

M LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

The Marketing Guide for Local Business Owners

February 2017

6 *Creative Lead Magnet Ideas that Drive Conversions*

The 7 Most Important Benefits of Social Media Marketing

4 Ways to Leverage the Power of Social Media

5 Ways to Make Your Video Marketing Campaign More Compelling

How to Grow Your Business with Digital Marketing

Introduction to Marketing: Why It Matters for Your Business

How to Gain Free Web Traffic to Grow Your Business

Infographic: Marketing to Millennials

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Change is all around us. Seasons, Politics, Trends & Fads. Life is moving at an incredible pace.

For local business owners though, the goal is still the same; increasing revenues in a cost effective manner.

Where should business owners invest their money to get them the best return on their investment?

Of course, there isn't one answer that fits all situations. Your business is unique, and the solutions will be as well. Our goal is to provide you information on best practices, emerging platforms and tried-and-true approaches to growing your business that you can leverage and apply, whether you do them yourself or you hire a company to assist you.

In this month's issue, we cover a wide variety of topics that we hope are of interest to you, including Social Media, Video Marketing, Driving more Traffic to your Website and many more.

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.

Here's to a very successful 2017!

David Akers
President / CEO
LMS Solutions, Inc.

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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.

February

Black History Month
American Heart Month
International Boost Self Esteem Month
International Expect Success Month
International Friendship Month
National Cancer Prevention Month
National Children's Dental Health Month
Spay/Neuter Awareness Month

February 14th - Valentine's Day
February 20th - President's Day

1st - National Freedom Day
1st - National Singing Day
2nd - Groundhog Day
2nd - Rheumatoid Awareness Day
3rd - National Wear Red Day
3rd - Working Naked Day
4th - Facebook's Birthday

4th - Homemade Soup Day
4th - World Cancer Day
5th - Super Bowl Sunday
5th - Popcorn Day
8th - Boy Scout Day
9th - Pancake Day
12th - Lincoln's Birthday
12th - Autism Sunday
14th - National Organ Donor Day
15th - Random Acts of Kindness Day
20th - Love Your Pet Day
20th - National Cherry Pie Day
22nd - Washington's Birthday
22nd - World Thinking Day
23rd - National Banana Bread Day
26th - Daytona 500
26th - Bacon Day
26th - Academy Awards
27th - International Polar Bear Day
27th - Spay Day
28th - Rare Disease Day



March

Irish American Heritage Month
Women's History Month
Employee Spirit Month
National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Month
National Endometriosis Awareness Month
Multiple Sclerosis Education and Awareness Month
Red Cross Month

March 1 - Ash Wednesday
March 12 - Daylight Savings Begins
March 17 - St. Patrick's Day
March 20 - 1st Day of Spring

1st - National Peanut Butter Lover's Day
2nd - Dr. Seuss Day
3rd - National Anthem Day
3rd - National Salesperson Day
3rd - Day of Unplugging



4th - National Hug a G.I. Day
6th - National Dentist's Day
6th - National Oreo Cookie Day
8th - National Pancake Day - IHOP
10th - National Pack Your Lunch Day
12th - National Girl Scout Day
13th - National Good Samaritan Day
13th - National Napping Day
14th - National Potato Chip Day
17th - Corned Beef and Cabbage Day
19th - National Certified Nurses Day
19th - National Corn Dog Day
21st - National Common Courtesy Day
22nd - National Goof Off Day
23rd - National Puppy Day
26th - National Spinach Day
29th - Mom and Pop Business Owners Day
30th - National Take a Walk in the Park Day
30th - National Doctors Day
31st - National Tater Day



How to Grow Your Business with Digital Marketing

As the market continues to change, business owners are required to adapt if they don't want to fail, but change is not always easy.

Even in the digital world, some people feel reluctant to use digital marketing to reach prospects, spread their message and increase their effectiveness. If you follow in their footsteps, you will never get the most from your business, but embracing digital marketing does not need to be difficult.

With the right plan in mind, you can easily use social media, search engine optimization and pay-per-click marketing to grow your

business faster than ever, and you will be impressed with the outcome.

If you want to benefit from digital marketing, learning to use social media in a business context is a smart move. Social platforms allow you to interact with your prospects, answer their questions and discover their hidden needs. By sharing compelling content on Facebook and Twitter, your followers will share your posts, providing you with free exposure.

