>
 Lithium Social Media Monitoring: “It’s easy to configure, works in real-time, and finds the best stuff from millions of social media sources.” Offers a free, 14-day trial with sign up.
- 5. SAS Sentiment Analysis Manager** <http://www.sas.com/text-analytics/sentiment-analysis/index.html>
 Part of SAS Text Analytics program, the Sentiment Analysis Manager: “crawls content sources, including mainstream Web sites and social media outlets, as well as internal organizational text sources...[it] creates reports that describe the expressed feelings of consumers, customers and competitors in real time.”
- 6. Trackur** <http://www.trackur.com/>
 “Trackur is an online reputation & social media monitoring tool designed to assist you in tracking what is said about you on the internet.” Claims more than 27,000 users. Offers a free plan with sign up, as well as a 10-day money back guarantee with any paid plan.

Step 7 - Iterate and Refine

Now that you've gathered the data, put it to work for you. It's not worth routinely tracking your social media, if you're not also prioritizing what's working. The beauty of social media monitoring is the transparency of the data, and the speed at which you can collect feedback and make changes. Knowing which changes to make is 90% of the battle, but your efforts will pay off exponentially if you put the last 10% of effort into implementing easily executable, gradual improvements as you learn.



An example of an easy iterative test would be to tweet variations of your lure language. Then monitor and determine which of your variations drives the most visits, conversions and retweets. You'll quickly be able to refine and hone your lure language based on these response rates.

Conclusion

A well-executed social media marketing campaign can be a highly effective mean to generate buzz, drive traffic, garner leads, measure customer sentiment, enhance customer relationships, position employees as thought leaders, and build brand equity. If you haven't already entered the world of social media marketing, the time is now.

As you embark on executing your social media campaign, you have an illuminated path to follow: plan your campaign; create great content, landing pages and lure language; distribute content via social media channels; track and measure; iterate and refine. We've deconstructed each of these critical steps and have provided you with the essential information you'll need to execute a successful social media campaign.

About Optify

Optify enables business to increase traffic from organic search and social media, convert traffic to sales and share results with easy-to-use, real time marketing software. Optify's integrated, hosted service enables professional marketers to find and track target keywords, optimize their website for search engines, monitor website visitors, automate Twitter campaigns and track results, and gain insights into which online marketing channels are driving the most qualified leads. Sales teams can automatically qualify and score web leads, focus sales efforts with real time lead scoring and alerts, align marketing and sales, and close more deals by assigning the right leads to the right sales person. Optify is simple to set up and includes free phone, e-mail and Web support. For more insights on how to market in real time, visit the [Optify Lead Generation Blog](#).

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