

LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

The Marketing Guide for Local Business Owners

July 2026

**THE IMPORTANCE
OF A STRONG
ONLINE
PRESENCE AND
HOW IT AFFECTS
YOUR SEARCH
RESULTS**

Great Ways to Promote
Your Local Business
During the Summer

**THE RISE
OF USER-
GENERATED
CONTENT:**

*HOW TO GET
CUSTOMERS TO
MARKET FOR
YOU*

**WHAT
MAKES
SOCIAL
MEDIA
CONTENT
GO VIRAL?**

**The Habits of
Highly Effective
Small Business
Owners**

Infographic:

10 Daily Habits of
Successful Business
Owners

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LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

Welcome to the July Issue!

Summer is in full swing, making it the perfect time to strengthen your brand, connect with your community, and find new ways to stand out. Whether you're looking to attract new customers or sharpen your marketing strategy, this month's issue is packed with practical ideas to help your business thrive.

Inside, you'll discover:

- **The Importance of a Strong Online Presence** – Learn why your digital footprint plays a critical role in how customers find your business.
- **Summer Marketing Ideas** – Creative ways to promote your local business during one of the busiest seasons of the year.
- **What Makes Content Go Viral?** – Explore the ingredients behind highly shareable social media posts.
- **The Habits of Highly Effective Small Business Owners** – Simple habits that can improve productivity, leadership, and long-term success.
- **The Rise of User-Generated Content** – See how your customers can become some of your most powerful marketers.

We hope this issue inspires you to try something new, strengthen your business, and make the most of the opportunities this summer has to offer. As always, thank you for reading, and if you find value in this issue, please share it with another local business owner.

Here's to a successful summer and continued growth!

Raj Deshpande
CEO

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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.

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Marketing Calendar

Plan your marketing messages around these upcoming holidays and proclamations.

July

National Grilling Month

National Ice Cream Month

National Picnic Month

National Blueberry Month

July 4 - Independence Day (U.S.)

1st - American Zoo Day

1st - Postal Worker Day

1st - International Joke Day

6th - Fried Chicken Day

7th - World Chocolate Day

7th - Global Forgiveness Day

8th - Blueberry Day

10th - Piña Colada Day

10th - Kitten Day

11th - 7-Eleven Day

11th - French Fry Day

11th - Mojito Day

12th - Pecan Pie Day

14th - Mac and Cheese Day

15th - Pet Fire Safety Day

15th - Hot Dog Day

17th - Lottery Day

17th - Emoji Day

18th - World Listening Day

19th - Daiquiri Day

19th - Ice Cream Day

21st - Junk Food Day

22nd - Mango Day

24th - Tequila Day

25th - Hire a Veteran Day

26th - Disability Independence Day

27th - Scotch Day

28th - Milk Chocolate Day

29th - Chicken Wing Day

30th - Cheesecake Day

31st - Avocado Day

August

Black Business Month

Eye Exam Month

Traffic Awareness Month

Sandwich Month

1st - World Lung Cancer Day

1st - Spider-Man Day

1st - Play Outside Day

2nd - Ice Cream Sandwich Day

2nd - Watermelon Day

2nd - International Friendship Day

4th - Chocolate Chip Cookie Day

5th - Oyster Day

7th - International Beer Day

8th - International Cat Day

9th - Book Lovers Day

9th - International Day of Indigenous People

10th - S'mores Day

10th - Spoil Your Dog Day

11th - National Son and Daughter Day

12th - International Youth Day

13th - International Lefthander's Day

13th - Filet Mignon Day

14th - Financial Awareness Day

15th - Relaxation Day

16th - Rum Day

17th - Nonprofit Day

18th - Couple's Day

19th - Potato Day

19th - World Photo Day

20th - Radio Day

20th - Lemonade Day

20th - Bacon Lovers Day

21st - Senior Citizen's Day

22nd - Eat a Peach Day

24th - Waffle Day

26th - Dog Day

26th - Women's Equality Day

28th - Red Wine Day

31st - Eat Outside Day



THE IMPORTANCE OF A STRONG ONLINE PRESENCE AND HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR SEARCH RESULTS

There was a time when a business's reputation lived primarily through word of mouth. Customers discovered companies through recommendations from friends, neighbors, and colleagues. While those personal referrals remain incredibly valuable today, the first place many consumers turn when searching for a product or service is no longer a conversation. It is a search engine.

Whether someone is looking for a local contractor, a restaurant for dinner, a new accountant, or a boutique to visit over the weekend, the process often begins with a simple online search. In that moment, businesses are faced with an important reality: if customers cannot find you online, many will assume you do not exist at all.

A strong online presence is no longer a competitive advantage. It has become an expectation.

