

M LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

The Marketing Guide for Local Business Owners

January 2017

5 *Ways to
Improve Your
Facebook Ads*

*Social Media
Traps Your
Business Will
Be Better Off
Avoiding*

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Opportunities
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**Affordable Digital
Marketing Strategies
for Every Brand**

**Infographic:
2017
Marketing
Trends**

FREE!

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Welcome 2017! Are you prepared to leverage today's top marketing platforms? Do you have a marketing plan for the year?

Many small business owners don't take the time to develop a comprehensive marketing plan. They often continue to do what has worked well for them in the past, and avoid anything new and unproven. If this describes you, try something new this year. Isn't your business worth the time to evaluate what has and hasn't worked over the last 12 months and look at modifying your marketing spend accordingly?

Much has changed in the last several years. Businesses are using new and emerging platforms to capture market share. Are there ones you should be using? Could you save money while using more effective platforms? While you can count on us to provide informative articles on all of these topics, meet with your marketing agency, advisor or partners and see if you're still spending your money wisely.

If you find the magazine helpful, and know other local business owners that could benefit from receiving our magazine each month, please do us (and them) a favor by forwarding a copy to them.

Here's to a very successful 2017!

Raj Deshpande
CEO
CroydonGate

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A Little About Us

Local Business Marketing Magazine is proudly provided by CroydonGate.



CroydonGate was started with one goal in mind. We wanted to use the scientific approach to Online Marketing and use our expertise to help our clients achieve their goals – whether it was to increase sales & customers, branding, website design, Social Media Marketing or Mobile marketing. We wanted to give our clients the ability to leverage the same cutting edge marketing platforms that the Fortune 500 organizations use, at affordable rates.

We are a one-stop-shop for all Online Marketing needs. Our Google Certified AdWords and Analytics Experts, Social Media Marketing Gurus and expert Web designers provide the professional service to our clients which results in consistently higher ROI for our client's Online Marketing Investment.

Our goal is not just getting the customers to your site but to put a plan in place that will get them to take that next crucial step of calling you or placing that order online.

We use a scientific approach to the Online Marketing and we use Google Analytics, Multivariate A/B Testing, Sale/Search Funnel reports and other industry leading tools to understand the customer dynamics and we accurately optimize the Online Marketing parameters so that the marketing campaign works at a maximum efficiency level and increases our client's profit while reducing the conversion costs.

Give us a call to learn how we've helped businesses like yours grow revenue. If you have any questions, or would like to know how we can help you meet and exceed your marketing goals, please contact us.

Did you know that we are a full-service ad agency? Did you also know that we specialize in helping small and medium sized businesses? We customize a program that meets the needs and budgets of each of our clients, and we offer Free Initial Consultations. Give us a call to learn how we've helped businesses like yours grow revenue. Some of our services include:

- Mobile Marketing
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- Reputation Management
- Online Marketing
- Social Media Marketing
- Branding
- Conversion Optimization



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Marketing Calendar

Plan your marketing messages around these upcoming holidays and proclamations.

January

Cervical Health Awareness Month
Eye Care Month
Family Fit Lifestyle Month
Financial Wellness Month
Get Organized Month
International Brain Teaser Month
March of Dimes Birth Defects Prevention Month
National Glaucoma Awareness Month
National Staying Healthy Month
National Volunteer Blood Donor Month
Thyroid Disease Awareness Month
Walk Your Pet Month

January 1 - New Year's Day
January 16 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day

1st - Polar Bear Plunge Day
1st - World Day of Peace

2nd - Science Fiction Day
9th - Law Enforcement Appreciation Day
9th - National Take the Stairs Day
14th - Dress Up Your Pet Day
15th - Humanitarian Day
17th - Ben Franklin's Birthday
18th - Winnie the Pooh Day
19th - Popcorn Day
20th - Inauguration Day
21st - National Hugging Day
23rd - Pie Day
24th - Compliment Day
24th - Peanut Butter Day
26th - Spouse's Day
27th - Chocolate Cake Day
28th - Chinese New Year
28th - Have Fun at Work Day
29th - National Puzzle Day
31st - Backward Day

February

Black History Month
American Heart Month
International Boost Self Esteem Month
International Expect Success Month
International Friendship Month
National Cancer Prevention Month
National Children's Dental Health Month
Spay/Neuter Awareness Month