Many people enjoy the ability to reach out to their fans without needing to pay ongoing advertising fees. But with social media advertising, you can target

your audience based on age, gender, interests and more. Depending on your target prospect, you will want to test several social media websites to discover the ones that work the best for your business.

Search engine optimization, or SEO, is another tool from which any digital marketing can benefit. This method involves crafting your content in a way that gives it the best possible chance of ranking on the No. 1 page of the search engines.

But in addition to writing SEO content, those who want to rank well for their targeted keywords will also be required to build backlinks and to optimize

their website. When it's done properly, SEO will send a consistent flow of targeted traffic to any domain.

When you want to target people who are actively looking for solutions to their problems, you won't want to overlook the advantages of pay-per-click marketing. Offered by the top search engines, pay-per-click ads enable you to target any keyword or phrase that you want.

Each marketer will place a bid for their targeted keywords, and the person with the highest bid will earn a spot on the first listing. If you need to do so, you can also use advanced

targeting so that the network will only display your ads in certain locations.

If you have never used digital marketing, getting started might feel a little intimidating, but it won't take you long to learn the basics. Once you implement a digital marketing plan, you will want to track your spending and income, making small changes to enhance your profitability.

Some people are quick to give up if they don't get the results for which they had been hoping right away, but you won't want to follow that path. Finding the winning combination will take some time and learning,

but when you discover how to make social media, SEO and pay-per-click ads work in your favor, you will take your business to the next level.

If you don't have the time or desire to learn the ins and outs of the different pay-per-click ads platforms, look for a company that is Google Certified; meaning they have not only passed exams to show proficiency, but have also shown a required level of performance on behalf of their customers. Many of these businesses will charge a small monthly management fee. Shop around and compare the services that are included.

VIDEO

MARKETING

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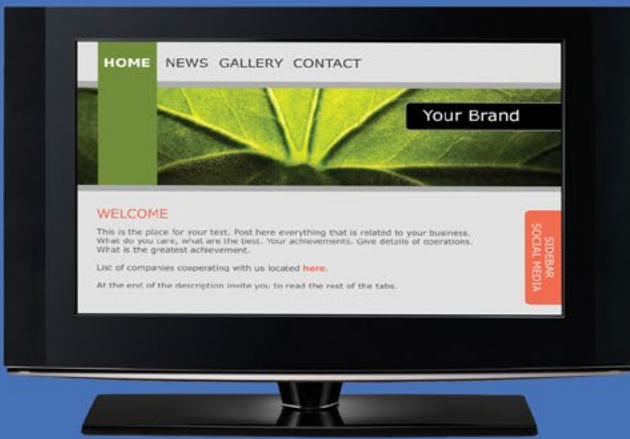
web traffic from search than non-users

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The 7 Most Important Benefits of Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is a trend that won't be going away any time soon. Brands and entrepreneurs alike are always coming up with new ways to promote on social media. When working to improve your brand's online presence, it is important to remember the benefits of social media marketing. Recognizing them will help you come up with strategies you can employ in the future.

Here are the seven most important benefits of social media marketing.

Improved conversions

Conversions are the bread and butter of any marketing endeavor. On social media, every tweet, post, or comment can drive conversions. Consistently posting on social media improves your chances of converting your followers into paying customers. Any type of content you post on social media works toward both driving traffic to your site and convincing subscribers that your brand is worth looking into. Social media also helps

humanize brands, and this can lead to more conversions.

Makes your brand more of an authority

Authority is important in a brand. Brands without authority are less likely to attract both customers and interest. Authority makes a brand's products and services more legitimate. Social media improves a brand's authority by encouraging people to talk about it. Conversations about your

brand indirectly contribute to making your brand more trustworthy. Interacting with personalities and influencers on Twitter, Facebook, and other platforms improves your brand's legitimacy.

Improved brand recognition

Take every opportunity to promote your brand. Social media is one of the most accessible places for both brands and customers to congregate. Social media represents new channels that you can use to spread word about your brand. Linking social media profiles makes it easier for prospective customers to discover your content. The "social" aspect of social media is the driving force that makes sure your brand gets the recognition it deserves.