Consumers today research before they purchase. They visit websites, read reviews, browse social media profiles, and compare options long before making contact. In many cases, these digital touchpoints create the first impression of a business. Long before a phone call is made or a storefront is visited, potential customers are already forming opinions based on what they find online.

Search engines recognize this behavior, and their algorithms increasingly reward businesses that demonstrate credibility, relevance, and activity across multiple online channels.

This means that search engine optimization is no longer limited to keywords and website content alone.

Your website remains the foundation of your online presence, but it is only one



piece of a much larger puzzle. Search engines evaluate hundreds of signals when determining rankings. A well designed website helps, but so do customer reviews, local business listings, social media activity, backlinks, business citations, and user engagement.

Collectively, these signals help search engines determine whether a business appears trustworthy and relevant to a particular search.

Imagine two businesses offering the exact same service in the same community.

The first business has an updated website, active social media profiles, recent customer reviews, accurate directory listings, and regularly publishes helpful content. The second business has an

outdated website, inconsistent contact information across platforms, and little recent online activity.

Which business do you think search engines are more likely to recommend?

The answer is fairly obvious.

Search engines are designed to provide users with the best possible experience. Businesses that maintain an active and trustworthy digital presence often align more closely with that goal.

One of the most influential factors in local search visibility continues to be your business profile.

Consumers frequently encounter business profiles before they ever reach a website. Photos, operating hours, reviews, services,

contact information, and recent updates all contribute to visibility and credibility. Businesses that actively manage these profiles often perform better in local search results because they provide search engines with fresh and accurate information.

Reviews have become particularly important in this process.

Research consistently shows that consumers trust online reviews almost as much as personal recommendations. Search engines understand this and often view positive reviews as indicators of quality and reliability. Businesses with a strong review profile frequently enjoy higher visibility as well as higher click through rates.

The impact extends beyond quantity alone.

Recency matters. Consistency matters. Responses matter.

Businesses that actively encourage reviews and engage professionally with customer feedback often create stronger signals for both search engines and consumers.

Social media also plays a larger role than many

business owners realize.

While social media activity may not directly determine search rankings in the same way as traditional SEO factors, it contributes to overall visibility, brand recognition, and content distribution. Strong social engagement often leads to increased website traffic, more branded searches, and additional opportunities for backlinks and mentions.

These secondary effects can positively influence search performance over time.

Content creation remains one of the strongest ways to build online authority.

Blogs, videos, guides, project showcases, and educational resources provide opportunities to answer customer questions and demonstrate expertise. Search engines favor businesses that consistently provide

useful information because that content helps users find solutions.

The more helpful and relevant your content becomes, the more opportunities exist for potential customers to discover your business.

Consistency is particularly important in this area.

Many businesses launch blogs or social media initiatives with enthusiasm only to abandon them after a few months. Search engines tend to reward sustained effort rather than occasional bursts of activity. A steady flow of quality content signals that a business is active, engaged, and relevant.

Mobile optimization has also become essential.

A significant majority of local searches now occur on mobile devices, often while consumers are actively looking to make purchasing

decisions. Slow loading websites, poor mobile experiences, and difficult navigation can negatively impact both rankings and conversions.

Consumers expect convenience, and search engines increasingly prioritize businesses that





provide it.

Another important factor is consistency across platforms.

Your business name, address, phone number, hours, and services should match everywhere they appear online. Inconsistent information creates confusion for both users and search engines. This seemingly small detail can have a measurable impact on local search visibility.

Strong online presence also creates an advantage beyond search rankings.

When potential customers discover your business, they immediately begin looking for signals that reinforce trust. A professional website, active social media profiles, positive reviews, recent content, and community involvement all contribute to credibility.

These factors influence not only whether people find your business, but whether they choose it.

The relationship between online presence and search visibility is often circular.

A stronger online presence leads to improved search visibility. Improved visibility generates more traffic, engagement, and reviews. Those signals then further strengthen online authority and search performance. Over time, this momentum compounds.

Businesses that invest consistently in their digital presence often find themselves benefiting from increased visibility, stronger credibility, and higher quality leads.

The opposite is also true.

Businesses that neglect their

online presence frequently discover that competitors with weaker products or services are outranking them simply because they are more visible and easier to trust online.

In today's marketplace, perception and accessibility matter.

Consumers cannot choose a business they cannot find, and they cannot trust a business that appears outdated or inactive.

Ultimately, a strong online presence serves two audiences simultaneously. It helps consumers feel confident in their decision, and it helps search engines feel confident recommending your business in the first place.