February 14th - Valentine's Day
February 20th - President's Day

1st - National Freedom Day
1st - National Singing Day
2nd - Groundhog Day
2nd - Rheumatoid Awareness Day
3rd - National Wear Red Day
3rd - Working Naked Day
4th - Facebook's Birthday

4th - Homemade Soup Day
4th - World Cancer Day
5th Super Bowl Sunday
5th - Popcorn Day
8th - Boy Scout Day
9th - Pancake Day
12th - Lincoln's Birthday
12th - Autism Sunday
14th - National Organ Donor Day
15th - Random Acts of Kindness Day
20th - Love Your Pet Day
20th - National Cherry Pie Day
22nd - Washington's Birthday
22nd - World Thinking Day
23rd - National Banana Bread Day
26th - Daytona 500
26th - Bacon Day
26th - Academy Awards
27th - International Polar Bear Day
27th - Spay Day
28th - Rare Disease Day





5 Ways to Improve Your Facebook Ads

With social media playing such a pivotal role in people's everyday lives, Facebook advertising has never been more important. Facebook advertising is a highly competitive landscape. There's only so much space on Facebook for your ads and you'll have to employ some tricks to make your ads really stand out. Here are five things you can do to make your ads on Facebook that much more noticeable.

Use more red

Red is a color that naturally stands out. This isn't just a psychology thing. People are naturally driven to look out for things that are the color red. On Facebook, red is a quick way to catch people's attention. Red represents

both danger and intrigue, and mixing it with greens and blues can help your ad stand out in people's news feeds. Red also represents powerful emotions like love, excitement, and anger--emotions that you can use to improve your ad's message.

Other colors work just as well for triggering different emotions. Blues and greens for example work great for making people feel calm and secure.

Show more faces and emotions

Showing faces on your ads is the easiest way to get people's attention. People's brains are hardwired to look for faces. Faces make ads more personal and relatable. If you

want to trigger an emotional response in your audience, include a face and a story that goes with it in your ads. Specifically, putting people in your ads that best represent your audience can improve how you send your message. There is a time and place for strictly image-based ads. But on a social media platform like Facebook, putting a person on your ad is essential if you want to get noticed.

But don't just put any face on your ads. The emotions on the face are just as important. Both positive and negative emotions work just as well, as long as you're confident that you're getting a story across in your ad. Emotional extremes work great. Overwhelming happiness or extreme tragedy are examples of such

emotions. But more subtle emotions and expressions work best. Emotions get people involved in your ad, further driving their curiosity.

Instill a false sense of urgency

Make people afraid to miss out. Simply including the words “one of a kind” or “exclusive” into your ads can make people more inclined to check them out. Scarce offers are often perceived as being more valuable.

You can also include limited time offers for products and services, or limit a launch to only a few people. You can instill a false sense of urgency even if you’re not selling any physical products.

Emphasize community

Everyone wants to belong. Facebook, being a social media platform, is all about making people feel like they are a part of something big. Your ads should portray a community-driven image. Portray your brand or product as something that people want to be a part of. Your brand shouldn’t be something that people feel weird getting involved with. Make your brand feel like a social movement.

Use the right words

Getting your ads noticed on Facebook is all about using the right words. “You” makes it seem like you’re talking directly to your audience. The

word personalizes your ads and makes your audience think about how your product can benefit them. “Free” is another straightforward word you can use to get people to stop what they’re doing and look at your ad. People are always looking out for free things. Other words that you should include in your ad are “top,” “new,” and “exclusive.”

These are just some of the things you can do to make your Facebook ads stand out more. Facebook advertising is all about catering to people’s emotions. Be creative with your ads. Employ these techniques and soon your ads will be getting the attention they deserve.



