

M LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

The Marketing Guide for Local Business Owners

October 2016

**Hitting the Mark
with an Instantly
Effective Press
Release - 6
Mistakes to Avoid**

**10 EMAIL MARKETING
MISTAKES THAT WILL RUIN
YOUR CAMPAIGN**

**How to Create
A Buzz During
Your Next Event
Marketing
Campaign**

**The 5 Types of
Emails You Should
Be Sending in a
Follow-Up
Campaign**

**HOW TO
CREATE MORE
ENGAGING
FACEBOOK
POSTS**

**Infographic:
Recipe for
Deliciously
Creative Content**

FREE!

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Welcome to this month's edition!

We're officially in the last quarter of the year and the major holidays are right around the corner. For many local businesses, this is the most critical part of the year, and can make or break the financial health of a company.

As you're developing your holiday marketing strategy, please consider using some of today's leading marketing platforms, including Social Media and Online Marketing. Used correctly, these platforms can work well for local businesses - helping you capture your share of the seasonal spending.

This articles and infographic in this month's issue cover many topics that we believe are important to local business owners, including Social Media, E-Mail Marketing, Press Releases, 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!

David Akers
President / CEO
LMS Solutions, Inc.

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Inside This Month's Issue

- 4 Marketing Calendar
- 5 How to Create More Engaging Facebook Posts
- 8 10 Email Marketing Mistakes That Will Ruin Your Campaign
- 11 Hitting the Mark with an Instantly Effective Press Release - 6 Mistakes to Avoid
- 14 How to Create A Buzz During Your Next Event Marketing Campaign
- 17 The 5 Types of Emails You Should Be Sending in a Follow-Up Campaign
- 20 Infographic - Recipe for Deliciously Creative Content

A Little About Us

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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.

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Marketing Calendar

Plan your marketing messages around these upcoming holidays and proclamations.

October

Adopt A Shelter Dog Month
Breast Cancer Awareness Month
Bullying Prevention Month
Blindness Awareness Month
Celiac Disease Awareness Month
Domestic Violence Awareness Month
Down Syndrome Awareness Month
Dyslexia Awareness Month
Emotional Wellness Month
National Dental Hygiene Month
National Pizza Month

Oct 10 - Columbus Day (U.S.)
Oct 31 - Halloween

1st - Homemade Cookies Day
2nd - Name Your Car Day
3rd - Techies Day
4th - Taco Day
4th - Vodka Day
5th - Do Something Nice Day

6th - Noodle Day
8th - Motorcycle Day
10th - Kick Butt Day
11th - Coming Out Day
12th - Stop Bullying Day
13th - Train Your Brain Day
14th - National Dessert Day
15th - Grouch Day
20th - Get to Know Your Customers Day
17th - Boss's Day
24th - Food Day
17th - Pasta Day
18th - National Chocolate Cupcake Day
18th - National No Beard Day
22nd - Make A Difference Day
23rd - Mother-in-Law Day
28th - Chocolate Day
29th - Cat Day
30th - Candy Corn Day
31st - Knock-Knock Jokes Day

November

Adopt A Senior Pet Month
Aviation History Month
Epilepsy Awareness Month
Lung Cancer Awareness Month
Military Family Appreciation Month
National Adoption Month
National Alzheimer's Disease Month
National COPD Month
National Diabetes Month
National Family Literacy Month
National Pet Cancer Awareness Month
Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month

November 8 - Election Day
November 11 - Veteran's Day
November 24 - Thanksgiving
November 25 - Black Friday
November 26 - Small Business Saturday
November 28 - Cyber Monday

3rd - Housewife's Day
3rd - Men Make Dinner Day
4th - Candy Day
5th - Doughnut Day
6th - Daylight Saving Time Ends
6th - Nachos Day
10th - Marine Corps Birthday
11th - National Sundae Day
14th - National Pickle Day
15th - Clean Out Your Refrigerator Day
16th - Fast Food Day
17th - Great American Smokeout
18th - Mickey Mouse's Birthday
19th - International Men's Day
20th - Universal Children's Day
21st - Adoption Day
21st - World Television Day
26th - National Cake Day
28th - French Toast Day
30th - Computer Security Day



CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

How to Create More Engaging Facebook Posts

Facebook has become one of the best platforms for business marketing, providing businesses of all sizes with access to enormous audiences. Although the marketing potential of Facebook is huge, businesses still have to do the right things to take advantage of it. A key component of using Facebook to its fullest is creating engaging posts that customers will like, share and, hopefully, be inspired to take action by. Here are some of the top tips for creating better and more engaging Facebook marketing posts.

Rely Less on Text and More on Visual Content

Many businesses make the mistake of writing long, highly informative posts that they

believe will be of tremendous value to their customers. Although the intention behind this is good, it works against certain fundamental aspects of the Facebook platform. People using Facebook typically scroll through their news feeds too rapidly to read every post. Instead, they scan the feed and then stop only on posts that they have some kind of initial engagement with. In the case of posts from friends, this initial engagement is usually just that they know the person well and are interested in what that person has to say. In the case of business posts, however, this factor isn't present. Instead, the post needs to have an interesting piece of visual content that will stop the viewer from simply scrolling straight past it.

Create Humorous or Interesting Videos

Though a picture can be excellent for engagement, video content is usually even better. However, there is a right way and a wrong way to present your product or service on video. Simply making a short video telling people what you sell or do won't result in much engagement because not many people will really care. Instead, you should present your business by using either humorous or interesting videos that will catch the viewer's attention in the first few seconds. Once the viewer is hooked, you can present the product or service you are promoting within the context of the video.

Get Your Target Audience Right

If you are marketing a business on Facebook, chances are you are using Facebook advertising to get your posts in front of as many people as possible. However, the best content in the world will be entirely meaningless if you put it in front of the wrong audience.

Find out about the location, demographics and interests of your existing customers and use the data from your customer base to target your promoted posts to people similar to them.

You can, of course, experiment with audience targeting, but make sure that the people your post is being promoted to have at least something in common with the customers you already have.

Redirect to Other Platforms

As was pointed out earlier, Facebook is not the place to post large amounts of informative content. However, it can be an excellent way to redirect viewers to platforms better suited to such content.

For example, if your business has a blog, it is better to use Facebook posts to redirect

viewers to that blog than to try to write out a long and informative Facebook post. If you have detailed content that is not suitable for Facebook, simply use Facebook posts to get readers or viewers to platforms that are more appropriate for that sort of content.

Creating engaging Facebook posts can help your business to grow its audience and reach new customers that otherwise may never have become aware of its products or services.

By using these tips to create more engaging Facebook posts, businesses can broaden their appeal and increase the success of their social media marketing campaigns.

Business owners should also remember that getting engagement from customers also means engaging with customers.

When questions are asked in the comments section of a Facebook post or through a direct inquiry, it is important to let your customers know you are listening by responding quickly and with useful information.



- Promotional Products
- Online Company Stores
- Trade Show Giveaways
- Executive Gifts
- Stress Relievers
- Team and Collegiate Items

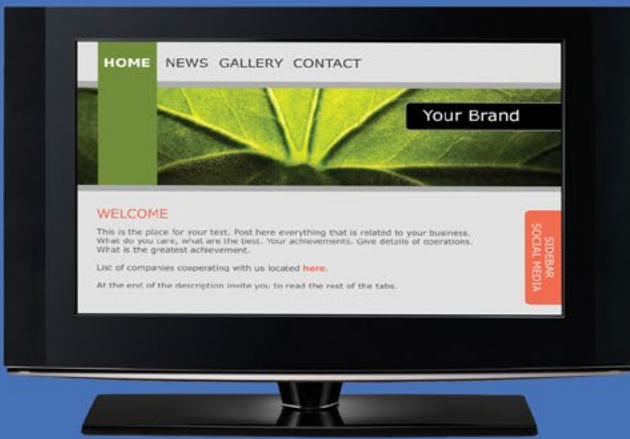


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10 Email Marketing Mistakes That Will Ruin Your Campaign