Maintain brand loyalty

Social media provides brands with a variety of tools they can use to build connections with their fans. Anything from tweets to status updates to private messages can help improve a brand's relationship with

its customer base. Responding to comments or tweets in particular is a good way to show your customers that you care about their questions and opinions. Customers feel validated whenever a brand personally responds to their tweets, comments, or status updates.

A great source of traffic

Social media is an excellent source of inbound traffic. You can't just rely on SEO, forums, and inbound links forever. Social media is an avenue where you can continually share content relevant to your niche and eventually drive your subscribers back to your website. Every social media profile you create contributes to steering traffic back to your site.

Helps with SEO

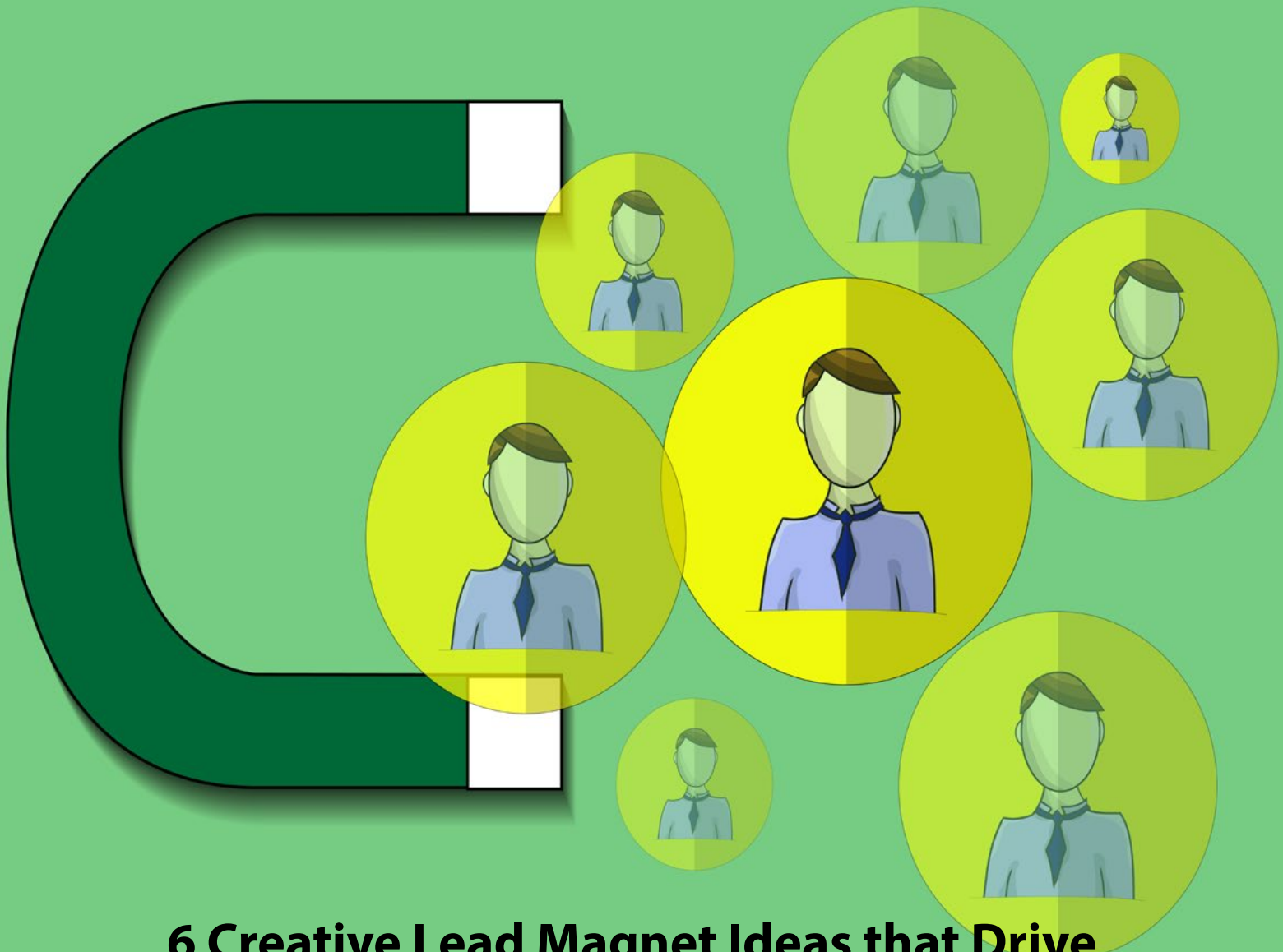
Social media can indirectly help with SEO. Google, Bing, and other search engines use social media presence as a way to calculate rankings. Keyword and blog posts can only go so far toward contributing to SEO. Social media aggregates link toward your site, indirect-

ly boosting your rank on search engines.