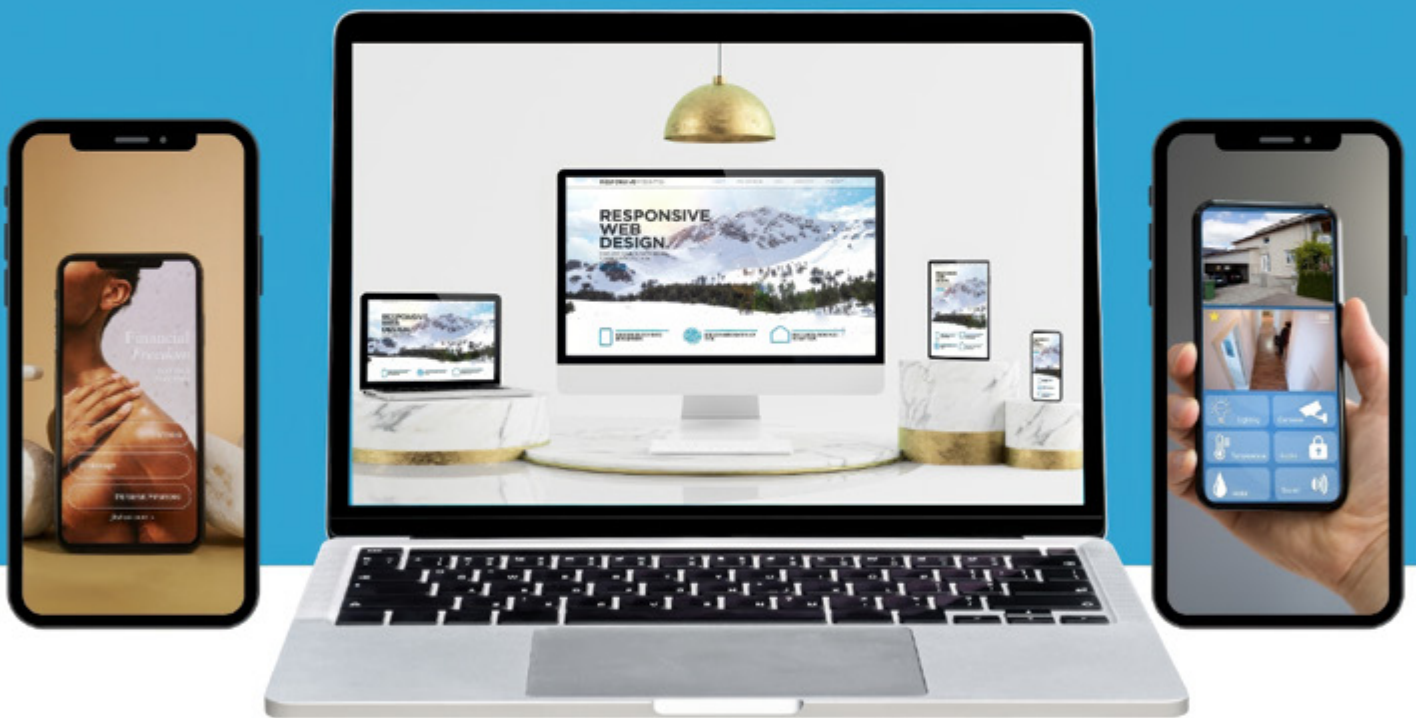
Those two goals are more connected than ever before.

A strong online presence has become one of the most important factors influencing search visibility and customer trust. Websites, reviews, business profiles, social media activity, content creation, and consistent information across platforms all contribute to how search engines evaluate and rank businesses. In 2026, businesses that invest in their digital presence are not simply improving their marketing. They are improving their ability to be found, trusted, and chosen by the customers searching for them every day.

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Great Ways to Promote Your Local Business During the Summer

Summer has a rhythm all its own. The days are longer, calendars are fuller, and communities come alive with festivals, vacations, outdoor dining, concerts, sporting events, and neighborhood gatherings. For small businesses, this seasonal energy creates an opportunity that simply does not exist during other times of the year.

Consumers are out and about. They are spending more time with family and friends, exploring their communities, and looking for experiences. Businesses that understand how

to align their marketing with these seasonal behaviors often find summer to be one of their most valuable opportunities for growth.

The first step is understanding that summer marketing should feel different. Consumers are not in the same mindset they are in during the holiday season or the busy rush of spring. Summer marketing works best when it feels lighter, more experiential, and more community focused. It is less about selling and more about participating in the moments people are already enjoying.

Community events remain one of the most effective ways to increase local visibility during the summer months. Farmers markets, festivals, outdoor concerts, car shows, fairs, and charity events all create opportunities to put your business in front of highly engaged local audiences. Even businesses that do not sell products directly can benefit from sponsoring events, setting up informational booths, or simply showing up and participating.

There is tremendous value in becoming a familiar face in the community. Consumers are more likely to support businesses they recognize, and recognition often starts with repeated local exposure. A logo on an event banner or a conversation at a community gathering may not result in an immediate sale, but it builds familiarity that often pays dividends later.