MARKETING

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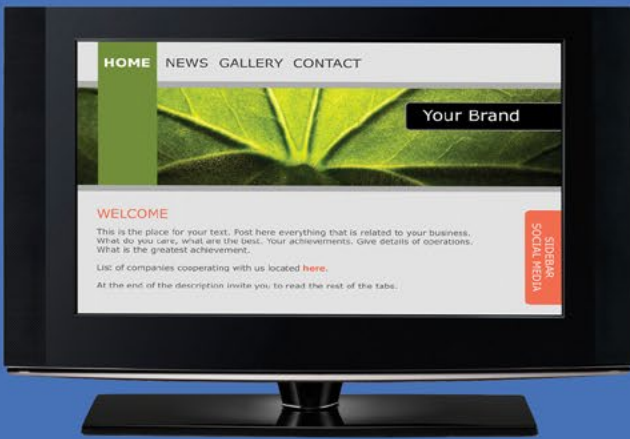
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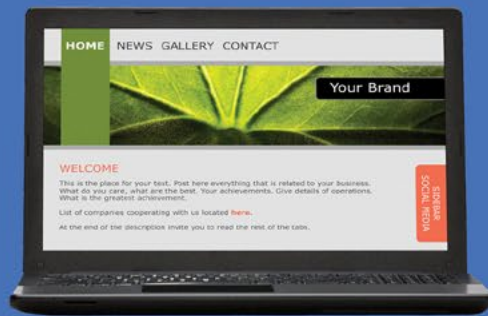


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6 Affordable Digital Marketing Strategies for Every Brand

The Digital Marketing landscape is rife with creative strategies. Entrepreneurs are always coming up with new ideas to market their brands. A brand's long-term success hangs on its ability to adapt and come up with fresh marketing strategies to keep interest going. Most of these strategies cost time and money to succeed, but there are always some small

things that a brand can do to drastically improve how it markets itself online.

Here are six digital marketing strategies that every brand can afford to do.

Try to get noticed by niche blogs

While getting featured in a popular magazine or blog

is every brand's dream, sometimes getting noticed by a popular niche blog can be just as good, if not better. Niche blogs cater to a specific audience and getting featured in one can be just what your brand needs. Guest posting is the best way to get featured on a niche blog, because this allows you to retain a form of creative control.

Optimize the mobile experience

Mobile devices are always getting better and faster. A significant amount of traffic that your website will be receiving will come from mobile devices. Cater to mobile users by incorporating responsive design on your websites. Your site should be as accessible on a phone's small screen as it is on a desktop. Optimizing your site is twice as important if you have a store. Customers should be able to make purchases on their phones as easily as they would on their computers.

Ads should also be optimized for mobile devices. When viewed on a smaller screen, ads should not be obstructive. They should instead be direct to the point, focusing on clean images and direct calls-to-action.

Create a LinkedIn Group

LinkedIn groups are free and easy to create. LinkedIn provides you with an easy way to share your experience with people who are a part of your niche. It helps you establish a professional network while at the same time allowing you to drive traffic to your

site through your posts and profile. LinkedIn allows you to share resources with your fellow entrepreneurs. LinkedIn Groups helps you build communities around your brand and drive the direction of discussions about your content.

Make use of optimized, personalize ads

Badly-designed ads can disrupt visitor experience on your website. Ads that have irrelevant messages and images that are too distracting can cause visitors to prematurely leave your site. Consumers these days prefer personalized ads. Data analytics tools can help brands create targeted ads that enhance the visitor's experience.

Properly leverage social media presence

Social media will always be relevant. Sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are always growing in scope. Social media is constantly evolving. New ways are always being developed for people to share their everyday lives, and to an extent, for brands to promote themselves. Starting a page for your brand on Facebook or making an

