

M LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

The Marketing Guide for Local Business Owners

April 2020

Telecommuting During COVID-19: How to Stay Productive When Working at Home

***3 Ways
to Stay
Productive
with Kids
Around***



YouTube Marketing Tips for Small Businesses

**10 Reasons to
Outsource Your
Email Marketing**

**7 Social Media
Marketing
Strategies That
Bring Results**

**Infographic:
2020 Small
Business Trends**

FREE!

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LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

Greetings!

Thank you for taking a few minutes to read through this month's issue. We develop this magazine each month with the hope that the information we feature will help you achieve (and exceed) all of your goals.

Local Businesses around the world are finding themselves facing a new struggle, as many have been forced to close or have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

In this month's issue, you'll find articles covering many topics that are important to business owners. We hope you enjoy the articles on Telecommuting or staying productive while working from home, especially with young kids.

If you're not already receiving this magazine regularly, we suggest you add your email to our subscriber list. We have some exciting articles already in the works for the upcoming issues. Don't miss out!

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.

As always, we welcome any comments or questions you might have, as well as the opportunity to explain how we've been able to help businesses just like yours.

David Akers
President / CEO
LMS Solutions, Inc.

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Inside This Month's Issue

- 4 Marketing Calendar
- 5 Telecommuting During COVID-19: How to Stay Productive When Working at Home
- 9 3 Ways to Stay Productive with Kids Around
- 11 10 Reasons to Outsource Your Email Marketing
- 15 YouTube Marketing Tips for Small Businesses
- 18 7 Social Media Marketing Strategies That Bring Results
- 26 Fun Facts
- 27 Infographic - 2020 Small Business Trends

A Little About Us

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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.

April

Autism Awareness Month
National Humor Month
International Customer Loyalty Month
Lawn and Garden Month
Stress Awareness Month
Physical Wellness Month

April 1st - April Fool's Day
April 10th - Good Friday
April 19th - Easter Sunday
April 22nd - Administrative Professionals Day (US)
April 9th - 16th - Passover
April 22nd - Earth Day

1st - Walking Day
2nd - Peanut Butter & Jelly Day
2nd - Burrito Day
5th - Caramel Day
6th - Hostess Twinkie Day
7th - No Housework Day

7th - Beer Day
9th - Winston Churchill Day
10th - ASPCA Day
10th - Golfer's Day
10th - National Siblings Day
11th - National Pet Day
12th - Grilled Cheese Sandwich Day
13th - National Scrabble Day
15th - Tax Day
15th - Titanic Remembrance Day
16th - Wear Your Pajamas to Work Day
16th - Get to Know Your Customers Day
19th - Pet Owners Day
20th - Look Alike Day
22nd - Jelly Bean Day
23rd - Picnic Day
23rd - Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day
26th - Pretzel Day
28th - Superhero Day
30th - Adopt a Shelter Pet Day
30th - Bugs Bunny Day