More customer insights

Analytics are an important part of running an online marketing campaign. Social media provides you with new insights on the viewing, browsing, and reading patterns of your customers. Monitoring comments on Facebook or measuring how often your handle is mentioned in Twitter are just some ways you can gain insight on your customers. Social media can also help you gauge what types of content get the most attention. You can then adjust your approach based on the information you gain.

Social media marketing is surprisingly easy to learn but can be difficult to master. The social media landscape is constantly evolving. As an entrepreneur, you need to make use of every advantage to get the most out of social media. Understanding the benefits of social media can help you develop future marketing strategies and figure out the future of your brand.



6 Creative Lead Magnet Ideas that Drive Conversions

A lead magnet is something you give away for free to visitors on your site in exchange for an email, name, or other relevant information. Lead magnets are an essential part of an email marketing campaign.

They are responsible for driving conversions and interest in your brand. Coming up with new lead

magnet ideas can be a challenge. Here are some ideas to help you get started.

The 30-day trial

If you're offering a subscription-based service or tool, offering a limited trial can be one way to get leads. Ask people to try out your service or product

using a name and email. State clearly that signing up for the trial opts them into your email list. People love products that are both quantifiable and capable of giving immediate results. T

rials are a great way for prospective customers to experience what you have to offer. Remember that if you're making a signup

form, avoid including too many fields. A name and email are usually enough. The fewer fields you use, the better.

Quizzes and exams

From IQ tests to personality tests, people love learning more about themselves. Offer an easy-to-take test on your site. Make sure that visitors can finish the entire exam without inputting a single piece of information about themselves. Only ask for a name or email when a customer wants to see the results.

Quizzes and exams work best when you want to share your expertise on a particular topic. These types of lead magnets also have the advantage of not taking a lot of time to make.

Infographics

Infographics don't just make great lead magnets, but they are also great on social media. They work well if you want to share information or impart knowledge to your visitors. Infographics are great because they condense information into a single, digestible image.

Color and design play important roles in making good infographics.

Exclusive deals and free shipping

People love being involved in something exclusive. Special deals like coupons are a great way to get people to hand you their emails. People enjoy saving money on deals as well as free stuff. Coupons and exclusive deals embody what people are looking for in a product or service. Practically every brand uses deals and other giveaways to reach more customers. Sometimes, even a free shipping coupon is enough to get people's attention.

A checklist

Checklists are great because they are both easy to make and digest. Checklists are clear with their message. They are flexible and can work for a variety of niches. They are a great way to present your expertise on a topic and to share solutions that your visitors may have.

Avoid making your checklists too long. The items on your list should be simple and easy to

remember. Checklists work best if they are essentially the summary of an article on your blog.

Reports

Reports are one of the most common types of lead magnets. They don't take too much time and effort to make and subscribers know what to expect when they download one. Reports are a great way to summarize information, as well as your brand's goals.

Reports are usually done in ebook or PDF formats. They should not be too long or too short. Avoid giving away reports that are too detailed or too long. When composing a report, you can either do the research yourself or draw numbers from a source.

There are countless ways to make a lead magnet. A good lead magnet is easy to digest and doesn't take too much time to create. Base your lead magnets on the examples provided above and your brand should be on its way to gaining new subscribers.



Introduction to Marketing: Why It Matters for Your Business

Starting a business is just like starting any other endeavor in life. If you just work hard enough and persevere through the difficult moments, you'll eventually succeed and reap the rewards of building a company that will stand the test of time, spreading happiness to all future generations. Right?

Wrong. At least eighty percent of all businesses fail within the first eighteen months. This means that eight out of ten entrepreneurs will

dedicate huge amounts of time, effort, and money towards an enterprise that is destined to go belly up. It's not because the owners are lazy or uneducated (in fact, most of the time they are enthusiastic and smart), but the main reason for the catastrophe is a lack of skill or understanding in the area of marketing.