Marketing can be loosely defined as product promotion, and while this isn't an inaccurate assessment, it's certainly lacking a few important points. Just sending email to people isn't going to work. If you do that, most of your mail will end up deleted; if you don't refine your methods, the company may follow. Here are a few terrible email marketing mistakes that can send your campaign to the dumpster.

1. You send generic mail

The purpose of email marketing is to inspire people to action, and that's tough to do when you send something generic. You can't inspire them with your call to action when you talk in generalities. Instead of talking about "people," use the word "you." Make your email seem like a conversation rather than a speech.

If you're having trouble writing in this style, just think of it as

talking to an old friend. Think less of selling your product and more about helping your old friends discover something that can improve their lives. When your readers feel like you're invested in their well-being, they become more receptive and open to your suggestions.

2. The individual components are weak

Your primary function is to sell the product. How you do that

will vary, but each element of the email must help toward that goal. You can't go with a "greater than the sum of their parts" approach, in which the individual elements are weak but kind of work well together.

A headline can get mail deleted before the rest of it comes into play.

Much like a company's offering, you must keep innovating and improving your pitch. It must be as interesting as possible. Every time you send out an email marketing campaign, check your metrics. See if it did better than the previous one and figure out where you could improve. A good response means that you're going in the right direction -- not that you're done refining.

3. Throwing spaghetti at the wall

There are plenty of instances when you should use the spray-and-pray method, but email marketing is not one of them. Marketing is a precise effort. While there is some intuition involved, for the most part, your decisions are based on facts and trends. That includes knowing what part of your target market responds to email marketing.

This is an important sticking point. Just because someone's in your target market doesn't mean they'll respond to, or even like, your email. Some won't be interested simply because they're not as invested in the product, others because they just distrust their email. Whatever the reason, it's your job to figure out which of your prospects will be most responsive and target your campaign accordingly.

4. You don't have a call to action

One of the biggest mistakes marketers can make is not having a call to action. They list all the benefits of the offering, but they don't tell customers how to take advantage of the product. The customer is left knowing more, they maybe even be excited, but they're not prompted to do anything with their excitement.

When they're done reading your email, the customer must know what to do. They must also feel compelled to do it. End every email with clear instructions, and if appropriate, a time limit.

5. Your offer isn't compelling

Email is special. It's not something people involuntarily see or hear, like

a bus ad or a jingle. They must look at your subject line, consider it worth their time to learn more, and click their email. They must have a reason to respond, which means anything you put in must be special. Information they can see on your site is redundant and often pointless.

If you want email marketing to work for you, you must offer recipients something special. Offer them a two-for-one special or a limited-time discount; give them something they wouldn't find anywhere else. Not only will it increase responses for your current campaign, but it also will increase the chance of further emails being opened.

6. Having a poor mailing list

At the heart of every successful email marketing campaign is a great mailing list. Some marketers elect to build the list themselves by giving people the option to join on the website. Others elect to have a list broker find a good one for the company. In either event, it's your responsibility to make sure it fits your criteria.

If you built the list yourself, you can vet its contents yourself. If you're using a list broker, ask questions before and after

the campaign. Ask them when it was last updated and find out how they check list validity and accuracy. You cannot diagnose or improve a campaign if the problem is in the list.

7. You don't have analytics

Consider a scenario wherein after you launch your email marketing campaign, company revenue increases dramatically. You could go ahead and call it a win, but can you do that in good faith?

There are plenty of reasons there could be a sudden burst of customer response, from concurrent marketing campaigns to a seasonal change. Not knowing for sure how your campaign contributed to the company keeps you from accurately assessing its performance.