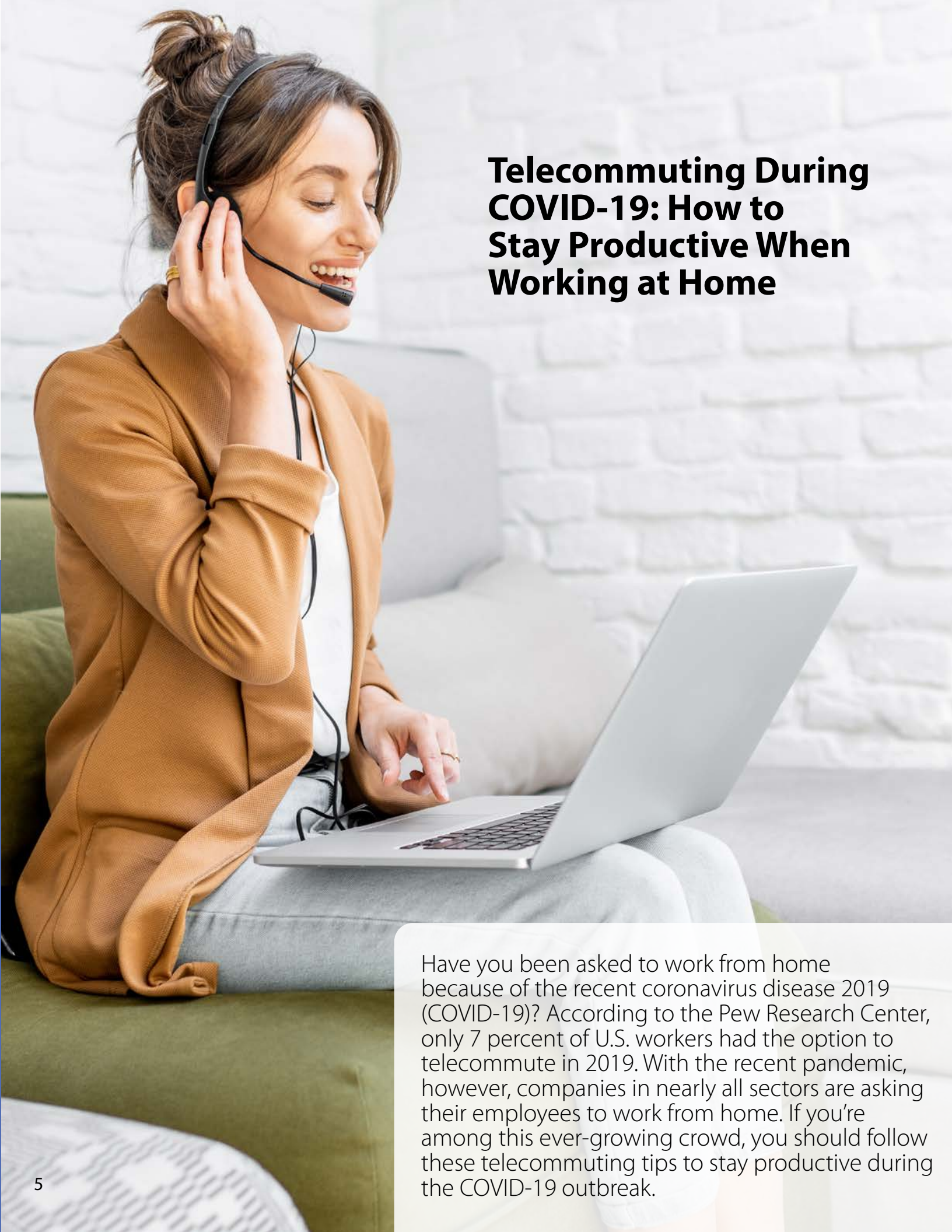
May

Mental Health Awareness Month
Military Appreciation Month
Employee Health & Fitness Month
National Pet Month
National Barbecue Month
National Blood Pressure Month
National Hamburger Month

May 1 - May Day
May 5 - Cinco de Mayo (US)
May 10 - Mother's Day
May 25 - Memorial Day (US)

1st - Batman Day
1st - National Space Day
2nd - Free Comic Book Day
2nd - Fitness Day
3rd - Two Different Colored Shoes Day
4th - Star Wars Day
5th - Teacher Appreciation Day

5th - Hoagie Day
6th - Skilled Trades Day
6th - Nurses Day
8th - Military Spouse Appreciation Day
9th - Miniature Golf Day
9th - Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive Day
10th - Shrimp Day
11th - Miniature Golf Day
13th - Apple Pie Day
15th - Dinosaur Day
15th - Pizza Party Day
15th - Bike to Work Day
15th - NASCAR Day
16th - Armed Forces Day
24th - Scavenger Hunt Day
24th - Neighbor Day
24th - Indianapolis 500
25th - Brown-Bag It Day
25th - Wine Day
25th - Hamburger Day
25th - Missing Children's Day

A woman with her hair in a bun, wearing a brown blazer and a headset, is sitting on a green couch. She is smiling and looking at a silver laptop on her lap. The background is a white brick wall.

Telecommuting During COVID-19: How to Stay Productive When Working at Home

Have you been asked to work from home because of the recent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)? According to the Pew Research Center, only 7 percent of U.S. workers had the option to telecommute in 2019. With the recent pandemic, however, companies in nearly all sectors are asking their employees to work from home. If you're among this ever-growing crowd, you should follow these telecommuting tips to stay productive during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Check Your Email Less Frequently

While email is a convenient communications platform when telecommuting, you should be conscious of how much time you spend browsing your inbox. A study conducted by McKinsey & Company found that the average employee spends nearly 11 hours each workweek reading and responding to emails.

Constantly checking your email is a distraction that prevents you from focusing on work-related tasks. By checking your email no more than once every hour when telecommuting, you'll achieve a higher level of productivity that's reflected upon the quantity and quality of your work.

