

M LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

The Marketing Guide for Local Business Owners

September 2022

*How to Use
Social Proof
to Boost Email
Marketing
Results*

*10 Effective
Ways to
Motivate Your
Staff*

*Build Your
Community
with Contests*

**5 Simple
Ways to
Grow Your
List
Organically**

**Infographic:
6 Steps to
Growing a Great
Business**

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LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

Greetings!

September wraps up the third quarter of the year, and the fourth quarter with three major holidays is just about upon us. As a local business, it isn't too soon to start planning your holiday marketing strategy.

Our hope is that our magazine will help provide you some insight into these and other marketing trends, and contain information you can utilize to help you grow your business.

This month's articles and infographic cover many topics that we hope will be relevant to your business, including How to Build Your Community, Customer Engagement, Email Marketing, and many other timely topics.

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.

Have a topic that you'd like to see us cover? We welcome any suggestions, comments or questions you might have. Of course, we always welcome the opportunity to explain how we've been able to help businesses just like yours increase their revenue by using our effective, yet affordable marketing solutions.

To Your Success!

Alyssa Engle
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LMS Solutions, Inc.

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A Little About Us

Local Business Marketing Magazine is proudly provided by LMS Solutions, Inc.



LMS Solutions was developed to give businesses of all sizes the ability to leverage the same cutting-edge marketing platforms that the Fortune 500 organizations use, at extremely affordable rates.

We offer an extensive catalog of cutting-edge Local Online, Mobile, Social, Pay-Per-Click, Video, Web and Direct Marketing Media Programs. Whether you're a small business, medium business, or non-profit organization, our programs can help you find greater success.

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Marketing Calendar

Plan your marketing messages around these upcoming holidays and proclamations.

September

National Service Dog Month

Hispanic Heritage Month

Baby Safety Month

Self Improvement Month

Shameless Promotion Month

Blood Cancer Awareness Month

National Organic Month

Sucide Prevention Month

Sep 5 - Labor Day (U.S.)

Sep 11 - Patriot Day (U.S.)

3rd - Bacon Day

3rd - World Beard Day

4th - Wildlife Day

5th - Cheese Pizza Day

7th - Beer Lovers Day

7th - Google's Birthday

10th - World Suicide Prevention Day

11th - Grandparents Day

12th - Video Games Day

12th - Chocolate Milkshake Day

13th - Peanut Day

14th - Eat a Hoagie Day

15th - Double Cheeseburger Day

16th - Guacamole Day

17th - Batman Day

17th - Citizenship Day

17th - Apple Dumpling Day

17th - Cleanup Day

17th - Puppy Mill Awareness Day

17th - Thank a Police Officer Day

18th - Wife Appreciation Day

21st - World's Alzheimer's Day

22nd - Autumnal Equinox

22nd - Ice Cream Cone Day

25th - One Hit Wonder Day

27th - Chocolate Milk Day

27th - Good Neighbor Day

28th - Sons Day

29th - World Heart Day

October

Adopt A Dog Month

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Bullying Prevention Month

Fall Car Care Month

Dental Hygiene Month

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Emotional Wellness Month

National Pasta Month

Oct 10th - Columbus Day (U.S.)

Oct 31st - Halloween

1st - International Coffee Day

1st - Homemade Cookies Day

3rd - Child Health Day

3rd - Techies Day

4th - Cinnamon Roll Day

4th - Golf Lovers Day

4th - Taco Day

4th - Vodka Day

4th - World Animal Day

5th - Do Something Nice Day

6th - Noodle Day

9th - Beer & Pizza Day

9th - Father-Daughter Day

10th - World Mental Health Day

10th - World Homeless Day

12th - Savings Day

12th - Stop Bullying Day

12th - World Arthritis Day

14th - Dessert Day

15th - Global Handwashing Day

16th - Boss's Day

17th - Pasta Day

18th - Chocolate Cupcake Day

19th - Medical Assistants Day

20th - Get to Know Your Customers Day

21st - Back to the Future Day

22nd - Make A Difference Day

26th - Pumpkin Day

28th - Chocolate Day

30th - Candy Corn Day

31st - Knock-Knock Jokes Day



5 Simple Ways to Grow Your List Organically

If the money is in the list, then one of your priorities as a marketer is to grow that list. Whether you're acting as an affiliate, drop shipping, or developing and selling your own products, having a list of fans you can market to is important. Email marketing allows you to connect with both new prospects and loyal customers, driving further engagement and sales.

