

Social media for



small business

quick



guide

Whether you already have your social media account set up or you are just getting started, I have 5 steps for you to truly utilize and understand the social media platform you choose to market your small business.



My background in social media:

To start, I'm an elder millennial, which means I've been an active member of the world of social media since Live Journal and Xanga, through MySpace, Tumblr, and now TikTok (and everything in between).

Professionally, I've been working in marketing for many years, even before I left my career in education to fully transition into marketing in 2017. Since professionally becoming a creative marketer and receiving a Master degree in Strategic Marketing,

I have spent countless hours researching trends and concepts within the most popular social media platforms for business growth. I'm going to break all of my research down into four steps that have been consistent throughout the years and will continue to do so despite the ever changing trends.

Step 1: choose a platform

There are multiple different social media platforms to choose from when it comes to marketing your small business. If you are just getting started or are focusing on understanding social media management, I always suggest starting with one platform to really focus your energy on. For most of my clients, it's Instagram, but other platforms such as Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, LinkedIn, and TikTok may be better for your business. I personally only work with Instagram and Facebook for the time being because that is where my target audience is (but Pinterest management will be coming soon).



Let's take a deeper look into these platforms to see which one is right for your business.

Instagram

Instagram has officially become a social selling platform. It is used to sell products, promote services, and now that influencers have taken over the world, it is the best platform for influential type marketing. If your products or services are highly visual, educational based, or have comedic appeal Instagram is your platform. In my professional opinion, Instagram is right for everyone and is the most universal platform.

Facebook

Now that Facebook has officially transitioned its way back into a family reunion platform, as I like to call it, Facebook is no longer ideal for most businesses. Years ago, people on Facebook would complain that they were only getting ads and promoted posts and seeing business posts rather than seeing what their friends and family were posting. In the last few years Instagram and Facebook have shifted their platform focus and Facebook is back to reconnecting family and friends. That being said, Facebook can be great for private groups for your business (especially if you are membership or subscriber based), it can also be good for reaching a wider audience that may not be in on Instagram, as Facebook is generally going to have a slightly older audience.

Pinterest

Pinterest is a platform that, even though I don't use it to its full capabilities for my business, I do think all businesses have a place on it. Pinterest is great if you are a boutique, influencer, in home improvement or real estate, or if you have visually compelling items or services to sell. It's also a great place for anybody to go and get inspiration. I often ask my clients to create an inspo/mood board on Pinterest so I can get a feel for who they are as a business and person. If you have products/services/images/graphics that may be inspirational, then you should be utilizing Pinterest!

Industry Secret: Pinterest posts convert to sales faster than any other social media platform.

Twitter

Twitter (or X as it is now called) is what I call the stand-up comedian gone news anchor platform. We all see funny tweets turned into memes, but it's also a great place to gather very quick information. Twitter is great for brands that fall into the more rugged category of my [Brand Personality Guide](#) and it's also great for brands who are able to provide short bursts of information that's relevant to their audience. Or if you're as funny as Wendy's or Denny's it's a great place for you to just show off some brand personality!

LinkedIn

LinkedIn always has been and always will be the platform for businesses who are marketing to other businesses. If you are a B2B business and you're looking for networking opportunities, and a way to showcase your knowledge in your industry, then LinkedIn would be a great platform for you. That being said, it also depends on your brand personality because even though I'm technically a B2B business, my personality is a little too fun, less sophisticated and frankly just a little bit too creative to make it anywhere on LinkedIn. LinkedIn is definitely more for the suited professional.

Take a look at this list of [LinkedIn's Top Influencers](#). If you don't seem to jive with them, then LinkedIn probably isn't the platform for you.

TikTok

Lastly... TikTok. I will be honest in that I do not feel as though I am educated enough on TikTok to provide a quality breakdown of the platform. But from my experience I've noticed that TikTok is a platform of chance, meaning it can result in a lot of reach but not a lot of conversion. I've also noticed that I rarely see businesses on TikTok but more so the individual person behind the business on a personal profile. If there is a business that comes up on TikTok, it's because they have something very compelling to showcase that captures the audience's visual attention.

If you're coming from working mostly with Instagram and are looking to get into TikTok, try reusing your Instagram Reels! Keep in mind that TikTok favors videos that require little effort, where as Instagram prefers a more clean, crisp video.