Summer also creates opportunities for businesses to take advantage of outdoor spaces. Restaurants can expand patio dining experiences. Retailers can host sidewalk sales. Service businesses can sponsor outdoor movie nights or community gatherings. Even something as simple as offering refreshments during a hot day can create memorable customer experiences.

Partnerships with other local businesses become

particularly powerful during the summer. A coffee shop and bookstore might collaborate on an event. A landscaping company and garden center might offer a joint promotion. A boutique and local salon might create a summer giveaway package. These partnerships allow businesses to expand their reach while strengthening relationships within the community.

Social media content should evolve with the season as well. Summer is inherently visual, making it ideal for behind-the-scenes content, customer spotlights, community involvement, and lifestyle imagery. People want to see experiences, not advertisements. A short video from a local event or photos from a community fundraiser often generate more engagement than a traditional promotional post.

User generated content can be especially effective during the summer months. Encouraging customers to share photos of your products or services in use creates authentic content while increasing visibility. A restaurant featuring customer vacation photos, a retailer highlighting customer purchases, or a contractor showcasing completed outdoor projects can all benefit from this approach.

Seasonal promotions continue

to perform well, but the most successful businesses avoid relying solely on discounts. Summer themed packages, limited edition offerings, exclusive experiences, and event tie ins often create more excitement than simple price reductions. Consumers respond to experiences and exclusivity just as much as they respond to savings.

Local search visibility becomes increasingly important during the summer travel season. Tourists and visitors frequently search for businesses near them while exploring unfamiliar areas. Ensuring that your business listings are accurate, your hours are current, and your online reviews are strong can make a significant difference in attracting new customers.

Google Business Profiles deserve particular attention during this time of year. Updated photos, current promotions, event announcements, and active review management can all improve visibility in local search results. For many businesses, this profile serves as the first impression for potential customers.

Email marketing can also benefit from a seasonal refresh. Summer newsletters tend to perform better when they focus on local events, seasonal tips, community involvement, and helpful content rather than heavy

promotional messaging. The tone should feel conversational and timely.

One often overlooked opportunity is employee advocacy. Team members attending local events, volunteering, or participating in community activities naturally extend the visibility of your business. Branded apparel, sponsorship participation, and community involvement all contribute to this effect.

Summer is also an ideal time to tell your story. Share your involvement in local events. Highlight your employees. Celebrate milestones. Showcase your connection to the community. Small businesses possess a unique advantage over national chains because they have local roots and local stories to tell.

Perhaps the most important principle of summer marketing is simple: meet people where they already

are. Instead of trying to pull consumers away from their summer activities, find ways to become part of those experiences. Businesses that integrate themselves naturally into the season often create stronger connections and more memorable impressions.

As consumers continue to seek experiences and community connections, local businesses are uniquely positioned to deliver both. The businesses that thrive during the summer are often not the ones with the biggest advertising budgets. They are the ones that show up, participate, and become an active part of the communities they serve.

Summer eventually fades into fall, but the relationships built during these months often last much longer. A conversation at a festival, a sponsorship at a community event, or a memorable customer experience can turn a casual visitor into a loyal customer for

years to come.

In the end, summer marketing is not simply about increasing sales during a busy season. It is about increasing visibility, building relationships, and strengthening your position within the community. Businesses that embrace those opportunities often discover that the return extends far beyond the summer months themselves.

Summer presents unique opportunities for local businesses to increase visibility and strengthen community relationships. Through local events, partnerships, seasonal experiences, community involvement, and strategic digital marketing, businesses can position themselves where consumers are already spending their time. The businesses that make the greatest impact are often the ones that become an active and recognizable part of the communities they proudly serve.



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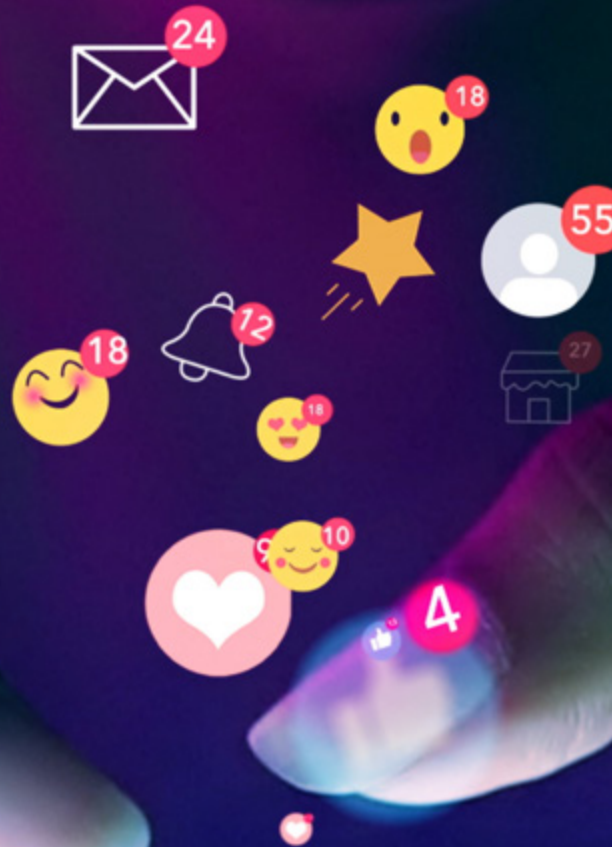


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WHAT MAKES SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT GO VIRAL?