Unfortunately, many people don't know how to grow a list, especially organically. They spend money to build funnels and send ads all over the Internet, building a list of cold leads who wanted your lead magnet but are in all other ways unfamiliar with your brand. These recruits aren't your fans unless you manage to bring them around and get them to start spending time on your website. This marketing process is an

uphill battle.

Leads who come in from your website, however, are already engaged with your brand and business. They're warmer than the people you entice with a magnet using paid means, so marketing to them won't be as difficult. They want your emails so they can keep up with any sales, discounts, or just general news about their interests. But how do you get them?

1. Remember that Content is King

Funnels and great copy are important aspects of a marketing business, but they aren't everything. Content still reigns as king because it has the power to turn cold leads into hot buyers, convince Google your site is legit, and bring visitors organically to your blog. This is because content demonstrates your value.

Even if your niche isn't about teaching people something, your content shows that you care about something. If you're in the video game niche, for example, your content shows that you care about what you're talking about. Maybe you have

a YouTube or Twitch channel where you play games online and your site is for sharing industry news. All of this content keeps people coming and keeps your fanbase engaged so they buy your merchandise or view the ads that generate revenue.

Content will always be what people crave first and foremost. It builds trust and turns visitors into buyers far more reliably than most funnels ever will. That's not to bash funnels, of course, but the power of good content shouldn't be underestimated.

There are two rules for good content:

- The content should be relevant to the niche and what your fans are currently interested in.
- It should be actionable. It doesn't matter if you want people to sign up for more good content, want to redirect people to a product or service, or just want people to engage with the post.



These two rules bring new people into the fold, keep people coming back, and redirect their attention so you get more sales, engagement, or whatever needs to be accomplished. You should use your site's analytics to see what people are best responding to in order to achieve this better.

2. Social Proof isn't Just for Landing Pages

Most marketers and business owners understand the power of social proof and happily include it on their landing pages and sales pages. This is because social proof can help drive engagement if visitors can see that they're just following in the footsteps of other happy customers. It's why some e-commerce sites include little popups in the corner every time someone makes a

purchase and why there are so many testimonials when you make your way through a sales funnel or watch a webinar.

However, you can use social proof to grow your list on your website organically. A counter to display how many people have signed up already would be good, as would a popup in the corner shouting, "John Doe just subscribed!" whenever you get a new sign-up. Both of these offer incredibly social proof. The latter is especially good if you don't have a large email list of, say, more than 1,000 subscribers yet.

You can also put a message over your subscription form or in the popup, if you use one, inviting people to, for example, "Join more than 2,000 happy subscribers!" This also provides incredible social proof to help people see that this isn't just another "newsletter" to subscribe to only to be bombarded with ads day in and day out.

Trust seals are also forms of social proof that some marketers are very fond of. A trust seal, sometimes called a trust badge, are signals that let your visitors and leads know that other companies trust you. If you have a seal of approval from Norton, for example, then people who already use Norton's antivirus programs and such will be more likely to trust you.



visitors to your site (where they'll sign up), but you should never write content with the sole expectation that people share it and comment on it without you needing to acknowledge it at all.

People comment and engage because they want to be heard.

They don't want their voices to merely echo, unacknowledged, through the canyons of your funnels. Replies and responses go a long way toward building loyalty and only lead to more engagement. A detached web blog or social media account

leads to people feeling uncared for. While people cannot reply to your autoresponder emails, they can reply to your posts, so interaction there is more likely to lead to more email subscribers in the long run.