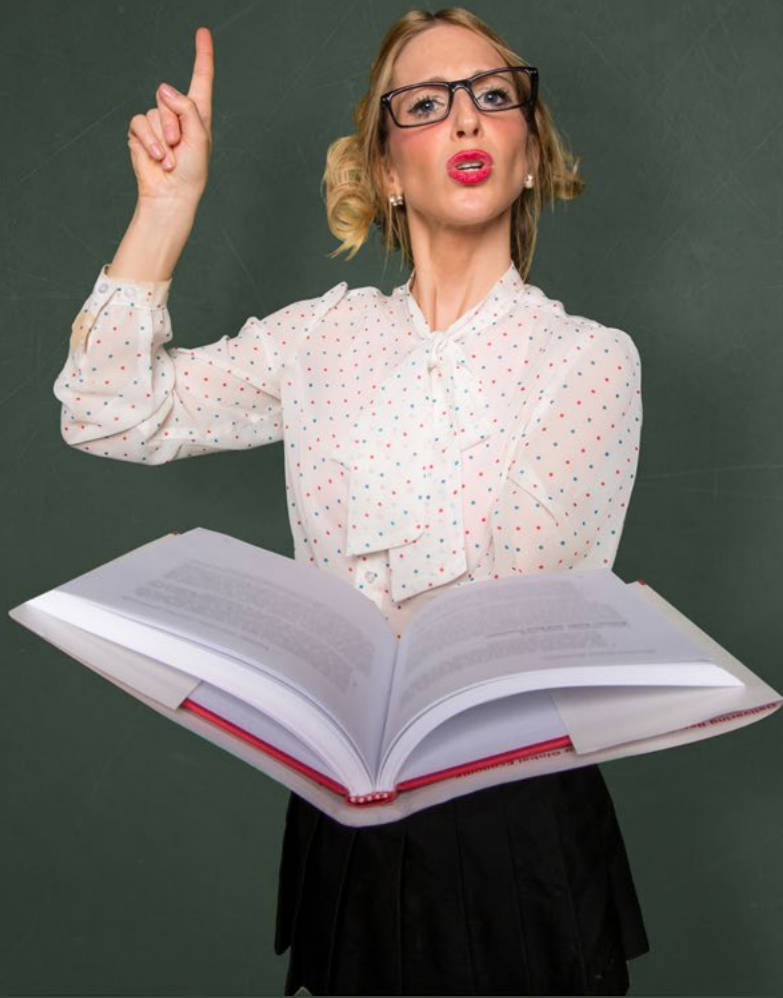
account on Twitter is only the first step. Brands should utilize retargeting efforts to guarantee that their brand is reaching their audiences through the proper channels.

Brands should also utilize social media platforms based on their niches. Facebook and Twitter are basic platforms for every brand, but not every niche is capable of utilizing a presence on platforms like Pinterest and Instagram.

Build a strategy using consumer data

In order to get the most out of your marketing strategies, don't forget to gather and eventually analyze consumer data. Study how your visitors arrive at your website. Take note of their browsing patterns, browsing history, and purchase history. Use marketing automation tools to gather these relevant data and use these data to develop a marketing strategy.

A proper digital marketing strategy doesn't always have to cost thousands of dollars to get going. There are plenty of things that a brand can do to improve its online presence. Follow these strategies and your brand should be well on its way to growing.



KNOW THE RULES!

6 Important Advertising Rules All Small Businesses Must Understand

One of the most glaring differences between large and small businesses lies in how much room for error large businesses have. Many a faux pas have inspired cries of how the latest big company is about to fall, but it rarely happens. Small businesses, on the other hand, can find their doors closing in a heartbeat. No matter what message you're sending, there are a number of rules you must

know and understand.

1. It's All About the Customer

Pretty much everything about the product, from how it's developed to the price point, is about the customer. The same should be said of your advertising. It doesn't matter how excited you are about the many features the product offers if you can't

connect those features to the customer's needs. It's on you to inform them how exactly the product makes their lives better.

Your advertising isn't there to talk about how amazing the product is and leave it at that. It's there to generate leads and attract prospects. While talking about what you have to offer is involved, it must be done relative to the target

market's interests and needs. If you don't have them at the forefront of your marketing campaign, you'll never succeed.

2. There's No Replacement for Testing

No marketing plan survives first contact. Until it's out there, in front of your audience, all you have is an advertisement built on assumptions. It doesn't matter how much you know about them. They may have changed since you last looked for one reason or another. So what do you do?

You test. You test everything and every opportunity. Don't assume you're doing something right -- prove it.

Measure response rates and discover what is and isn't working. Look through the responses of previous campaigns and see how they fare when compared against what you're doing now.

3. Know What You're Advertising

You can't sell what you don't know. Emotional music and sad imagery may get your advertisement attention, but it's not going to sell your product. The mistake many

promoters make is trying to write an ad first, and then looking at what they're actually selling. Unfortunately, that's not a consistent path to success.

The good news is that everything you need to succeed is right in front of you. Before anything else, learn about your product. The more you know about the product, the easier it'll be to relate it to your audience. Creativity doesn't happen in a vacuum. It happens when you see a connection between what you're promoting and who you're promoting it to.

4. Be Different

With so many options available to the average consumer, it's hard to imagine anyone being noticed if they're not making a real effort to stand out. If you want your advertisement to succeed, you must make an effort to get attention. It's not a matter of showmanship or loudness, although those can play a role. It's a matter of being distinct.