Every business owner has thought it at least once.

"What if this post goes viral?"

It is an understandable question. We have all seen the stories. A local bakery posts a funny video and gains hundreds of thousands of followers overnight. A small retailer shares a behind the scenes clip that suddenly appears on millions of

screens. A contractor films a transformation video that generates more leads in a week than they received all year.

The allure of virality is powerful because it feels like a shortcut. One post. One video. One moment that changes everything.

The reality, however, is often much different.

For every piece of content that explodes across the internet, millions quietly disappear into the endless scroll of social media feeds.

More importantly, many viral moments generate attention without generating results. Views do not automatically become customers. Followers do not automatically become revenue. Popularity does not automatically become growth.



Think about the last post you shared with a friend. Chances are it made you laugh, taught you something unexpected, or reminded you of a personal experience. We share content because it makes us feel something.

Timing also plays a significant role.

Content that aligns with current conversations, trends, seasonal moments, or cultural events naturally receives more attention. Social media platforms reward relevance and recency. Being part of the conversation often matters more than trying to create one from scratch.

Video continues to dominate this environment.

Short form video remains one of the most consumed content formats in 2026. Industry research suggests that consumers spend significantly more time engaging with video content than static images alone. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and YouTube continue to prioritize video because it keeps users on the platform longer.

But while video may increase the opportunity for reach, it is not a guarantee of success.

Authenticity consistently outperforms perfection.

Consumers have become

That is why small businesses need to ask a different question.

Not, "How do we go viral?"

But rather, "How do we create content that actually helps our business grow?"

To understand the difference, it helps to understand what causes content to spread in the first place.

Emotion drives sharing.

Research consistently shows that content that evokes strong emotional responses performs better than content that simply informs. Humor, surprise, inspiration, nostalgia, excitement, and even outrage motivate people to hit the share button. Human beings are emotional creatures long before they are logical consumers.

remarkably skilled at recognizing overly polished or overly scripted content. In many cases, the videos that perform best are not the ones with professional lighting or expensive editing. They are the ones that feel real.

A business owner sharing a lesson learned.

An employee showing what happens behind the scenes.

A customer reacting to a completed project.

These moments resonate because they feel human.

There is another factor that often drives virality: simplicity.

The most successful content is usually built around one clear idea. It does not try to explain everything at once. It delivers a message quickly and clearly. Within the first few seconds, viewers know exactly what they are watching and why they should continue. Confusion is the enemy of engagement.

Yet while all of these ingredients may contribute to viral content, there is an uncomfortable truth many marketers eventually discover.

Virality is often unpredictable.

Some of the most carefully planned campaigns generate modest engagement. Meanwhile, an unplanned

video filmed on a phone receives hundreds of thousands of views. Algorithms shift. Audiences change. What works one week may not work the next.

Building an entire marketing strategy around virality is a bit like building a business plan around winning the lottery.

It can happen.

It just should not be the plan.

What matters more for small businesses is consistency.

A local business that reaches five hundred highly relevant people every week will often outperform a business that reaches five hundred thousand random viewers once. Attention only matters if it comes from the right audience.

The local restaurant does not need millions of views from people across the country.

The local accountant does not need followers in every state.

The local contractor does not need international recognition.

They need visibility within the communities they serve.

This is where engagement becomes more important than reach.

A post that generates twenty

meaningful conversations with potential customers often delivers more business value than a video that receives one hundred thousand views and no inquiries. Comments, direct messages, shares within local networks, and customer conversations are often far stronger indicators of success than impressions alone.

Relationships outperform algorithms every time.

Trust is also built through repetition rather than explosions of attention.

Marketing research has long shown that consumers need multiple interactions with a brand before making a purchasing decision. A single viral moment may create awareness, but consistent visibility creates familiarity. Familiarity creates trust. Trust creates customers.

That process is slower, but it is significantly more reliable.

The businesses seeing the greatest success on social media today are rarely the ones chasing trends every day. More often, they are the ones consistently educating, entertaining, informing, and connecting with their audiences over time.

They show up regularly.

They provide value.

They respond to comments.

They participate in

conversations.

