



**Social media is a critical marketing tool that any business, big or small, should be taking advantage of. No doubt, your business requires an active social media presence. Social media platforms are tools you can use to connect with your audience, create and increase awareness about your business, and boost your sales. Investing in social media is a wise business move. As you gain traction, invest more to improve copy, graphics etc. Social media increases your visibility among potential customers, letting you reach a broad audience by using minimal time, resources, and effort. Here are nine tips to stay relevant in social media just for you:**

## **1. Know your audience**

It is pointless to put out information about your business without knowing with whom you are communicating with. Not every content you think about can be relevant for all audiences. It is dangerous to simply assume and not test to confirm. The right material for the wrong audience can cost your business a lot. A world event can change the dynamics of your audience; it can grow bigger or smaller. The target age group can also change. For instance, with most people staying at home, families are together most of the time, and if you have to send out content, you may want to include the new norms we face as a society working remote. Gather data on your recent customers and get accustomed to social media analytics; that way, you will cultivate a clear picture of who is interacting with you online.

## **2. Look to expand your audience**

Once you have a clear picture of who your audience is, you can now look out for means to influence them. Have a short and sharp profile statement. Give out offers and awards for the regular profile visits and interactions. Maintain and improve the quality content to keep the old audience entertained and informed while making new members feel special too. Give shout outs and awards to customers who share your content and recommend you to other potential customers. Include social media links to your website and email signatures. Use one social account with a larger audience to market another; for example, if you have many followers on Facebook, you can ask them to follow you on Twitter (or other pages as well). Cross scheduling content to many social networks is a great way to stay active 24/7.

### 3. Content scheduling

It's Saturday afternoon. From your Facebook Insights, you know your customers are online now. Clearly, it's a great time to post, but you don't have anything prepared yet. You get into that too-familiar "what do I say" mode. You want to find something to post and fast. Ten minutes later, you settle on a perfect piece of content to post on your page or group, and you're like, "wheeeeew!" What if you could avoid all of that by creating a social media content schedule? The internet is always active, there's no weekends, holidays or nights. Scheduling can be achieved through using effective tools relevant for every specific social media platforms. Certain social media calendar tools allow you to schedule posts ahead of time and also manage audience engagement. You should find a tool that is reliable, intelligent and works hard for you around the clock like an agency would. Create your posts in advance and use scheduling tools to post them automatically at the right time. This will have your customers expecting your posts and quickly become conversation starters. Scheduling will have you dedicate a specific time to post creation, and you will end up having more free time to respond to clients and other produce other lead gen content. Maintaining a social media calendar lets you plan well in advance. It is the best way to make sure you will never find yourself wondering "what do I post?" again.

### 4. Visual Content

Tell your story through photos and videos. Visual content is not only easy to understand; it creates a permanent picture of your brand in your customer's mind. It is easier to remember a graphical content than it is to remember text. Visual content draws someone's attention automatically before they even see the words. A well done image or a video can pass a message more efficiently than words ever can. Words are still relevant to capture what might have been left out by the visual content, but visual content is what will draw people to read your text. The visual content has to be appealing and relevant to the audience; for example, graphical quotes can be used when you are looking to inspire your audience. Be tactical on content creation; do not make your content very predictable and similar, be unique and creative. Dynamic and compelling content keeps your audience excited for the next post, they will not want to miss out on anything, and this will make them come back by subscribing, liking pages or following handles.



## 5. Select a platform that is right for your SMB

Understand your customers and the platforms they engage in most of the time and use it to communicate your latest products, offers, and any changes or updates from your business. Make them feel valued and a vital part of your business (after all, it's because of your customers your business exists). You may want to, for example, know if you are targeting millennials, Facebook should not be the first on your list, you might want to focus on Instagram or TikTok. Reach out to your audience on the platforms they are already spending time on. Emphasize on using one or two social channel, for a start. Once you have those automated and in control, you can build from the lessons and expand your social networks (helps to have a tool that manages all of them!).

## 6. Manage engagement

When people engage with your content online, it is important to engage back with kindness and value based content. It builds trust / helps you nurture relationships that can develop into sales. Have people who will quickly respond to every compliment and answer questions on your behalf. As comprehensive as you might have tried to be on the content, your audience will always ask some questions. Direct communication with your audience makes them feel they know you on a human level, and when you launch products, they will be excited to learn more. You can have a tool that will enable you to respond and engage without having to log in to each of your individual social media channels.



## 7. Be purposeful with content

Whether you are going to use graphical content or text, try as much as possible to experiment and see what works best for your business. Do not leave a chance for doubt. Do not let your audience complete sentences for themselves. Yes, you are going to be available to answer their questions but every opportunity is a chance to provide value to your audience...be purposeful. Make your content as catchy and your points as clear as possible. Avoid lengthy descriptions when using words, be precise, candid, and use the checkmark emoji for lists ✅. This will build trust. It is also important to keep revising the content with the change in the audience, and the seasons the audience are in. If it is Easter weekend, for instance, you might consider attaching a "Happy Easter Holidays" somewhere in your content. It makes it relevant; the audience feels special and cared. If it is during a pandemic, let them know you care about their wellness and open to helping in whatever ways you can. #EQ



## 8. Content quality over quantity

There are so many social media platforms and marketing options; you do not need all of them. It is more important to have less but more quality content. Select the social platforms that are more relevant to your audience and maximize on them. Post great content which will naturally get more likes, comments etc. Do not fall under pressure from competitors to post a lot of content and end up sacrificing relevance. Be sure about your posts and ensure they offer value. Be authentic and honest to influence your customers positively. Often times, sharing and giving credit to other's articles, posts etc. is a great way to start before you start making your own.



## 9. Online performance monitoring

Track your performance online to determine what is successful and what isn't and how you can improve. Often times, AI can help determine the best emojis, text, images etc. which reduces the guess work in the creation or curation process. Do not hold on to an idea if it's not working. Improve on strategies that are working. Flow with new trends. Drive traffic to your channels. Track the URL shares, clicks, and conversions. Know how many people are moving visiting your business website pages from social media. That will enable you to emphasize on the right content and also realize the impact each content is making when it comes to driving traffic into sales.



**In conclusion,** social media presence should be treated just like any other business or marketing effort. Businesses use information from social media and websites to decide on products; therefore, the impression you put out for them matters a lot...You are just a google or facebook search away from making the sale (or not). Social media can either break or build barriers between businesses and their potential customers. Clients will reach out for customer service on the platforms too. Therefore, develop your reputation as a reliable and caring organization by offering the support customers need. Social media is proof for your audience that your brand exists especially when everything is online now. .

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