It doesn't have to involve fireworks. Even a simple colored package can generate curiosity in those who see it. Clickbait headlines, while usually viewed as unsavory, are an expression of this need

to be noticed by the average consumer. Striking pictures can also take on the role of attractor. It may seem silly to think that you need bait to get people to look at an advertisement so you can sell a product, but that's what you need to do.

5. Get Every Aspect Right

Many small businesses have to cut corners. Smart businesses will take the time to study which aspects will have the least impact on their future should they spend slightly less on it. Many marketers take the same approach to their advertisements and promotions. Unfortunately, running a marketing campaign isn't always like a small business.

Your advertisement is only as strong as its weakest link. A great sales email doesn't matter if it can't capture the attention of the reader because you slacked off on the headline or subject.

On the flip side, a great headline won't matter if your copy is poorly crafted or generic. If even one of the parts doesn't measure up to the rest, that aspect will bring everything down.

6. Understand the Target Market

No promoter has ever succeeded not knowing and understanding the target market. You cannot cater to who you do not know. The message changes when you're delivering it to teenagers as opposed to parents. What works for parents will come across poorly to teenagers. In theory, immersing yourself in their culture should give you an idea of what makes them tick,

but this isn't something you can do in a weekend. There are a lot of movies to watch and a lot of magazines to read, after all.

You can also go out and just interact with them. Questionnaires can work, but there's something to be said for talking to them directly. If possible, find people you know who fit your target market and just get to know them. Given enough time, you'll get a better idea of what traits they tend to share.

This will make it easier to plan your overall campaign.

It doesn't matter what you're selling; if you don't follow these advertising rules, your marketing campaign will fail. No joke or clever piece of imagery will replace solid fundamentals and focus on the consumer. It's not going to be easy, but the effort is worth it. There's nothing like seeing a well-crafted and studied marketing campaign come together.

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How to Better Optimize Your Newsletters

The digital marketing landscape is in a state of flux. New trends and techniques are always popping up. Email marketing is one of the constants in the digital marketing world. Email marketing has a special place with influencer and social media marketing. Email is one of the most valuable marketing channels in the world. It is a vital part of every aspect of running a business online. Regardless of your niche or expertise, email is going to be a vital part of your business. It is thus very important for brands to invest in email marketing. In particular, newsletters are the backbone of email marketing.

Here are some things you can do to better optimize your newsletters.

Trim subscribers from your list

Your subscribers won't digest your content forever. Over time, some names on your list are going to stop interacting with your newsletters. This is something that you simply can't avoid. Instead of working to try and keep your subscribers you should instead endeavour to keep your list fresh. Focus on quality over quantity.

The best way to optimize your email marketing campaign is by getting rid of old subscribers who have stopped engaging your emails. Don't wait for them to unsubscribe. Trimming your email list helps you focus on the subscribers who are still interested in your brand, while at the same time

reducing the risk of spam complaints.

Use heatmaps to analyse reading patterns

Not everyone reads their emails the same way. Analyzing reading patterns is an essential part of email marketing. This is because it's very easy for your subscribers to lose interest or get distracted while reading your emails. Heatmaps can help you understand how your subscribers digest your newsletters. Heatmaps give you an idea on how to better place your Calls to Action, links to social media and other important buttons.

Heatmap technology can help you aggregate information on your subscriber's reading

patterns. You don't have to stop using heatmaps on your newsletters alone. Heatmaps can also help you better design your website.

Use bold, italics, and underline for emphasis

Use bold, italics, and underline to bring your readers' attention to important parts of your email. When your subscribers are skimming your email, these simple formatting options can help capture their attention. Use these simple formatting options on CTAs and other important links. Make sure that your subscribers don't miss anything that you deem important, even if they're just giving five seconds of their time for your email.

Improve your signup page

Everybody does email marketing these days. Just asking for people to sign up for your newsletter won't cut it anymore. "Sign up for our newsletter" is a boring way of trying to get people to subscribe. You'll need to do something to stand out from the competition. Offer "ethical bribes" or lead magnets to get people to subscribe. Lead magnets are something you give away for free in exchange for a name, email, or other

form of information. If you can, try to ask people to subscribe to your email without ever using the words "free" or "sign up." Be creative and give your would-be subscribers an idea on what they can gain from subscribing to your email.