Fortunately, many options are available. Embedded email tracking codes allow you to accurately assess click, conversion, and bounce rate. Ask your email provider for options.

8. Follow-ups are rare or poorly done

Customer interaction doesn't end when you send your

mail. It doesn't end when they decide to click your link. It doesn't end when they choose to take you up on your offering. In fact, it never ends. Once they choose your offering, it's time to follow-up.

Make sure the customer experience is as pleasant as possible. Your email should give them a taste of what kind of service the company offers.

Make sure there's no disconnect between what your email promises and what the company can deliver. A positive encounter will encourage customers to come back for more, giving you more value per email sent.

9. The campaign is based on poor data

Email marketing campaigns can die for a lot of reasons, the worst being poor data. Data is the foundation of any marketing campaign. If your data is poor, the campaign sinks. Unfortunately, bad data doesn't just come from poor surveys.

What was once accurate can lose value over time. People change and can move in and out of your target market.

Once-responsive audiences can move to other things, leaving your campaigns in the dust.

Keep up by making sure your data is up-to-date. Make sure you're still targeting the right audience. Look for duplicate entries and eliminate them so your response estimates are more accurate. Weed out any accounts that aren't appropriate.

10. You get complacent

Nothing lasts forever. Campaigns must adapt to the times or fall behind. Everything about the field of business changes at some point, from the customers to the competition.

Never stop changing to adapt to your market. Keep testing, keep innovating, and keep improving. Even a slight tweak to your content can make a huge difference.

Email marketing isn't for the faint of heart. Even a single mistake can cause the entire campaign to fail. Vigilance is the key: keep an eye on every aspect of the campaign and you'll minimize mistakes.



Hitting the Mark with an Instantly Effective Press Release - 6 Mistakes to Avoid

Press releases are highly effective and relatively inexpensive ways of getting the word out about a new product or service. The drawback is that marketers know this, and so the average journalist will see dozens if not hundreds of examples every day. If you want your release to be noticed you need to hit the mark first time. Here are six mistakes which will see your press release relegated to the rejected pile before it's had chance to get your message across.

Not Providing News

A press release is not an advertisement. It needs to offer something truly newsworthy which will be of genuine interest to a publication's readership. If your release doesn't provide something worth publishing, then why should the journalist waste time over it?

Using Promotional Language

You're not trying to sell your product to the journalist, and

using marketing language or hype is unlikely to be appreciated. Stick to the facts without sensationalism or selling. Avoid overt opinions apart from in your direct quotes (see below), and even when you truly believe that your product is the best on the market, stay objective and restrained.

Not Providing an Angle

If your press release sparks off the idea for a story in the journalist's mind, it stands a much better chance of

success. Try and provide an angle for the journalist to work with, and if you can tailor this to the specific publication's theme or audience then all the better. Human interest always provides a good hook to build a story around, so try and introduce this in a somewhat understated way.

Not Providing a Quote

All press releases should include a quote from a real person within your company, and this quote should be interesting enough to publish as-is. It shouldn't be overly commercial, but this is your one chance within a release to extol the virtues of your product or service using more natural language rather than

sticking to bare facts - so make it count.

Unnecessary Length or Wordiness

Journalists are busy people, and don't have time to read reams of text. Get straight to the point, capture the attention within the headline and first sentence or two, and don't be tempted to go into too much detail. Outline the most important facts in an interesting and immediate way, and then provide links to further reading for those who want more information. Aim for a length of between 300 and 500 words, but avoid padding out just to achieve this length.

Poor Grammar and Spelling

Journalists are professional writers and will be highly sensitive to poor spelling and lazy grammar. Your press release simply won't be taken seriously if it includes mistakes so proof it carefully.

A well-written press release can generate a huge amount of exposure for very little cost, but it requires a different style of writing than other marketing methods. Avoiding these mistakes will give your release the best possible chance of achieving traction amid the sea of thousands of competing texts circulating every day.