3. Engage with Your Fans

Did you know that most marketers don't reply to blog comments, tweets directed at the business, or Facebook comments? Fans want engagement with you; that's why they bothered to comment or tweet in the first place. If you ignore them, they'll come to ignore you. Sharing posts is a great way to organically spread your brand awareness and get more organic

4. Use Popups in Ways that Make Sense

Popups have a bad reputation online, and it's easy to see why. They're obtrusive, can feel like begging, and sometimes

are difficult to close once they're in your face, especially on mobile. However, to circle back a little bit to point #2, pop-ups don't have to do this. In the example given earlier, popups in the corner of a page alerting visitors to when someone has taken action on your site are neither obtrusive nor unwelcome. They pop in for a second and then disappear of their own accord -- a mere herald that something has happened to plant the seeds of trust in your prospect's mind.

You can also use the more traditional pop-up in ways that don't make others groan, however. Basically, you do this by mastering the timing and relevancy of those pop-ups. Random popups drive visitors away, but a popup that's timed to pique their interest can drive them to take further action.

For example, let's pretend your prospect is checking out a product on your site. This could be something you're selling yourself, an affiliate product, or even promoting a multi-level proposition. If you have a lead magnet relevant to what they're looking at, such as a free course

on how to build a downline if your visitor is curious about your network marketing offer, they may be willing to sign up.

This is because the popup is relevant in this case. You're giving someone something for free to help them make a better-informed decision, and that lead magnet and further emails from your list might be what they need to take the action you really want: a purchase.

You can also personalize popups depending on whether someone is a repeat customer or a first-time visitor, whether people own cats or dogs or something else, whether they prefer Macs or PCs, etc. This kind of personalization caters to the 80% of shoppers who claim to want more personalized content and offers from their preferred businesses. This works outside of e-commerce as well and can be applied to blogs.

5. Embrace the Giveaway

One of the fastest ways to get new email sign-ups



is to host a giveaway on social media. Offering a giveaway or sweepstakes is a fantastic way to bring more people into your email list because there's zero risk and a strong emotional factor driving their actions. Emotion is powerful, regardless of your personality type, and the gratification of a possible win is more than enough for many people to do something as simple as entering their email address.

Why social media?

Because the average user spends around two and a half hours on sites like YouTube, TikTok, Twitter, and Instagram every day. Social media is a great way to get found, and a giveaway is an emotionally charged piece of content that grabs attention and then doesn't demand it for very long.

There are a few tips to make a giveaway more successful:

- Incentivize action by giving people multiple ways to enter. For example, subscribing to your newsletter awards one entry, sharing on Facebook gives another, sharing on Twitter gives yet another, and so on. This is a great way to spread brand awareness while also growing your list.
- Make sure to engage with your audience during the promotion. You should be engaging a lot, as per tip #3, but make sure you're on your A game during the promotion. This helps generate more excitement and allows you to show yourself by putting your best foot forward.

Remember to Stay Optimistic

Growing your list organically doesn't happen overnight. Much as how marketers must

perform split testing on their funnels exhaustively in order to ensure they're getting the biggest bang for their buck; you may have to experiment with different ways of engaging visitors and spurring them to action on your main website.

Of course, for this to be successful, you must develop a robust authority site. If your business relies almost exclusively on funnels, you'll have to put more time into making a site that brings in visitors regularly. Building that should be your first priority followed by motivating prospects to subscribe to your email list.



A website is a powerful tool when it comes to your business. Don't overlook the quality of leads you can get when they subscribe because they came to you first.

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How to Use Social Proof to Boost Email Marketing Results

More than ever before, consumers rely on other people rather than brands to guide their purchase decisions. This is why businesses using email marketing need to incorporate more social proof in their email campaigns. Using social proof such as testimonials and case studies is not only a great way to build brand trust and customer loyalty, but it also speeds up buying decisions.

Whether you're new to email marketing or looking for new ideas, this guide looks at various ways to use social proof in your email marketing campaigns. First, let's look at what social proof means.

What Is Social Proof?