A/B Test Headlines

A/B Testing allows you to better understand how to approach your subscribers. Headlines represent the initial step of interacting with your subscribers. Don't just send the same headline to everyone on your list. Instead, send multiple versions of the same headline to different customers. Then find out which of those headlines returned the most clicks. Testing like this lets you figure out how to better compose your headlines and how you can better deliver your message.

Newsletters are the most vital part of an email marketing campaign. Getting leads is one thing, but making sure that those leads inevitably translate to conversions is something else entirely. Work hard on making your newsletters properly designed and optimized to get the most out of your email marketing campaign.



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Link Building Opportunities to Maximize SEO in 2017



It's more important than ever before to use legitimate link building strategies to improve your search rankings. Google's Penguin spam filter now works in real time, so anyone using dubious linking techniques will be penalized.

Backlinks are still essential to ranking high in SERPs. This was confirmed in March 2016, when Andrey Lipattsev, a search quality senior strategist at Google, said that the two most important ranking factors were links and content.

Social media marketing, guest blogging, and local directory listings are all still important, but what else can

you do to improve your SEO? Here are seven more ways to strengthen your link profile in 2017.

Turn Mentions Into Backlinks

Is your brand mentioned on another website, but has no link to your domain? Is one of your products featured on a review site without a link to your product page? These are both great opportunities to request a link to your site.

On the whole, if someone is willing to give you a mention, they're also willing to give you a link. It's usually enough to reach out to people and

request a link. To find these mentions without links, use a tool like Fresh Web Explorer from Moz.

When requesting a link, try to use phrases such as "mention our website" or "reference our site." You're likely to have more success than if you use the word "link."

Testimonials

Testimonials are a great way to build your backlink profile and your credibility. Many businesses will appreciate receiving a few words about your experience using their products. It's also more likely to be approved than a

standard link request. It's a win-win scenario: companies get another testimonial to publish on their website, and you get a new backlink to boost your SEO.

Brand Advocates

It's important to develop a loyal community around your brand, and people who naturally support your business give you the perfect opportunity to generate relevant links. Find out where your fans are talking about your business and products, and reach out to them for links. You can develop these relationships by offering exclusive content and news to people with more social influence, which will benefit both parties.

Local Chambers of Commerce

Most companies will have a listing with their local chambers of commerce, but it's worth checking to see if all your listings include a relevant link to your website. This is especially important if you have multiple branches. A full listing with the local chambers of commerce will help to build your reputation and improve your search rankings.

Community Involvement

If your company is involved in the local community in any way, use this as an opportunity to build more links. For example, if you provided goods for a local school or contributed to a charity event, it's helpful to link to the relevant websites involved, in return for a link to your business. Most organizations will be happy to give you the recognition, especially if it's a long-term relationship.

Dynamic Content

There are still many brands that don't understand the importance of high-quality content when it comes to link building. Providing consumers (and therefore search engine users) with the best content on a particular subject is still one of the best ways to improve your authority and search rankings.

By using multiple content formats, you're likely to generate more links and also leads for your business. As well as publishing standard blog posts, produce more dynamic content such as infographics, videos, webinar recordings, podcasts, research papers, and reviews. It's also worth noting that list posts receive

on average 74 percent more links than any other type of content.

Online Relationships

Links from websites related to your industry usually carry more value, which is why it's important to develop online relationships with other credible businesses. Use industry-related forums, niche blogs, and social media groups to build your presence. Make valuable contributions to discussions and leave a link to your website when possible.

In 2017, it will be even more important to provide real value to consumers and search engines with useful and unique content. Real link building requires time and effort, so avoid using black-hat link building techniques that will cause more harm than good.