They build communities rather than audiences.

Ironically, these are often the businesses that eventually experience viral moments anyway. Not because they chased them, but because they built the foundation that allowed those moments to matter.

In many ways, social media success looks a lot like business success itself. There are very few shortcuts. Sustainable growth usually comes from consistency, trust, and relationships built over time.

The occasional viral post may provide a boost along the way. But it is the hundreds of ordinary posts, conversations, and interactions that ultimately build extraordinary businesses.

Viral content is often driven by emotion, timing, authenticity, and simplicity, but virality itself remains largely unpredictable. For small businesses, the pursuit of meaningful engagement, community relationships, and consistent visibility often delivers far greater value than chasing internet fame. In the long run, businesses do not grow because millions of people saw one post. They grow because the right people saw the right message consistently over time.

5 Signs You're Measuring the Wrong Social Media Metrics

1. You celebrate views, but never track inquiries.

A video with 100,000 views feels exciting, but if it generates zero phone calls, website visits, or leads, what did it actually accomplish? Visibility is valuable, but business growth happens when attention turns into action.

2. Your follower count matters more to you than your customer count.

A local business with 2,000 engaged local followers will often outperform a business with 50,000 followers scattered across the country. The right audience will always outperform the biggest audience.

3. You focus on likes instead of conversations.

Likes are easy. Comments, direct messages, shares, and saved posts require more effort from your audience and often signal much stronger interest. Engagement quality matters far more than engagement quantity.

4. You chase every trend but ignore consistency.

One viral post can create a temporary spike in attention. Consistent content that educates, entertains, and builds trust creates sustainable growth. Most successful businesses are built on momentum, not moments.

5. You measure popularity instead of profitability.

At the end of the day, social media is a business tool. If your content generates leads, appointments, website traffic, referrals, or sales, it is working; even if it never goes viral.

The Metric That Actually Matters Most

The most important question is not, *"How many people saw this?"* It is, *"Did the right people see it, and did they take the next step?"*

For most small businesses, meaningful engagement from local customers will always be more valuable than attention from strangers who will never buy from you.



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The Habits of Highly Effective Small Business Owners



Spend enough time around successful small business owners and you begin to notice something interesting. Their industries may be different. Their personalities may be different. Their businesses may range from construction companies and restaurants to retail stores and marketing agencies. Yet many of the habits that contribute to their success are remarkably similar.

Success in small business rarely happens because of one brilliant idea or one lucky break. More often, it is the result of consistent actions repeated over time. The habits business owners develop often determine not only how their companies perform, but how they handle challenges, opportunities, and growth.

One of the most common traits among effective business owners is their ability to prioritize long term thinking over short term reactions. It is easy to spend every day responding to emails, solving problems, and putting out fires. There will always be another issue demanding immediate attention. Successful owners understand that if they spend all of their time reacting, they leave little room for growth.

They intentionally create time to work on the business, not just in it.

This may involve reviewing

financial reports, evaluating marketing efforts, exploring new opportunities, or improving internal systems. These activities may not feel urgent in the moment, but they often have the greatest impact on long term success.

Another habit shared by high performing business owners is an obsession with learning.

The business landscape changes constantly. Consumer expectations evolve. Technology advances. Marketing strategies shift. The owners who continue to grow are often the ones who remain curious.

They read books. They attend conferences. They listen to podcasts during their commute. They ask questions and seek advice from others who have traveled similar paths. They understand that learning is not something that ends when school does. In business, learning becomes a lifelong responsibility.

Highly effective owners also develop a strong relationship with their numbers.

Many entrepreneurs enter business because they are passionate about a product, service, or craft. Financial reports and profit margins may not have been the reason they started the company. However, successful owners understand that numbers tell a story.

They know where revenue is coming from. They understand their margins. They review expenses regularly and monitor trends over time. They do not need to be accountants, but they do need to know how to read the scoreboard.

After all, it is difficult to improve performance if you do not know how you are keeping score.

Delegation is another habit that separates growing businesses from stagnant ones.

Many business owners fall into the trap of believing that no one can do the work as well as they can. While this mindset often comes from a place of pride and responsibility, it can quickly become a limitation.

The most effective leaders understand that growth requires trust. They build systems, train their teams, and empower others to take ownership. They recognize that their time is most valuable when spent on leadership, strategy, and decision making rather than tasks that others can successfully manage.

This willingness to let go often becomes one of the most important turning points in a company's growth.

Communication also plays a major role in long term success.

Strong business owners communicate clearly with customers, employees, vendors, and partners. They set expectations. They provide feedback. They listen carefully and respond thoughtfully.

Many business problems that appear complex at first glance can ultimately be traced back to poor communication. Effective leaders understand that clarity prevents confusion and strengthens relationships.