If you do not know how to market your business, then you'd better save yourself the trouble and not bother to start one in the first place. Marketing is the meat and

potatoes of establishing a successful commercial empire. This applies to the smallest mom-and-pop store to the largest retailer. Without it, you are essentially dead in the water.

What is marketing?

Simply put, marketing is the process of attracting customers. Most people have the wrong mentality when they go into business. They often think that by simply delivering the best product or service they can, word will spread by itself

and soon prospective clients will begin lining up at their door with their wallets in hand, waiting to give them their hard-earned money. This is far from the truth.

Although quality is important, it's not enough to just have something good to sell. How many restaurants out there have excellent food on their menu? Probably a lot, but many of them go bankrupt because no one knows they even exist.

There is no excuse for being unattractive

Business attraction is not based on looks or genetics, but rather on the ability to market effectively. Entrepreneurs who go bankrupt often blame a bevy of culprits for their mistakes. They point their finger at their staff and lament the difficulty of finding decent help nowadays, or they pin the fault on government regulations and how the bureaucrats erect so many red-tape laws it's almost impossible to gain a profit. Sometimes they even accuse their competitors of foul play. Even if all of these are true, they don't have enough force to destroy a

sound business. At the heart of it, it's suicide through defective marketing that is the reason for the demise.

Commit to learning the tools of the trade

Understand that people will not come to you to buy your products; you have to entice them to come to you. There are many techniques that have been developed throughout the years, and some of them are as follows:

Advertising

This involves print and media announcements proclaiming to customers the location and product lineup of your business. This is often expensive since you have to buy space or airtime in a newspaper, radio, or television network, but it remains one of the most effective ways to reach the public.

Sales

This is done on a more personal level and involves actual people (the owner of the company or his staff) talking to prospective clients about the business. Having a friendly and competent sales department to market your wares is one of the

cornerstones of good marketing.

Affiliation

This is a practice that involves outsourcing the marketing to other, more well-connected individuals. It is a somewhat easier avenue considering the age of social media. In exchange, each affiliate gets a small commission for every customer they manage to attract to your business.

Conversion

This type of marketing uses safety-net techniques that catch lost customers and coax them back to the business. It may involve giving special offers or items to clients who browse around the store but leave without buying anything.

Upselling

This is a marketing method that attempts to convince customers to buy more products and become lifelong patrons rather than just one-time purchasers.

Niche

This is a special marketing strategy that caters to the needs of extremely small

demographics in order to monopolize a tiny segment of the industry, rather than trying to compete with more established businesses. Niche marketing is an efficient roadmap for entrepreneurs who are just starting out.

Marketing is neither good nor evil but necessary

There is a common misconception that marketers are a sleazy

bunch who take money surreptitiously and offer nothing in return. In fact, one of the most reviled figures in modern times is the “used car salesman,” a person who has been tragically associated with cheating and marketing in general.

True marketing, however, is neither good nor evil but simply a process of attracting customers to a business. It is up to the entrepreneur whether

he wants to engage in shady tactics or stick to his principles. You can still be benevolent while being a marketer, but you cannot be a successful business owner without being a marketer. Commit to learning the art that has been around ever since the first merchants sold their wares millennia ago. By hard work and effort, you will reap the rewards. Without it, you will fail, guaranteed.

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4 Ways to Leverage the Power of Social Media

Social media can have huge marketing potential, but many businesses fail to produce the results they want. Social media is saturated with businesses and marketers trying to shout louder than everyone else, which makes it much more difficult to reach

your target customer with your marketing messages. Successful business owners and marketers know how to maximize their results by using different tactics to those of their competitors. Here are four ways to leverage the power of social media.

Design Your Image Carefully

Designing the right image to suit your business is crucial for social media success, as your image informs potential customers about the type of business you run, as well as the

quality of your products and services. Company logos, professional headshots or other pictures that signify your business in some way will give your profile a professional look.

Use the same profile image, headline and company description across all of your online activities, as this helps to build a recognizable brand.

Think carefully about the colors, graphics, slogans and wording used in your profiles. All elements of your profile should appear professional, while also making you stand out from the crowd.