Speed Up Your Wi-Fi

Slow Wi-Fi can harm your telecommuting productivity. According to a study conducted by SanDisk, slow Wi-Fi is responsible for one week of lost productivity, per employee, each year. You may have a blazing-fast internet service at your home, but it won't do any good if your Wi-Fi is slow. Rather, you'll still encounter slow speeds

when downloading and uploading data over the internet.

Here are some tips to speed up your Wi-Fi and increase your telecommuting productivity:

- Place your computer or device closer to the router to which it's connected.
- Remove physical obstructions between your computer or device and the router.
- Since routers use the same radio frequency bands as microwaves, video cameras and other electronics, changing the channel may speed up your Wi-Fi.
- Monitor bandwidth usage in your router to identify data-hogging devices that could otherwise slow down your Wi-Fi.
- Install a Wi-Fi booster to extend the range of your router, and therefore speed up your Wi-Fi.
- Update the driver for your computer or device's network adapter to the latest version.
- Update your router's firmware to the latest version.

Illuminate Your Home Office With Sunlight

Rather than relying on artificial light, such as an overhead fixture or a desk lamp, use sunlight to illuminate your home office. Not only is it more energy efficient, but illuminating your home office with sunlight can also increase your telecommuting productivity.

According to a survey conducted by Harvard University, 70 percent of employees say they are more productive when working in a sunlit environment as opposed to an artificially lit environment. Exposure to sunlight promotes lower stress levels, which in turn raises productivity levels. To illuminate your home office with sunlight, set up your workstation in front of a window and open the curtains.

Use a Video Conferencing App for Meetings

If meetings are a regular part of your workweek, you should consider using a video conferencing app. While it's possible to conduct meetings by phone as well as by email, video conferencing is a better solution because it allows you to both see and hear

the people with whom you are meeting.

Social isolation is one of the biggest challenges faced by telecommuting workers. And with COVID-19, it will likely become increasingly problematic for at-home workers. The good news is video conferencing allows you to hold productive meetings while socializing with your coworkers, managers, clients or other individuals. Some of the top video conferencing apps include Skype for Business, Zoom, Google Hangouts and GoToMeeting.

Dress for Success

You might be surprised to learn that your attire can affect your telecommuting productivity. Far too many telecommuting workers roll out of bed in their pajamas and immediately head to their home office. Wearing pajamas or other extremely casual clothes, though, instills a sense of relaxation that lowers your motivation to work.

A three-piece suit and tie typically isn't necessary when telecommuting, but you should wear professional-looking clothes. Otherwise, you may subconsciously slack off.

Take Breaks

Don't forget to take breaks when telecommuting. Squeezing a few short breaks into your workday will help you relax both mentally and physically, which may have a positive impact on your telecommuting productivity. An infographic published by Lifehack even suggests that taking a 30-second break, known as a micro-break, increases a worker's productivity by approximately 13 percent.

For regular breaks to have a positive impact on your productivity, you must separate yourself from all work-related tasks during them. In other words, use this opportunity to rest, eat, exercise or socialize with members of your household. When your break is over, you'll feel refreshed and ready to tackle the rest of the workday.

Create a Work Schedule

Telecommuting often comes with the freedom of setting your own hours. Unless otherwise stated by your employer, you can choose when to begin your workday and when to end it. Unfortunately, the flexible hours that come with telecommuting leads

many workers down the wrong path. If you work erratic hours, you'll struggle to stay focused and productive.

To stay productive when telecommuting, you should create a work schedule. With your workdays planned out, you'll become acclimated to working during those hours.

Refrain From Social Media

Unless it's associated with your job, you should refrain from using social media when telecommuting. According to a study conducted by TeamLease, the average office worker spends nearly one-third of his or her working hours on social media.

Maybe you want to check Facebook to see how your friends are holding up during the COVID-19 outbreak, or perhaps you want to pass the time by watching videos on Twitter. Regardless, you should wait until your workday is over to use social media.

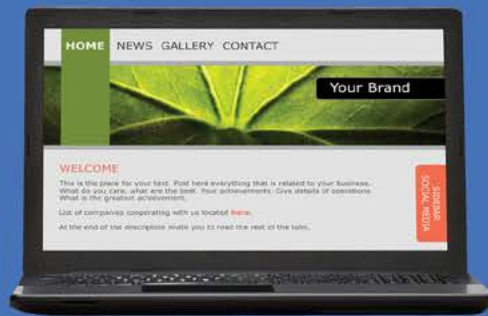
Regardless of how long you're planning to telecommute during the outbreak, you can stay productive by following these tips.