Perhaps one of the most overlooked habits is consistency.

Consumers often assume successful businesses experience overnight growth. In reality, most businesses grow because they continue showing up long after others have stopped. They continue marketing when business is good. They continue improving when things are comfortable. They continue building relationships even when immediate returns are not obvious.

Consistency may not be exciting, but it is often what separates sustainable businesses from short lived success stories.

Successful owners also protect their time carefully.

They recognize that time is one of their most valuable assets and they treat it accordingly. They learn to say



businesses they trust. Employees stay with leaders they respect. Partnerships develop when businesses support one another. These relationships become assets that often prove more valuable than any advertising campaign.

family and personal interests.

A business owner who is exhausted, overwhelmed, and disengaged cannot effectively lead a growing company.

In many ways, the habits that drive business success are not complicated. They are often simple actions practiced consistently over long periods of time. Strategic thinking, continuous learning, financial awareness, delegation, communication, and adaptability may not sound revolutionary, but together they create a foundation that allows businesses to thrive.

no to distractions, unnecessary meetings, and opportunities that do not align with their goals.

This discipline allows them to focus on high value activities that move the business forward rather than simply keeping them busy.

Adaptability has become another defining characteristic of successful business owners in recent years.

The businesses that survive and thrive are often not the largest or the oldest. They are the ones willing to evolve. They adjust to changing customer behavior, embrace new technology, and remain open to new ideas.

Flexibility is no longer a competitive advantage. In many industries, it has become a requirement for survival.

Highly effective owners also understand the importance of investing in relationships.

Customers return to

Strong relationships create referrals, loyalty, and opportunities that cannot be purchased.

Many successful owners also make reflection a regular habit.

They evaluate what worked and what did not. They review decisions honestly and look for lessons in both successes and failures. This ability to self assess allows them to improve continuously rather than repeating the same mistakes.

Growth often begins with awareness.

Finally, highly effective business owners understand that burnout is not a badge of honor.

There was a time when endless hours and constant exhaustion were celebrated as signs of commitment. Today, many leaders recognize that long term success requires sustainability. They create boundaries, prioritize their health, and make time for

The difference between successful business owners and everyone else is rarely a secret formula.

More often, it is the willingness to do the ordinary things extraordinarily well and to continue doing them long after the initial excitement has faded.

Highly effective small business owners share many of the same habits regardless of their industry or experience level. They focus on long term growth, commit to continuous learning, understand their numbers, delegate effectively, and build strong relationships. Most importantly, they recognize that success is rarely the result of one big decision. It is the result of small, intentional actions repeated consistently over time.



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THE RISE OF USER-GENERATED CONTENT

HOW TO GET CUSTOMERS TO MARKET FOR YOU



For decades, businesses controlled the marketing conversation.

Brands wrote the advertisements, selected the images, crafted the messaging, and decided exactly how they wanted to present themselves to the world. Customers consumed the content, and businesses did the talking.

Then social media changed everything.

Today, some of the most powerful marketing content is no longer created by businesses at all. It is created by customers sharing photos of their purchases, posting

videos of their experiences, leaving online reviews, or tagging businesses in social media posts. The marketing megaphone has changed hands, and consumers are listening more closely to each other than ever before.

This shift has given rise to one of the most important trends in modern marketing: user-generated content.

User-generated content, often referred to as UGC, includes any content created voluntarily by customers rather than by the business itself. Reviews, testimonials, social media posts, videos, photos, and even comments

all fall under this category. While it may sound simple, its impact on purchasing decisions has been profound.

The reason is remarkably straightforward.

People trust people.

Marketing research has consistently reinforced this idea for years. According to research frequently cited from Nielsen's Trust in Advertising studies, 92 percent of consumers trust recommendations from other people more than traditional advertising. In many cases, consumers place greater confidence in a stranger's

online review than they do in a professionally produced advertisement.

This trust advantage has only grown stronger as consumers become increasingly skeptical of polished marketing campaigns and sponsored content.

In fact, recent industry research found that consumers are 2.4 times more likely to view user-generated content as authentic compared to content produced directly by brands.

Authenticity has become one of the most valuable currencies in marketing.

Consumers have grown accustomed to highly produced videos, carefully curated social media feeds, and advertising messages that often feel too perfect to be believable. User-generated content feels different because it reflects real experiences from real people.

- A customer sharing photos from a restaurant dinner feels more credible than a stock image in an advertisement.
- A homeowner posting pictures of a completed renovation feels more convincing than a promotional brochure.
- A parent recommending a local business in a community Facebook

group often carries more influence than an expensive advertising campaign.

Consumers recognize this difference immediately.

The impact extends well beyond trust alone.