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How to Create A Buzz During Your Next Event Marketing Campaign

Marketing events isn't always easy. You need to work out who might be interested in attending, find their contact details, target them with advertising, and create the infrastructure to purchase tickets and confirm attendees.

All of these stages take careful planning to get them right. If you let your guard slip, it's easy to end up with a hall full of exhibitors but no one there to visit them. But that's not going to happen to you. Here's how to ensure that your next event secures the attendance it deserves.

Research Your Target Audience

This is the first thing any event marketer needs to do, whether they are organizing a trade fair for social media marketers, furniture makers, or sports physiotherapists. You need to find out what kind of people are going to attend before you can even think about reaching them via marketing material.

Think about what sets your audience apart. How old are they? Are they predominantly men or women? What kind of income or occupations do they have? More

fundamentally, ask yourself how they might find out about your event and why they would decide to attend.

Build an App Infrastructure to Stage Your Event

Having the right technology in place is a vital part of event marketing, and it should be arranged as soon as possible. There are plenty of apps that make the process much, much easier for you and your team, and the sooner you get them online, the better.

For example, Trello is an excellent, accessible task

organizer. Prowly allows you to create “brand journals” that collates content from your social media channels for attendees to read and enables you to produce professional brochures to distribute on the day. Eventbrite is another essential, making the process of selling tickets and processing payments much easier.

With this software infrastructure in place, you can press on with the task of selling your event. Don't leave anything to the last moment.

Get it all online and ready to use from the first weeks of your event marketing campaign.

Blitz Publications Associated with Your Audience

When you've got a fair idea who is coming, it's time to work all of your marketing channels to let them know who you are and what your event has to offer. The first places to contact are any publications that your audience regularly reads. For example, if you are dealing with vintage cars, there's a vibrant trade press dealing with that sector, but upmarket lifestyle magazines are also applicable.

Contact relevant media outlets and try to negotiate space to advertise. They will be keen to work with any serious event organizers, and may sign up to cover the event as a result, so try to contact as many major publications as you can (both online and offline).

Create Tailored Advertising

Next, come up with advertising that focuses like a laser beam on what motivates your audience. You need to implant the idea that your event is unmissable. It has to enhance their experience and deliver a service that is worth traveling for. Stress any USPs like superstar speakers or planned product launches. Anything that sets your event apart needs to be foregrounded.

After that, work every marketing channel you have at your fingertips. That could be arranging a series of email updates, run of site banners on relevant sites, Facebook ads, and regular social media posts.

Make the nature, time and location of your event completely clear, and the buzz will steadily rise.

Link Up with Key Influencers to Build Your Event

If you are staging an industry event, you'll probably already be recruiting speakers and exhibitors. As you do so, try to recruit them as marketing influencers as well. Influencers are experts with broad social media connections and authority in their field. With them on board, you can attract a higher quality audience and promote your event much more easily.

It's fine to offer more prominent speaking slots for people who will go the extra mile for your event. If influencers are happy to blog about your event, don't let their efforts go unrewarded. Give them something in return that goes beyond liking their post or leaving a comment (although do both of those things too).

Ensure Media Outlets are On Board when the Event Arrives

From an early date, you should start planning to have as many journalists and bloggers present at your event as possible. This will be your promotional army, turning a lifeless hall of people into a social media event that

will live on and build your reputation well after the stalls are packed away.

Contact local media outlets to build a local buzz, along with regional newspapers. Don't neglect major commentary sites like Huffington Post or Tech Crunch either. These sites will often have guest contributors based near your event and will be keen to provide some coverage.

Have some stories for journalists to use when they arrive, making their jobs as easy as possible. If you have unique exhibitors, produce press releases that tell their story. If a star speaker is about to reveal something special, inform the media so they are there to witness it.