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3 Ways to Stay Productive with Kids Around



“Mommy, do you want to see my drawing?”

Chances are, you don't. But today the stakes are especially high because you really ought to be working.

Over the past few decades, the number of households where both parents work has risen sharply, making situations like these far more common. And it has always been a struggle for parents raising children on their own.

When childcare can't be found, or an emergency arises, parents may be stuck taking their kids to work or working from home. These types of situations can be difficult. While parenting may be your first and most important job, we all need to bring home the bacon, and that means staying productive even when the kids are around.

If you ever find yourself in a such a touchy situation, here are some steps you can take to keep your kids occupied and yourself productive!

Plan a schedule for yourself and your kids!

Trying to get any work done when your kids are around can be extremely difficult at times. If you have younger kids at home, one of the easiest things you can do is get them on a regular nap schedule. This gives you the opportunity to work at the same time of day every day -- when they know it is time for a nap! They also fight you less once it becomes a habit. Another thing you can do is have a special bin of toys they can play with only when you are working. This not only keeps their attention much longer, but also helps them to look forward to your work time.

Also, keep track of your own tasks, and schedule them wisely. Some can be done with your divided attention, whereas others require prolonged periods of focus. Save the latter for nap time, and do the easier tasks when you know you might be interrupted.

Give the kids their own “work”

One way to keep the kids occupied is to enlist their help. Get the kids involved in small tasks around the

house or office, such as dusting, cleaning, and folding. Teaching them how to do these things, while an investment of time and energy, can pay large dividends long-term. They will feel valued, they may run out of energy faster, and on occasion, you may even find their help to be valuable!

Treat them like grown-ups, and model good behavior

Depending on their age, your kids may be mature enough to understand how important work is as a part of adult life. Show them what you're working on in terms that they can understand. Demonstrate how diligently you work, and how sometimes projects can take a long time, but that doing good work allows grownups to be able to do things like buy food and spend time with their kids.

Having kids around at work is always a balancing act, but thoughtful preparation and good communication can get the kids on “your side,” so to speak. Or at the very least, it can keep them occupied long enough for you get some work done!

10 Reasons to Outsource Your Email Marketing



Outsourcing is one of the most underrated and underutilized strategies for scaling your business quickly and optimizing your marketing ROI. When you outsource a task to a remote freelancer, you're able to pay for an expert to deliver results you may not have achieved on your own. Plus, you free up time to focus on growing your business in other ways.

Email marketing is a critical aspect of

marketing for any business that gets a huge return on investment when done by someone with experience and expertise. If you don't know enough about it, you can lose a lot of time and money trying to figure it out, while missing out on great results. If you're thinking about outsourcing your email marketing campaigns to a freelancer who specializes in it, here are 10 reasons to go for it:

1. Save Time for Other Areas of Your Business

Marketing and marketing strategy typically take up most of the time spent running a business, and email marketing is a huge chunk of that. Email marketing, in particular, can be a huge time suck because of the learning curve and time required to write and publish frequent emails. Hiring someone to do your email marketing frees up a lot of time for you that can be spent elsewhere on your business.

2. Improve Email Consistency and Increase Frequency

When you outsource your email marketing campaigns, you can stick to whatever schedule you want without having to worry about the workload that puts on you. You're paying someone to send out your emails on time, which can make your email campaigns a lot more accurate and show your audience you're reliable and consistent.

3. Leverage Experts Who Specialize in Email Marketing

It makes sense: email marketers with the most experience deliver the best results. If you're not an expert in email marketing, that's reason enough alone to outsource it. Freelancers who specialize in email marketing run email marketing campaigns all the time. You can find experts with years of experience getting the sort of results you want to see for your business.

4. Use the Latest and Greatest Marketing Tactics

People who specialize in email marketing have the knowledge required to boost your ROI and convert sales through the latest and greatest tactics.

They've done the trial and error process so that you don't have to, and they know what works. They know how to use email design techniques that enhance your branding. They know how to personalize

messages, use sales copy that converts and use other tactics critical to email marketing success.

5. Send Emails That Yield Higher Conversions

If you're not really a writer, then that's another reason to hand your email writing over to a professional email marketer. You want to hire someone who's an expert in crafting engaging emails your audience loves to read. A great email marketer knows how to use language to get you higher email open rates and more conversions.

6. Benefit from Professional Tools and Technology

Email marketing experts know more about email marketing tools than you do because they use them all the time and aim to stay up with the latest and greatest tools. You can leverage these tools without the steep learning curve by hiring email marketing experts who already use them.