Create a Strong Presence

A strong presence is the cornerstone of successful social media marketing. Playing an active role in the social media community boosts your followers, increases your influence and helps to establish relationships with other users.

The key to building a strong social media presence is consistency. Posting regular updates, interacting with your followers

and engaging in public conversations will all help to strengthen your ties with other users. Businesses with a reputation for being friendly, approachable and helpful are often the most successful at building a strong social media presence.

Build Relationships With Influencers

Building relationships with influential people can give you access to a much wider audience and help to create a trustworthy reputation for your business.

Find out who the main influencers are within your industry or field of expertise and start a conversation with them. Keep it casual and allow the relationship to develop naturally, as you don't want to appear too pushy. Never ask for endorsements from influencers or popular businesses in your industry.

Once you have established a relationship with an industry influencer, potential customers will see your interactions in their feed, helping to increase your audience.

Post Content Worth Sharing

Creating content that your audience will want to share with their followers enables you to reach a wide range of social media users.

Create content that will appeal to your target customer, rather than a general audience, and use hashtags that help to categorize your messages.

Choose hashtags that are popular enough to have a steady stream of messages. Never include more than one link per message, as users may view your content as spam.

Social media marketing can be difficult for new users and businesses with no previous experience. However, there are ways to leverage the power of social media, regardless of the type of business you run.

Designing the right image, creating a strong presence, building relationships with influencers and posting content that your followers will want to share can all give you a great foundation for social media marketing.



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How to Gain Free Web Traffic to Grow Your Business

For many businesses, marketing is one of the most expensive tasks, and people are often left wondering what steps will allow them to decrease their overhead.

If you want to minimize the amount of money that you pay for your marketing campaigns without losing visitors, reaching your goal can seem all but impossible.

But with a little time and effort, you can send prospects to your website without paying a dime in advertising.

Some people overlook the power that free traffic has when it comes to growing a business, but you won't want to ignore this resource.

As long as you stick to a

plan, you will notice a steady flow of traffic in no time.

If generating free traffic is one of your goals, forum marketing is an effective way to reach your desired outcome. People go to forums when they are looking for a solution to a problem, and you can use this fact in your favor.

With a quick online search, it won't take you long to find several forums that are related to your industry. Decide on a few sites that you want to use, create an account on each one and start giving high-quality answers to the questions that people ask.

Once you have built a reputation for offering value, place a link to your website in your signature.

Those who opt to earn free traffic will often find success by using search engine optimization, or SEO. This approach will help your site show up when people search for related terms on Google and the other search engines.

If you have a new website, you can still target long tail keywords that won't have a lot of competition. Posting interesting and engaging articles on a consistent basis is how you will get the most from any SEO strategy.

Guest blogging is a nice way to bring a flood of traffic to your website, and using this method is not difficult. You can search for several blogs related to your market, making a list of at least 10.

After replying to comments and offering valuable insights, contact the owner of the blog to pitch your guest post. As long as you have found a way to stand out from the rest, you will likely get a positive response.

Depending on the size of the blog that you have in mind, a single guest post could be enough to send hundreds of people to your website.

By taking this advice to heart, you will soon enjoy more visitors than you once thought possible. Some people, though, are quick to give up on getting free traffic if they don't reach their goals right away.

Getting free traffic is not something that you can hope to accomplish overnight, but putting in a persistent effort to stay on track will help you build momentum.

Over time, forum marketing, search engine optimization and guest blogging will help you establish yourself as an expert, and influencers will then come to you for content.



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5 Ways to Make Your Video Marketing Campaign More Compelling

Videos are easy to digest and have a high potential of going viral. This makes video marketing one of the most reliable ways to promote your brand online. Unique and engaging videos drive leads and are a great source of conversions.

Video marketing, however, is both time consuming and resource intensive. Here are five things you

can do to make your video marketing campaign more compelling.

The first 10 seconds are crucial

Most people tab out of a video after 10 seconds. If your video fails to capture a viewer's attention in the first 10 seconds, you're doing something wrong. Frontload your content. Get to the point as soon

as possible. Your pitch should be focused on the beginning of your videos. The rest of your video should simply be there to expand your point. Alternatively, you can introduce a question in the first 10 seconds. Tickle your viewers' curiosity. Hook them with a thought-provoking statement or a solution to one of their problems.