The term "social proof" was coined by the psychologist Robert Cialdini in his 1984 book "Influence: The

Psychology of Persuasion." The social proof effect is based on the observation that people tend to "follow the wisdom of the crowd," taking a particular action because they see others taking the same action. Most people just want to "fit in," and copying the majority feels like the easiest way to make the right decision, especially when there are multiple choices.

Ultimately, using social proof in marketing is one of the most powerful ways to influence purchase decisions. Marketers have taken advantage of this psychological effect for years because consumers are more likely to make decisions based on what other consumers have done. This is why so many marketing messages use social proof such as testimonials and peer recommendations to persuade and earn the trust of potential customers.

9 Ways to Incorporate Social Proof in Email Marketing Campaigns

Whether you want to add credibility to your welcome emails or make your discount emails more persuasive, here are nine easy ways to squeeze more social proof into your email campaigns:

1. Use Specific Numbers

Inserting numbers into email copy can add instant visual impact. It also makes your messages sound more credible. For example: "Join 1,570 other happy customers in our loyalty program." Consider using the following numbers as social proof:

- Product sales numbers.

- A statistic from a customer survey.
- The limited number of items left in stock.
- The number of email subscribers on your list.
- The number of new customers you gained in a given time period.

2. Draw Attention to Popular Products

You don't have to use numbers to show your products' popularity; you can simply showcase your most sought-after products. For example: "Our best sellers this season..." or "Check out our customer favorites..."

3. Include Reviews and Testimonials

According to a report from digital marketing company Tint, around 72 percent of consumers trust reviews and testimonials more than brand-created content.

When promoting a product or service in emails, always try to include social proof in the form of reviews and testimonials from satisfied customers. This will help to improve engagement and conversions, especially in emails such as abandoned

cart emails and welcome emails. If possible, include customer photos. According to Emarketer, 62 percent of consumers are more likely to buy a product if they can see customer photos.

4. Incorporate User-Generated Content (UGC)

According to a 2019 Stackla report, 79 percent of consumers said that UGC highly impacts their purchase decisions. What other types of UGC can you use besides reviews as social proof?

If your business, product, or service is mentioned in a third-party blog post, this counts as UGC. Social media images featuring your products, services, or employees can also be used as social proof. You can use social media listening tools to find content related to your brand. Remember that it's your legal responsibility to ask permission before using other people's content, and always credit the original content creator.

5. Showcase Media Mentions

Generally, people tend to view media organizations

as credible sources of information, which is why being mentioned on any media channel is a great form of social proof. Whether you get mentioned in a blog, local newspaper, podcast, or local magazine, make sure to tell your audience. This is especially important for smaller businesses that are less well known.

If you don't have any media mentions yet, reach out to local reporters or bloggers in your industry and ask them to review one of your products.

6. Share Case Studies

Case studies are a great way to convey the value of your products or services and show how you solve specific problems for people or companies. Case studies work well because they deal in facts. People also like to read about other people's common challenges and how their problems were solved.

When you're highlighting the benefits of your products or services within emails, consider including a link to one of your case studies.



7. Highlight Expert Endorsements

If any industry expert recommends your business or one of your products, you need to make the most of it. Make sure your email subscribers know about it from the moment they sign up to build confidence in your brand.

8. Show Awards and Certifications

If your company wins any awards or earns certifications, display them in emails to add credibility to your business and increase consumer trust. When people see awards and certifications, they instinctively believe a brand is more experienced and trustworthy.

9. Add Social Proof to Your Email Signature

Optimizing your email signature is an easy way to strengthen the

marketing power of your emails. You can include testimonials, mention awards, or feature other types of social proof. Consider including a link for readers that want to find out more.

Different team members and departments can also create unique email signatures using different types of social proof.

Improve Email Marketing Results with Social Proof

As more and more consumers seek authenticity from brands, using social proof has become an essential marketing technique for businesses across every industry. If your email marketing campaigns need a boost, the ideas outlined here are a good place to start.

As well as using social proof in the body of your email messages, try using it in email subject lines and email signup forms to increase engagement. The more you experiment, the more you'll learn about what resonates with your unique audience.