Make it Easy for Attendees to Share Their Experiences

Social media is definitely a key ally for event organizers. On the day of the event, major social media platforms should be leveraged to create as much attention and traffic as possible.

One great way to do so is by using (and promoting) Snapchat geofilters. These unique filters allow Snapchat users to create branded

videos from the event venue. They are a fun, creative way for attendees and exhibitors to tell their followers what's going on and they help to create a uniform, recognizable brand for the event itself.

Snapchat is also a great platform for running contests during your event. These contests are an effective way to build atmosphere and enhance the experience of attendees, and they take very little effort to organize.

Attend to Your Exhibitors' Needs During the Event

Another thing to think about is how the exhibitors at your event are promoting themselves. Obviously, you can't have total control over what they tweet or post on their Facebook wall.

However, you can offer them help with social media and provide things like gifs, infographics, free blog postings, and videos to post.

The key thing is to direct people at the event to post about the event itself, not just their own experiences. This isn't always easy. You probably won't have the resources to talk to every stall manager

about your content strategy, but by providing guidelines and assisting exhibitors, you can give them an incentive to think on a larger canvas than just their own stand.

Create an Event to Remember

Some events will have different social media strategies. A video gaming event might focus on Twitch and YouTube, while an app development conference will tend to center around Twitter. However, the marketing strategy that underlies the events will have plenty in common.

Whatever your event entails, similar marketing rules apply. Plan from an early stage, research your audience, source the right apps and software, have a slick media strategy, and cover every angle on the day of the event.

If you follow these guidelines, the results will be a high level of media engagement, strong attendance numbers, happy exhibitors, plenty of social media engagement on the day, and a boost to your event marketing brand that lasts well after the event closes.



The 5 Types of Emails You Should Be Sending in a Follow-Up Campaign

Email might not seem the most cutting edge strategy available to marketers, but the results it gets will surprise anyone not implementing it.

According to consulting company Mckinsey, when it comes to acquiring new customers, email is 40 times more effective than Twitter and Facebook. Email marketing offers high levels of engagement, competitive click-through rates, and frequent conversions. If you

don't follow an effective plan, though, you can't expect this effectiveness, with email campaigns reliant on building subscriber relationships.

As you attempt to build this subscriber relationship, emails focused solely on promotion will become irritating, while being too cautious will prevent sales. Therefore, a good email campaign should include a variety of follow-up messages that all serve a purpose.

Introduction

A good introduction email can start the relationship on a positive note. Usually, people subscribe because they have been offered a free gift of some kind, so you want to ensure they don't immediately unsubscribe. You could start by introducing yourself and explaining what subscribers can expect from your messages.

Look to speak directly to an individual, but you can also indicate that your subscribers are part of a community with the same goals, interests, or hobbies.

Finally, try to be succinct as a long introduction might discourage readers from future messages.

Lesson

A lesson could be a tutorial on a particular aspect of your niche. Lessons can also take the form of an email series that expands on a topic at greater length. Ideally, the subject of this email will be closely related to the reason subscribers initially joined the list, with deviations likely to decrease future responsiveness.

You might not always be able to provide a lesson for your niche, but topics as diverse as golf swing techniques, woodworking, entrepreneurship, and pet care can all be used with some specialist knowledge.

Story

An interesting story is perfect for building rapport with readers. Informative emails are necessary, but a story can bring your email campaign to life by showing real

personality.

The topic could be about your introduction to the niche, a tough time you experienced, or a satisfying moment. Stories offer the chance to be more creative with your writing, but still look to maintain the same voice you use for all emails.

Promotion

Invariably, you will need to send promotional emails to maximize sales. You can still promote in other emails, usually by including a link to an external post or a casual mention towards the end of the message. A promotional email, however, will focus primarily on making a sale, whether immediately or during a subsequent message.

Some marketers are reluctant to actively promote through email, but direct promotions almost always lead to increased revenue. Short and long messages can both result in sales, so it is good to test your messages to see what your list responds to.