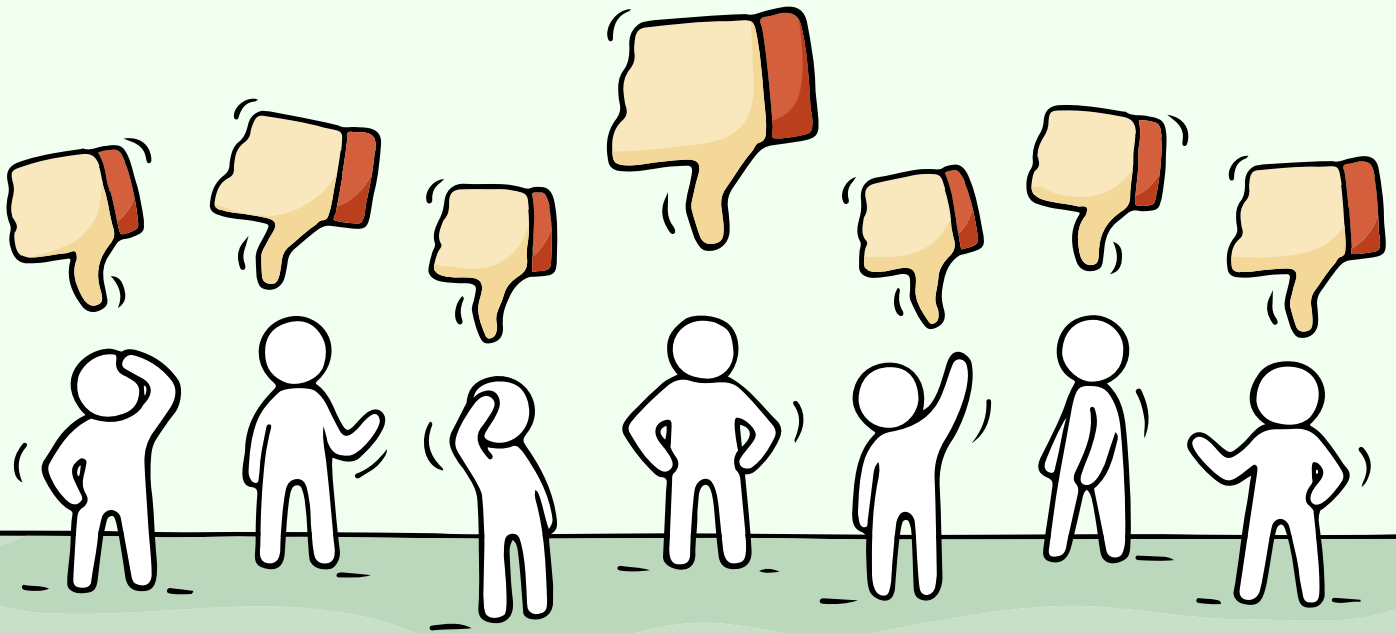
Try some of the strategies outlined above. Remember to always focus on your audience and try to produce the most valuable content you can to enrich the Internet. This will naturally increase backlinks by improving your reputation in the eyes of consumers and the major search engines.

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Social Media Traps Your Business Will Be Better Off Avoiding

One of the most prevalent marketing tools comes in the form of social media. Many businesses drive their growth through interactions and engagement with customers on this platform. However, social media can also be harmful when not utilized correctly. There are some pitfalls that businesses will do well to avoid. Here are some of these missteps and how to plan for them.

Many users operate social media for social networking, sharing photos, checking for instant news, and posting other content. This platform is essentially a portal for your company to connect with customers, clients, and partners. However, information overload does exist, even if you have the best intentions

when communicating with users. There is a difference between posting timely, relevant content and simply overloading users with advertising spam. When you publish content, be sure it is timed right and provides the most relevant information to users.

When you make posts on social media accounts, remember that the content and message lasts forever. Nothing is truly deleted online, but many marketing managers using the platform miss this important detail. Users can screenshot messages and immediately save them to share later. In addition, social media users following an account will receive instant notification when that account posts content.

With the cloud being able to snapshot your content immediately, be sure to plan your social media content in advance. Avoid posting anything in haste and ensure you have an additional set of eyes to review your content before it goes online. You can also invest in additional anti-security software to protect your account from being hacked as well as messages being leaked. Many hackers have the tools and ability to gain control of a company's social media website and install malware. One leaked message can expose information that can have a negative impact on your business.

Some businesses with less social media experience may accidentally share revealing information. This includes the

business' physical address or private financial information. This makes it easier for data thieves to gain access to your company's most sensitive data. Only display your business address if you physically offer your products or services at that location.

The content that goes online may not always be on your radar. Remember this as you delegate social media tasks to other employees. Also, be sure to turn off any automatic postings unless you have the content schedule available. If you have personal photos somehow attached to your social media accounts, then immediately remove them from the account. Some content can contain imagery of individuals who may or may not have provided their consent, which can lead to legal problems. Perform a review to check if non-public

individuals appearing in social media images have provided their consent.

You can have your social media managers check for any classified data that is sensitive to your business and whether they are at risk of being accidentally shared with the public. Some of these documents include marketing plans, product blueprints, financial information, or business-specific information that should not be seen by competitors. This information should not even be at risk from being shared on social media accounts.