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10 Effective Ways to Motivate Your Staff



Your employees are important to your business. They should feel motivated and inspired by what they do there each day. Motivation sharpens that drive and increases performance. It might not always be easy to get that spark going, but there are several things you can do to encourage the best in your team.

Here are 10 effective ways to motivate your staff:

1. Share the vision

Giving your team a vision will give them something to work toward and rally around. There isn't just one way to share a vision. It might be a mission statement, or it could be as simple as an email to everyone on your team explaining what you want everyone's focus to be on over the next few weeks. Regardless of how you share it, giving your staff a goal that they can see will help them feel like they are working towards something important and keep their eyes on that finish line.

2. Use recognition as motivation

Recognition is the easiest way to motivate your staff.

Recognition can come in several forms, but the result is a positive affirmation that you've done a stellar job. This can include:

- Verbal recognition in front of peers
- Awards for outstanding achievements
- Competitions between teams and individuals
- Keeping track of small wins and celebrating them (for example, if an employee has submitted five successful proposals, congratulate them with a custom letter.)
- Hiring from within

3. Offer benefits

Another way to motivate your staff is by offering them benefits. Employees are likely to be more motivated if they feel they're being treated well. Benefits can help with this, as they make employees feel valued by the company and show that you're willing to invest in them. They also vary depending on your business and industry, but usually include things like paid time off, professional development opportunities, healthcare coverage or health

insurance contributions, pension plans, flexible working hours, and remote working opportunities.

When deciding which benefits you should offer your employees, think about the factors that might be important to them. For instance, younger workers may value things like workplace social events or a free gym membership more than extra vacation days or tax-free travel concessions.

4. Create a friendly and fun environment

Getting to know one another outside of work is important to building relationships. Organize some team-building activities and events. You should also consider taking your team out to lunch or dinner sometimes, just as a way of saying thank you for their hard work. You can even order takeout at the office and have an impromptu potluck.

Creating a comfortable and friendly working area will motivate the staff. Encourage them to express themselves freely and feel comfortable about going about their daily tasks, because when people are happy where they

are, they're much more productive.

5. Develop strategic plans with your staff

Such plans will help guide your organization's operations, activities, and strategic direction. They also should cover the steps you'll take to achieve these goals. While it's important for you to consult with your senior managers when developing a strategic plan, it's also worthwhile involving other employees as well. Staff members who are involved in the planning process may be more likely to work toward their objectives because they have helped develop them.

6. Teach them new skills and give them opportunities to learn

Opportunities for education and training are a great way to motivate your staff. You can give them the opportunity to learn new skills or improve their current ones. There are many ways that this can happen, such as going on courses with other employees or having someone come into the office that specializes in training people from different companies on



topics like customer service skills development.

This will keep them engaged while also improving their value to you as an employee. If you train your staff in a new area, they will feel more confident in themselves and be more motivated to work harder for you.

7. Provide constructive feedback to help your staff see it's possible to improve their performance

As the boss, you're responsible for ensuring your team is performing at its best. If they're not, it reflects badly on you. If a staffer is underperforming or their performance slips, they may need encouragement or additional training.

You can provide that encouragement by giving constructive feedback and positive reinforcement. Provide specific examples of what they've done well and how they can improve--show them something concrete to try if their performance has slipped.

8. Help your staff prioritize tasks

- Give your staff a list of the company's top five priorities for the next year and ask them what their roles are in achieving those goals.
- Invite them to prioritize the tasks that need to be completed, and then schedule a meeting to review all items on their lists.
- Help them organize all tasks into four groups:

critical and urgent, critical but not time-sensitive, noncritical but urgent, and noncritical and not time-sensitive.

- Explain that they should focus on the first two groups while delegating the last two groups.

9. Give your staff room to be creative

You could, for example:

- Give your staff time to experiment with new ideas and processes.
- Set aside a regular slot in team meetings for staff to share their ideas.
- Give your staff some time each week to develop their skills (for instance, by reading articles or watching videos).
- Support them when they want to take on new projects or work on aspects of the job that interest them more than others.
- Encourage them to take risks and try out new ways of working.

