



## Introduction

One of the biggest fears small business owners have about social media marketing is that it will suck up too much of their time. And with good reason, as many have tried to use social media and have had disappointing results compared to the time they have invested.

But it doesn't have to be like that. Yes, social media takes effort. All marketing does. But with a few new tactics you could drastically increase the return you get on the time you spend on social media marketing.

# 1. Get A Strategy

This is the *big* time-saver. If you're sending out random tweets, Facebook posts or 'repinning' a few images on Pinterest each day you are almost certainly wasting your time. This has been true since the early days of social media but having a strategy is becoming even more important as social media grows and develops.

If you have no strategy then you're not alone. According to social media expert Jeff Bullas, less than 20% of businesses say they have a mature social media strategy. That's a *lot* of wasted time and opportunities. So don't delay, start working on your strategy today.

Work out your goals and who you need to engage with. Understand what content they want from you and deliver it. Build relationships then track your results, make changes and repeat. Write an action plan to make sure all of this gets done consistently.

Need help with that? [Social Media Action Strategy](#) will guide you through creating your own ten step social media marketing action plan.

## 2. Use Your Tools The Right Way

There are many tools that you can use to save time when using social media for marketing. But how many tools you use and how often is a careful balancing act. If you use too many tools then you take the 'social' out of social media. Nobody wants to feel like they are talking to a robot and some automation techniques are considered spammy. For example, don't set up twitter so that people are automatically asked to download your free e-book as soon as they follow you. On the other hand with too little automation you'll waste a lot of time.

Here are some of the best tools to try:

- **Hootsuite** or **Tweetdeck** social media dashboard apps
- **Buffer** for scheduling tweets and other updates when you're doing other things
- **Feedly** and **Google Alerts** so you're never short of useful articles to share
- **Virtual assistants** or **social media managers** can do most of your social media marketing for you. But make sure they are using an effective strategy (see tactic 1) with clearly defined goals. Also, make sure they aren't doing anything to damage your reputation e.g. using spammy tactics or sharing opinions that aren't a good fit for your brand. Your teenage neighbour may be a whizz with social media, but make sure you can trust him with your brand before hiring him as your social media manager.

### **3. Set A Schedule (And Stick To It)**

Create a content calendar – what are you going to post and when? You don't have to schedule it down to the last tweet, some spontaneity is a good thing! But having a plan of what you're going to post, when and on which platform is going to save you a lot of wasted time.

Decide how long you will spend on social media each day and then stick to it. One of the dangers of social media is being sucked in. You start browsing around Facebook and before you know it an hour has passed by. You could even use a time management method like the Pomodoro Technique where you set a timer and focus on the task in hand for 25 minutes then take a short break.

## 4. Don't Try To Be Everywhere At Once

Find out where your target audience is most active on social media and focus in on that platform. For example, if you sell handmade crafts to women age 20 to 40 then you're likely to do well on Pinterest. Spreading yourself around Twitter, Facebook, Google+, YouTube and LinkedIn all at the same time is likely to just water down your efforts and give you little in the way of results.

If you have the time to do it then a second platform may be the way to go, but be cautious about taking on a third. For example, Instagram may nicely complement the activity on Pinterest in the craft business above.

You can always add more platforms later on, when you have a strategy that is already working well.

## 5. Pick Metrics That Matter

There are plenty of small businesses that don't measure any social media results at all. This is, of course, a bad idea as you can't possibly know which tactics are working unless you've got some data to look at.

On the other hand, social media platforms have so much data available that it's possible to be side-tracked by metrics that aren't that important. For example, the number of Facebook likes you have for your business page is of some interest, but getting this number as high as possible is not going to be your main goal. It's possible to have thousands of likes but without lots engagement on the page posts the vast majority of your fans will never see your posts.

Instead, pick your metrics based on your goal. If your goal is to generate leads for your mailing list, then your target may be to get a hundred new names on your mailing list per month. That's a useful, measurable target and you can track your progress towards it.

## 6. Post Content That Your Target Audience Wants To Read

This sounds obvious but it's surprising how often businesses get it wrong. Think about what your audience wants to read or watch – do they want to be entertained? Would they prefer 'how to...' videos? Would they like a tutorial? The latest news? Behind-the-scenes information? Competitions? Even better, ask them what they would like to see from you. Watch which content gets the most likes and shares, then give them more of that.

Avoid posting sales messages or advertising, repeating the same posts too often, talking too much about the features of your product and boring 'corporate-style' information that you might find in an annual report.

## 7. Don't Forget Your Website

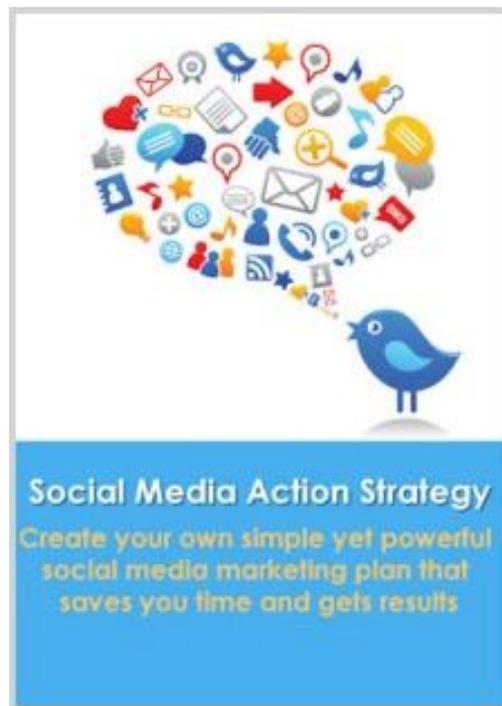
After people engage with you on social media the chances are that they'll take a look at your website to find out more about you. If they can't find what they are looking for, then you'll have wasted your time.

You'll be missing opportunities if:

- You post a link to your homepage rather than the product page that the person wants to know more about
- Your website is cluttered, unprofessional or out of date
- They want to download your free e-book or a discount coupon but you haven't set up a way to capture their email address in return for the giveaway
- Your website is full of boring or irrelevant information

Take a good look at your website then identify and fix any places where it may be letting you down.

## Want to know more?



**In Social Media Action Strategy you'll discover:**

- Why you should be using social media for marketing
- How to use social media for marketing
- The most effective network to use for your business (Is it Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn...?)
- Tips to get more followers and to engage with them
- The best tools to streamline your social media marketing

**Then, Social Media Action Strategy will take you step-by-step through creating:**

- Your own 10-step social media marketing action plan

Get your copy at [SocialMediaActionStrategy.com](http://SocialMediaActionStrategy.com)