Before pushing the publish button on a post, consider whether the content you are sharing might invite trouble for your business. Some businesses have run into problems in the past for posting content deemed

offensive. To avoid a similar problem, have your team review a post and ask whether it may be offensive to some users.

The last item on your checklist is to empower the employees managing the social media accounts. If you do have a social media team, instill in them the mindset that their content and activity on this platform is a major component of your company's growth. They must respect the rules of social media while finding a competitive edge in reaching out to customers and engaging with them. They can be creative while ensuring the security and integrity of your business' social media presence. By staying committed to these objectives, your team has a better chance of avoiding common social media pitfalls.

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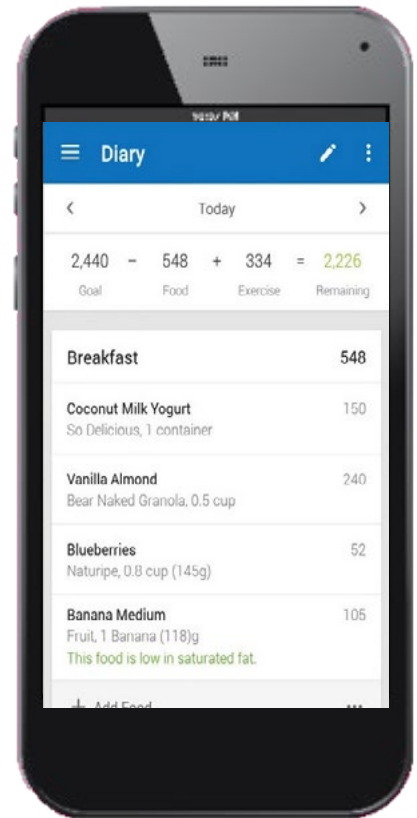


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- Easiest and fastest food entry

- Connect with over 50 devices and apps including Fitbit, Jawbone UP, Garmin, MapMyFitness, Runkeeper, Strava, Runtastic, Misfit, Withings, Healthkit, and more!
- Recipe importer – cook a lot? The recipe importer lets you visit any recipe on the web and easily import and track it with just a tap! It feels like magic!
- Comprehensive feature set
- Barcode Scanner
- Goals & Reports



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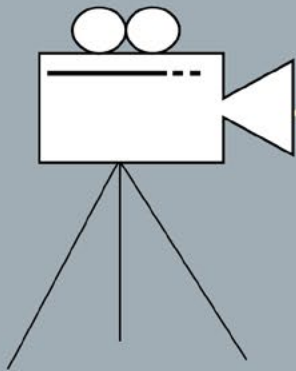
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Marketing Trends for 2017

Video Marketing



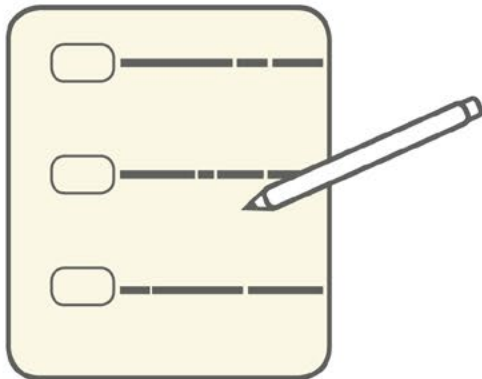
People now spend 3x longer watching live videos compared to pre-recorded videos

Videos have 135% more reach than photos on Facebook

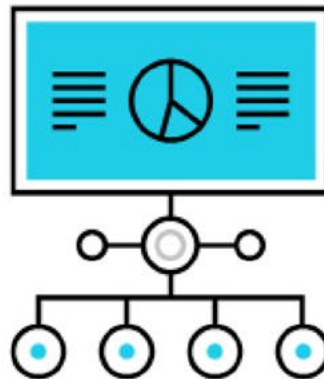
Mobile video views grew 6x faster than desktop views

Interactive Content

Quizzes & Questionnaires



Interactive Flowcharts



Calculators & Assessments



Influence Marketing

Leveraging key individuals' influence to drive demand for your product



Companies made \$6.50 for every \$1 invested in influence marketing

Influence marketing is the fastest growing channel for customer acquisition

81% of marketers who have used influence marketing found it effective



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