7. You Save Money

There's a big advantage to hiring remote freelancers, and it's that you're paying workers per project rather than giving out a flat salary. You're paying for results instead of time spent working, so you're more guaranteed that the money you're investing is money you'll get back.

You also save money by benefiting from all the trial-and-error learning curve freelancers had to experience in order to deliver you the service they're providing. If you were paying an in-house employee to work on your email marketing instead of a remote worker who does email marketing campaigns for different companies all the time, you wouldn't get the same ROI.

8. Get a Guaranteed Higher Return on Investment (ROI)

Winging your email marketing campaigns yourself doesn't guarantee you any return on the time and money you spent. When you

add email marketing to your plate on top of all your other tasks, your email marketing runs a high risk of stagnation or neglect. The best email marketing experts get hired because they've shown they can deliver results, and because they're committed to optimizing your strategy. Look for a freelancer with a portfolio that showcases their email marketing talent so that you know your investment will come back to you.

9. Focus on the Big Picture

Your job as a business owner is to oversee and orchestrate your business so you can work toward your ultimate goals. When you're caught up in the details of each individual strategy that makes up the overall big-picture strategy of your business, it's hard to see the grand scheme of things. Outsourcing frees you up from micro-managing your success so you can have time to lead and direct your business effectively.

10. Scale Your Business

If you want to scale your business, you have to outsource tasks at some point. Email marketing is particularly helpful in scaling your business not just because it frees up a lot of time for you to work on other things, but also because it boosts your ROI so you can invest more back into your business to scale it. If you avoid outsourcing, the growth process can be painfully slow.

Getting Started with Outsourcing Your Email Marketing

You want to choose an email marketer who has a lot of experience with email marketing campaigns.

Look for a provider who's an expert in growing your list, creating attractive landing pages and crafting call-to-action emails that engage your audience. You may even be able to find an email marketer who specializes in email marketing for your industry.

Today's Marketing Platforms Have You Not Sure Which Way To Go?

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YouTube Marketing Tips for Small Businesses

YouTube can be a powerful marketing tool, especially for small businesses. It's one of the most popular sites in the world, and it can be an amazing way to connect with an audience. Read on to learn more about using YouTube to promote your business.

Create a Variety of Videos

You won't want all the videos on your channel to be identical. Instead, you should try to offer a range of content. This can help you in several ways. First of all, offering variety allows you to see which types of videos get the best results. Creating different types of videos can help you to

develop a strategy for your channel.

Beyond that, offering variety will ensure that subscribers won't get bored with your channel. Once someone subscribes to your channel, you'll want to work to keep them engaged.

Fully Optimize Your Channel for Search Engines

You should optimize your YouTube channel for both the YouTube search engine and Google. By doing this, it'll be easier for people to find the videos that you're creating. You should use the right kinds of keywords in your title and

your video description. You should also choose the right kinds of tags for your videos.

It can be smart to upload a video transcript to YouTube as well. A transcript makes it easy for search bots to scrape your video. Transcripts can be helpful for your viewers as well; many people choose to watch videos with subtitles when they're at work or on the go.

Engage with Your Subscribers

Engagement is a key part of building an audience on YouTube. If someone leaves a comment on your YouTube video, you should

make sure you respond to that comment quickly. Interacting directly with your audience is an effective way to build brand loyalty.

In addition to this, you should be working to improve engagement with every video that you upload. Always take a minute to encourage your viewers to like and subscribe if they enjoy your content. You may also want to ask viewers to click the notification bell for your channel so that they'll always see your new content.

Publish New Content on a Regular Basis

If you want to build an audience on YouTube, consistent updates are key. Try to develop a content strategy. Aim to post new videos on a regular basis. Ideally, you should be posting at least one new video each week.

YouTube allows you to schedule videos in advance, which means that your channel can be regularly updated even when you don't have a lot of extra time for YouTube. You could create several videos for your channel

and then space those videos out over the next few weeks so that you won't have to worry about updates for a while.

If you're a small business owner and you're not using YouTube, you should strongly think about creating a YouTube channel. From vlogs to behind-the-scenes videos, there are plenty of ways you can use YouTube to promote your brand.

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7 Social Media Marketing Strategies That Bring Results



The benefits of a social media marketing strategy are clear to most businesses. Increased brand awareness, more traffic, and greater brand loyalty are a few of the advantages, with most strategies being affordable. The approach you take will heavily influence results, though, with an inconsistent schedule having downsides to your reputation. So what are the main social media strategies you should be working on?