10. Communicate in all directions

When you are communicating with your

team, make sure you are doing it in all directions. That means keeping them updated on what's going on with the business but also being open to hearing what they have to say.

When you do this, not only will you be able to provide meaningful updates that keep your team's morale high, but you will also be responsive to their needs, which is critical for retaining top talent. So, keep your staff informed about the big picture so they know how their work fits into it. This will help create a sense of belonging that can increase motivation.

It's crucial that you make your workforce feel wanted and valued. Pay them well and offer excellent benefits. And create a culture where passion and the possibility of advancement are the norm at work, even if you are the boss.

When working on your motivation plan, also look at which parts of your business need the most assistance in order for you to improve sales, increase revenue, and improve any struggles you might be experiencing. And be sure to motivate yourself along with your team.

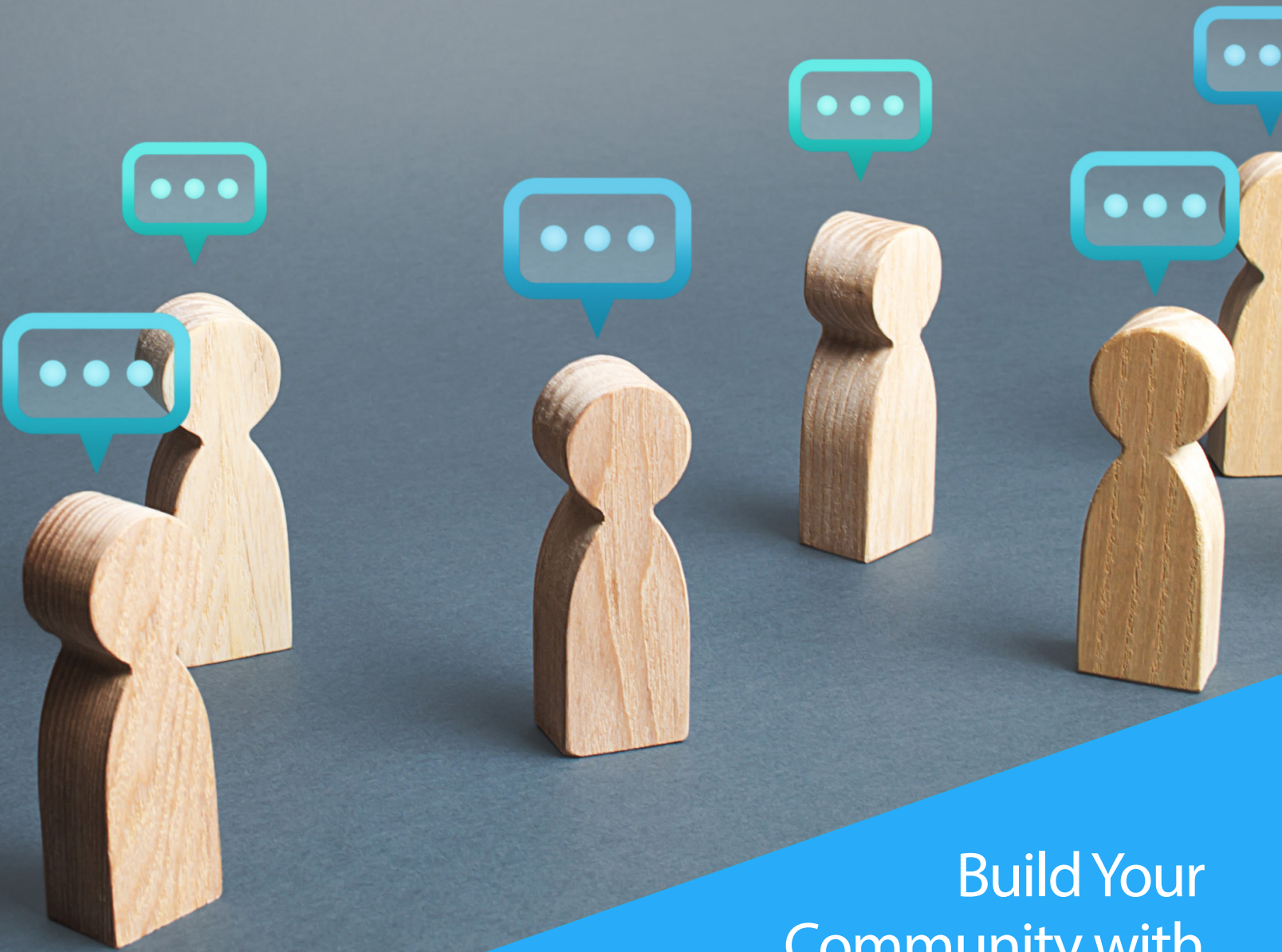


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Build Your
Community with
Contests

Who doesn't appreciate freebies? And what could be more enjoyable than competing for and winning free stuff? People enjoy competing and winning freebies; it appears to be ingrained in our DNA. Because of these factors, social media contests are extremely popular in the digital world.

Many businesses, from local mom and pops to Fortune 500 companies, are discovering that these contests are an excellent way to connect with potential customers, raise brand awareness, and differentiate themselves in the crowded, competitive online world. Most importantly, social media contests are exceptionally good ways to create online communities.

What is an online community?

An online community is a place where people with common interests come together to talk about ideas and interact commercially and socially. A community differs from an audience format (the more traditional form of information transfer) mainly in the flow of information. An audience

formats the information flowing from one central source (let's say the owner of the business or his agents) to the customers. In an online community, the flow of information branches out from customer to customer and also to the central agent or owner.

So, with a community, you gain insight from fellow customers or participants on the website, not just the central figure like the owner. There develops a kind of camaraderie, and people seek out others for ideas, insight, and advice. The business owner benefits from this by having a place where people turn for valuable information and even social interaction.