Roundup Posts

A roundup post is a quick email you can send to maintain contact with your list. This type of email could feature the best posts from your blog or curated from a

variety of different sources.

While you might not ideally want to direct subscribers away from your content, recommending other content should lead to relationships with other marketers in your niche. A roundup article can be created quickly, but ensure you maintain credibility by only recommending quality content.

If you integrate each of these email styles into a campaign, subscribers will not get tired of your voice. It is easy to become predictable with online communication, particularly as many people will only skim over the content.

When you offer variety, readers will have less chance to second-guess the content, so they will be more inclined to inspect it further.

Each of these styles also offers the chance to speak to different audiences, with some readers responding to longer stories, while others just want to click over to the content you are promoting.

If you can take it a step further with analytics and A/B testing, your email marketing can reach a new level of responsiveness and profitability.

APP Watch

EasilyDo

Price = Free (offers in-app purchases)

Availability: Android and Apple



EasilyDo helps you track shipments, stay up-to-date on flights, update contact lists, receive reminders about upcoming events and more. If something is happening in your life,

EasilyDo offers similar A.I.-based organization and tries to do some of the jobs a real-life personal assistant would do. It works by connecting directly to email accounts, such as Gmail and Exchange, and to other services and apps like Facebook, Evernote and LinkedIn.

The EasilyDo app can scan your emails and social networks and set up alerts for you.

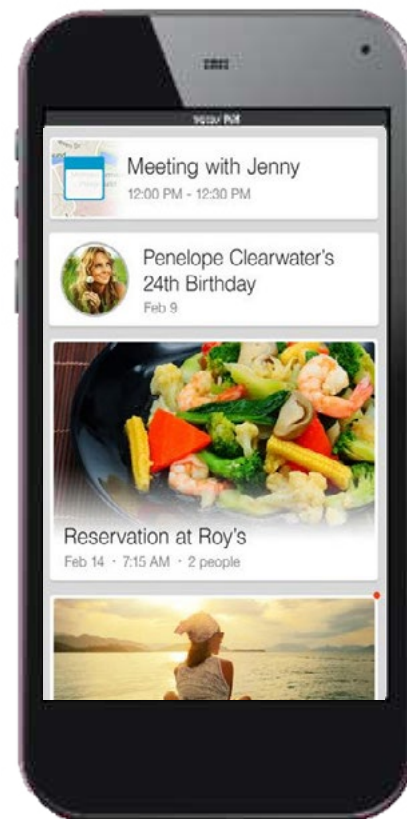
EasilyDo collects information from those sources so it can send an alert when you need to set off for a meeting scheduled in your calendar. It can also get status updates on flights or track packages,

create calendar events based on business emails and tidy up your contacts list.

Many features take some time to learn, but it is well designed and has made my online life a little less stressful.

EasilyDo is available on iOS and Android. Though most of its features are free, access to the full range (like one feature that connects to Salesforce to log professional sales information) starts at around \$5 a month.

EasilyDo Inc. also has a new free email app that applies to your inboxes some of the same smart automation ideas used in its digital assistant. It offers a unified inbox for different accounts, one-tap unsubscribing from mailing lists and automatic sorting of mail into different folder types, like travel or other categories. The app is available only for iOS devices.



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- Understand your target audience - their goals, behaviors and desires
- Research keywords
- Identify stakeholders and influencers

Develop a Content Strategy

- Define your objectives
- Align them to business goals
- Perform a content audit to identify gaps



Cook Up Your Plan

- Identify delivery channels
- Assign resources
- Define KPIs
- Develop calendar / frequency
- Develop content



Serving Suggestions

- Implement your strategy
- Engage with your audience
- Monitor the results
- Make modifications to your strategy as needed



***Is Your Marketing
Missing
Something?***

***We Might Be The
Missing Piece!***



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