End every video with a call to action

Avoid ending your videos with a blank screen; make use of the last few seconds to get something out of your viewers. Include a call to action at the end of your video, whether you're hosting it on your website or on a platform like YouTube.

Direct users to a subscription form or another video if you want. Promote a product or seminar. You can also redirect people to a poll or a coupon for a giveaway.

Teach your viewers something

Educational or instructional videos are effective for viewer retention. Share your expertise. Educate viewers on your brand, product, or industry. Teach them something new.

Provide viewers with a solution to a problem they may be facing. Your viewers should leave your video with new knowledge. They should learn something new, whether it's about themselves, their problems, or your brand.

Educational videos give your brand an air of legitimacy and reinforce your knowledge and expertise in your industry.

Focus on messages and emotions

Videos are most effective when they can trigger an emotional response in your viewers. Don't let your videos revolve around your product or service. Instead, focus on the message.

Make sure your videos have a story to tell, and that they trigger an emotional response in your viewers. Videos that resonate with a viewer do a better job of converting people to your brand, compared to product-focused videos.

Create videos that appeal to your customers' interests, wants, and needs. At the same time, focus your video on the actors. Don't rely too much on charts and fancy graphics to get your message across.

Be prepared to spend resources

Producing good-looking

videos isn't cheap. Whether you like it or not, you are going to need to dedicate resources to your video marketing campaign. You'll need to pay videographers, artists, actors, voice actors, and many others to get your campaign rolling.

Not preparing to spend for your campaign can only result in subpar, amateurish content that will fail to get your message across. You don't need to pay for an entire studio, but at the very least you should get professional help.

A well-made video lends your brand an air of legitimacy, while a badly scripted and amateurish video has the opposite effect. Facebook and YouTube are the best platforms for video marketing. Videos hosted on these sites are easy to share and have the potential of reaching the most people.

Video marketing is time consuming and resource intensive, but a well-executed campaign can do wonders for your brand. Follow these tips to get the most out of your video marketing campaign.

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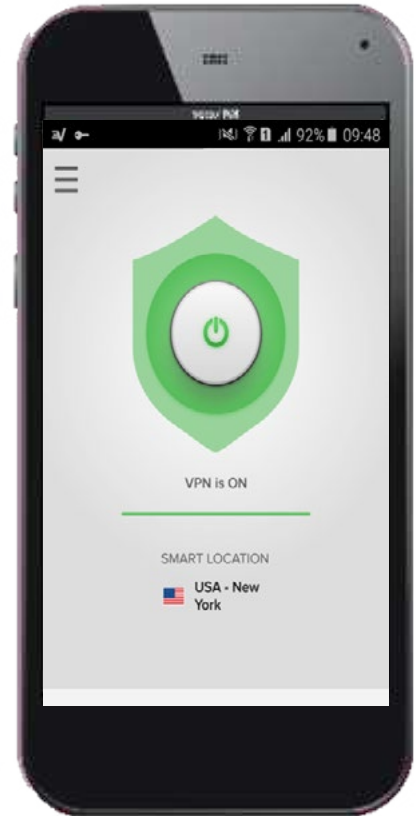
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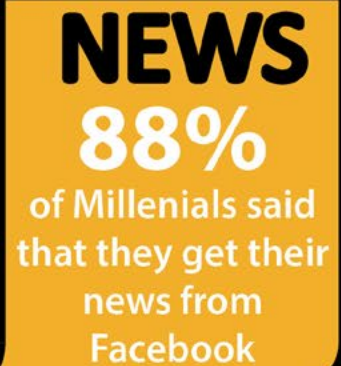
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MARKETING TO MILLENNIALS



Snapchat is the fastest growing social media platform among Millennials. They make up **70%** of all its users.



NEWS
88%
of Millennials said that they get their news from Facebook

Take Advantage of Mobile Marketing



85% of Millennials have smartphones

Millennials check their phone over 150 times a day

40% of Millennials interact with their phone more than with significant others, friends, parents and co-workers

Only **6%** of Millennials find online ads credible



56% of Millennials will share their location for coupons



Millennials hold **\$1.7 trillion** in annual buying power

68% of Millennials highly value the ratings and opinions of peers



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