Think of an online community like a neighborhood bar. People go there to drink and eat, but also for social interaction, entertainment, advice (from the bartender), to meet people, and even to make deals and do business. That is what the big push in online community building is all about: creating more value by sharing information from a wider and more varied source.

How are social media contests good for creating online communities?

By competing for prizes, customers, either by themselves or (even better) in teams, interact with others on the site. They meet others, they get advice from others, they get new ideas, and best of all, the interaction is about the products or services offered by the business. This interaction builds a following and, eventually, a community.

Writing contests (stories, poems, songs) can build a community

A good example of a successful contest was held by a small air conditioning parts and supply shop in Phoenix, Arizona. Phoenix is remarkably hot in the summer, and the owner's shop often overheard his customers, HVAC technicians, who often worked in attics or on the roofs of homes, talking about the heat they had to endure.

Looking for a way to build his online community, he came up with an idea to run a contest for the best rhyme about working on

air conditioners in the Phoenix heat. He was stunned at the response -- over 100 entries in just two weeks.

He posted the poems, rhymes, and lyrics online and got a huge response from others who saw and appreciated the creativity and shared the same sentiments.

An AC Man's Lament

All day long, I'm on my feet.

repairing air conditioners in the broiling Arizona heat.

In homes' attics, I'm roasted like sausage meat. But I'll work all day, till the jobs are completed.

One day I was sweating like an Olympic athlete.

I felt my heart doing a funny, strange beat.

Then my face turned white as a sheet.

But if I pass, I'm not afraid to meet old Saint Pete.

I'm a Phoenix AC repairman.

I've spent my whole life on the hot seat.

The winner got a \$30 Starbucks gift card and a

new Yeti ice cooler. The contest was so successful that the owner said he plans to run it every July when the weather gets hot.

What is a really simple contest to run?

A photo contest is one of the simplest to offer. People submit pictures of themselves using your product or service, and this is one of the best and most inexpensive ways to create and build an online community. It's easy, plus the pictures you gather become content for future posts and campaigns.