Studies show that customers who interact with reviews and user-generated content convert at significantly higher rates than those who do not. Research from the customer experience platform Yotpo found that shoppers who engage with user-generated content convert at rates 161 percent higher than customers who never encounter it during the buying process.

Other studies have reported similarly impressive results. Social posts featuring customer-created content have been shown to produce conversion rates more than ten times higher than traditional branded posts.

For small businesses operating with limited marketing budgets, those numbers are difficult to ignore.

The good news is that many businesses already have access to user-generated content; they simply are not asking for it.

Satisfied customers often enjoy sharing positive

experiences, but they may never think to do so unless prompted. Sometimes the difference between receiving customer content and never seeing it comes down to a simple request.

- A restaurant might encourage diners to tag them in photos.
- A contractor might ask homeowners to share before and after pictures of completed projects.
- A retailer might invite customers to post how they styled a recent purchase.

More often than not, customers are happy to participate when they feel appreciated rather than pressured.

Creating memorable experiences can also encourage customers to share organically.

People naturally post about experiences that surprise them, delight them, or exceed expectations. Exceptional packaging, thoughtful customer service, personalized touches, and unique moments often become social media content without businesses ever having to ask.

The businesses generating the most user-generated content are often not the ones asking the loudest. They are the ones creating experiences worth talking about.

This has become increasingly important as trust in online content continues to decline.

A recent consumer survey found that 75 percent of Americans trust online content less today than they did just a few years ago, while nearly eight in ten consumers say it is becoming harder to distinguish between authentic content and AI-generated material.

Ironically, the rise of artificial intelligence may be making authentic customer voices even more valuable.

Consumers are actively searching for proof that real people are using and enjoying products and services before making purchasing decisions. User-generated content provides that proof in a way that traditional advertising often cannot.

The influence of user-generated content is especially apparent among younger consumers.

A recent study examining consumer trust among younger demographics found that 72 percent of Gen Z consumers view customer reviews as the most credible source of information when evaluating a brand, ranking them above advertisements, brand social media content, and influencer endorsements.

For a generation that has

grown up surrounded by digital advertising, peer validation has become the ultimate form of credibility.

Of course, collecting user-generated content is only half the equation.

The businesses seeing the greatest success are actively incorporating customer content throughout their marketing ecosystem. Reviews appear on websites and landing pages. Customer photos are shared on social media. Testimonials become part of email campaigns and advertising creative.

One customer interaction can often fuel content across multiple channels for months.

There is another benefit that often goes overlooked.

User-generated content creates community.

When customers see other people engaging with a business, they feel part of something larger than a transaction. The relationship shifts from customer and company to participant and community member. This creates a powerful cycle where one customer's content encourages another customer's participation.

Momentum begins to build naturally.

The rise of user-generated

content ultimately represents something much bigger than a marketing trend. It reflects a shift in how trust is built in the digital age.

Consumers are no longer looking exclusively to businesses for information about products and services. They are looking to each other.

The businesses that understand this are not trying to dominate the conversation. They are creating experiences that inspire customers to join it.

Because in 2026, the most persuasive voice in your marketing strategy may not be your own.

It may belong to the customer who already believes in what you do.

User-generated content has become one of the most influential forces in modern marketing because consumers trust the experiences of other customers more than traditional advertising. Reviews, testimonials, photos, and customer stories provide authenticity that branded content often struggles to replicate.

By creating memorable experiences and encouraging customers to share them, businesses can turn their audience into their most credible and effective marketing team.

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10 Daily Habits of Successful Business Owners

1. They start the day with priorities, not emails.

Highly effective business owners identify the most important tasks for the day before opening their inbox or responding to distractions.

2. They spend time working on the business, not just in it.

Whether it is reviewing strategy, improving systems, or planning growth initiatives, they intentionally carve out time for long term thinking.

3. They review key numbers regularly.

Revenue, expenses, leads, margins, and cash flow are monitored consistently because successful owners know that numbers tell the story of the business.

4. They protect their calendars.

They understand that time is one of their most valuable assets and avoid filling every hour with meetings and low value tasks.

5. They communicate with their team daily.

Strong leaders provide clarity, direction, and encouragement while keeping communication open and consistent.

6. They continue learning.

Books, podcasts, articles, webinars, and industry news help successful owners stay sharp and adapt to changing markets.

7. They delegate instead of doing everything themselves.

They focus their energy on leadership and strategy while trusting their team with responsibilities that can be handled by others.

8. They invest in relationships.

Whether it is checking in with customers, employees, referral partners, or vendors, they understand that business growth is built on strong connections.

9. They make decisions instead of avoiding them.

Successful owners gather information, trust their experience, and move forward rather than becoming paralyzed by perfectionism.

10. They take time to reflect and reset.

At the end of the day, they review what worked, what did not, and what can be improved tomorrow because growth comes from continuous improvement, not constant activity.





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