Create Branded Hashtags

General hashtags are useful for putting your content in front of interested audiences. Results, however, can be minimal, with posts getting lost in the crowd. Developing your own hashtags won't offer immediate results, but you can see the benefits over time.

The most invested followers will start to use your branded hashtags, with their followers paying attention. Gradually, consumers will post your hashtag to showcase your products.

Focus On Instagram Stories

Content on social media doesn't usually have a long life. Instagram Stories can make the most of this fleeting interest, offering high levels of engagement. You can post a single story or a series of posts that highlight a simple idea. If you can grow your following to 10,000 people, Instagram allows you to add a swipe feature to an external site. This element can

transform engagement rates, leading to followers moving instantly to a targeted offer.

Integrate Customer Service With Social Media

Many customers turn to social media for advice from a business. While you may prefer to have a dedicated customer service helpdesk, this can frustrate customers. Integrating your customer service and social media lets you offer quick advice that can satisfy customers swiftly. More complicated questions or specific order queries can be directed to the helpdesk, ensuring people get the most appropriate service.

Make Use of User-Generated Content

User-generated content offers the chance to build a community, helping to increase brand loyalty. Users often like to post products they have purchased, but this can go unseen on small accounts. Promoting high-quality user-generated content provides social proof, showing there are active customers with

good experiences. User-generated content can also reduce the burden on businesses to consistently create new output.

Use Social Listening

Discussions across social media can offer a wealth of information to businesses. Customers may be discussing their experiences, opinions, and competitors, all of which can add value to your company.

Social listening tools can monitor brand mentions and other keywords, providing insight into the various conversations taking place. This data can be used to map out new campaigns and correct any common issues.

Run Social Media Contests

Social media contests are often built around growing follower numbers. Followers tag their friends into posts to enter, leading to new followers discovering your brand. An effective social contest can go further, though, helping to maintain interest in your business

and increase sales. Your prizes must be relevant to your business, so followers gain an interest in your products. Don't be afraid to get creative with your contests as long as they resonate with your brand identity.

Master Visual Content

Visual content is essential to most social platforms. Sites like Instagram and Facebook require a strong visual identity, with images and videos gaining high engagement

levels. Visual content needs to be eye-catching and representative of your brand. Videos can be created to appeal to diverse audiences, using short clips and longer live streams to vary the brand messages.

You can track results easily across social media, enabling you to make quick adjustments to your output.

Social media has become a central pillar of a digital marketing strategy. Social

platforms can bring a lot of new interest, turning these leads into loyal customers. There are so many approaches and a range of social platforms, though, so it can be tricky to know where to focus your attention. Using these strategies can help maximize your efforts, making the most of the time and resources you have at your disposal.

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- Postcards
- Posters
- Rack Cards
- Rip Cards
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FUN FACTS

April was formerly the second month in the ancient Roman year, when March began the calendar.

The real origin of its name has been lost

- April 12, 1955 - The polio vaccine, developed by Dr. Jonas Salk, was declared safe and effective
- April 14, 1912 - The famous ship "Titanic" sank
- April 17, 1937 - Daffy Duck made his first appearance.
- April 17, 2011 - Game of Thrones premiered on HBO
- April 20, 1926 - Western Electric and the Warner Brothers film studio officially introduced Vitaphone, a new process that would enable the addition of sound to film
- April 24, 1990 - STS-31 - The Hubble Space Telescope was launched from the Space Shuttle Discovery

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SMALL BUSINESS TRENDS

2020



78% of small businesses reporting being profitable.

82% of small businesses fail because of cash flow problems.

Only 50% of small business survive five years or longer. Only a third will survive 10 years or longer.

76% of business owners rated their level of happiness as Happy or Very Happy

64% of small businesses use social media in their marketing strategy

73 percent of marketers believe that their efforts through social media marketing have been "somewhat effective" or "very effective" for their business.



57 percent of customers would rather contact companies online than call them for help. However, 40 percent of customers still want to have access to voice-based customer support when handling complicated issues



27% of small business are owned by women.

Almost 20% of small businesses are family-owned.

50% of all small businesses are home-based.



41% of companies around the world offer some type of remote working opportunities

4.7 million employees now work from home at least half the time.

65% of workers claim they are more productive when working from home.

90% of employees say more flexible work opportunities

Top Challenges for Small Business Owners:

#1

Lack of Capital / Cash Flow

#2

Marketing / Advertising

#3

Recruiting / Retaining Employees



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