The contest can be as simple as asking people to take photos of themselves holding your product. To make it more interesting, you might give a prize for the best photo using your product in the most unusual location (on top of a mountain, in a jail cell, at the Grand Canyon), using



your product in a different activity (horseback riding, hang gliding, boxing), or using your product with their pet in the photo. The possibilities are endless.

Suggestions for product additions and changes can make a contest

A contest for new changes to a product or service is a fantastic idea. Consider contests where contestants offer suggestions for new flavors, aromas, or designs for your product line.

For example, an ice cream company may sponsor a contest for the best new flavor suggestion, or a

perfume company may solicit suggestions for a new scent that customers would like to have available.

If your company is more in the service sector, you could hold a contest for changes or additions to current services. For example, new, more convenient hours, a larger delivery area, or free clean-up for completed jobs could all be considered.

Seasonal-themed competitions are fun

A contest that focuses on your customers' current

interests is fantastic and is a great way to build a community. Seasonal theme contests are enjoyable and usually well received.

A Christmas-themed contest could feature "ugly Christmas sweaters." Contestants pose for a photo holding your product while wearing a truly hideous Christmas sweater.

A Halloween theme contest might require a contestant to send eerie photos of a haunted house or graveyard near their home. Perhaps your

product will be featured in the eerie photograph.

Contests are a fun, easy way to grow your online community. However, with a little imagination, you can engage your customers and get them thinking about your products and services in entirely new ways.

The cost is minimal -- a little of your time and some good prizes -- and the return in terms of new followers and page content can be impressive. Contests are an excellent way for your company to stand out in the digital world.

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FUN FACTS

According to the Georgian calendar, September is the ninth month. But, on the Roman calendar, it was the seventh month. September has had 29 days, and 31 days; but, since the time of the emperor Augustus, it has had only 30 days.

September's Birthstone is the Sapphire. Did you know more people are born in September than any other month?

September Milestones:

- Sept. 2nd, 1752 (Julian year) - Great Britain adapted the Gregorian calendar, making the next day September 14, 1752. There was no September 3-13 in the British Empire, including the American colonies. People rioted, believing that the government had stolen 11 days of their lives
- Sept 6th, 1997 - The funeral for Princess Diana was broadcast across several networks and around the world. An estimated 2 billion people watched all or part of the funeral on television
- Sept 7th, 1998 - Google was founded by Stanford University students Larry Page and Sergey Brin
- Sept 9th, 1956 - Elvis Presley appeared on The Ed Sullivan Show for the first time
- Sept 19th, 1928 - Mickey Mouse's first screen appearance - Steamboat Willie at the Colony Theater NYC

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6

Steps to Growing a Great Business



1. Create a vision of greatness for your business

A company's vision is more than just your business plan – it paints a picture of what your company will look like in 1, 3, 5, or 10 years. It should inspire you and your team and should provide you with guidance on decision-making.

2. Grow roots in your community

Businesses that plant seeds and develop deep roots within their communities cultivate relationships that give both ways – employees feel good about the local impact their making and members of the community tend to support businesses through thick and thin.



3. Develop a good relationship with customers and suppliers

Carefully consider the experience you want to give your customers and suppliers when they visit your business, use your products, receive service from your company, or interact with your team members. Consistently great experiences will keep them coming back!

4. Care for your employees first

Practice caring for people in the totality of their lives with a mutual understanding and appreciation of the responsibilities of owners and employees toward one another. Happy employees will care for your customers, which leads to happier customers.



5. Cultivate passionate leaders who are in love with what your company does

In the end, your team needs to have passion for what your company does. If employees are just working for a paycheck but don't have passion for your purpose, they will lack alignment and continue to drag you off course from achieving your vision.

6. Grow your cash flow by protecting your gross margins

Everything else is useless if you run out of cash, so its important to make sure you have a sound business model that produces consistent profits day-in and day-out! Having employees who act like co-owners can make a huge difference, so adopting an open-book management style is also essential to getting and keeping everyone on the same financial page.





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