Step 2: Setting goals

After you have chosen your specific platform(s) to focus your attention on, it's then time to set your goals. My favorite way to help small business owners set attainable goals is through a marketing strategy called SMART goals. SMART goals are the quickest and easiest ways to set goals.

Let's break this acronym down...

SMART Goals

S - Specific

Be specific in knowing exactly what you want to achieve. Instead of saying, "I want to reach a wider audience," specify a precise number or percentage increase that you would like to reach.

M - Measurable

Your social media strategy goals should have a metric next to them. However, in order to manifest these goals make sure you also put a feeling with that metric. How will you feel once you hit that measurable goal?

A - Attainable

Make sure that these goals are realistic for you. Remember there is nothing wrong with having small goals because even the smallest goals will count towards your big goal of being a successful business owner.

R - Relevant

Speaking of small goals, you do want to make sure that every goal you set sets you up for creating another goal. For example, if your goal is to get 50 website views in one month, your next goal should then be to get 3% of those 50 views converted into a customer/client.

T - Timed

Always set a time limit for your goals, whether that's one month, a quarter, or a year. You should have a time limit to achieve those goals otherwise they will just keep going and going and you'll never have a metric to look back on to review.

step 3: know your audience

One of the most important factors in setting up a successful social media strategy is to know your audience.

The best way to do this is to compile data from either your selling platform, your current social media pages, or by conducting a poll. You want to find the demographics of the people who you are currently reaching. From there, take that information and identify who your ideal client or customer is. Ask yourself, do they fall into the demographic that you're currently reaching or do you need to reevaluate and target a different audience to attract your ideal client?

You will want to keep track of your audience insights quite often because, even though it'll mostly stay the same, if you do see a spike in a different demographic, it's a good time to sit down and look to see what you did to cause that spike. Is it that you posted a meme and you attracted a younger audience than what you normally get? Did you post too many pictures of your kids and your audience grew a little bit older than what you're used to? These will help you gauge how you need to move forward with the posts that you create to ensure you are targeting not only your audience but your ideal audience. Reaching your ideal audience will set you up to have more sustainable and meaningful client/customer relationships and potentially keep them coming back for more!

Step 4: creating content

As time extensive as it may seem to research trends hashtags, copywriting your captions, batch creating your content and scheduling it (okay, yes it is very time extensive), there are several free tools and information I can give you to make it slightly less agonizing.

I often hear from small business owners that the hardest aspect of keeping up with their social media is that they just simply don't have the time so here's a few of my quick tips to get the process done without eating into too much of your already busy schedule! (And hey, if it is still too much for you, [reach out to me](#) and we can discuss my social media services.)

My Quick Content Creating Tips

- **Find Trends:** Trends can be easy to spot if you're actively scrolling on social media. I suggest taking an hour or a day (whether that's before bed, over your lunch, or spread out in small increments throughout the day) to go through whichever social media platform you're utilizing and saving or screenshotting content that inspires you or seems popular. You can always follow me along on [Instagram](#) as I will share trends there!

- **Batching:** Batching content means you create multiple pieces of content at one time. Social media managers do this often, where they will take one day a week to do nothing but create social media content. This can be done for posts, reels, stories, anything!

- **Captions:** Obviously it's not enough to just have the image or video that you want to use on your social media platform, but you also need to have a strong caption.

Key factors to remember in your captions are to utilize multiple keywords, use hashtags, and have a call to action.

- **Keywords:** Look at keywords as something that you would type into a Google search to find your business. If somebody is looking for my business on Google they might search "Omaha social media manager," so in my caption I want to make sure I utilize all those words if it's relevant to the post. It's very important to use location specific keywords if you are an industry that can only work with people in your location.
- **Hashtags:** There's always debate on how many hashtags do you use, where to put them, and if they come off as being spammy or not. From my research and experience, hashtags work best on Instagram. People are using Instagram now as a search engine. They are searching for, not only the keywords, but also the specific hashtags revolving around those keywords. It's important to utilize hashtags that are not overly saturated (over 500k posts is usually too saturated for reach) but also not too specific to where nobody searching for that hashtag. I try to stay between 15k-300k uses, with 35k-65k being the prime number. (And you can put them in the caption OR comments, there's no right or wrong placement.)

- **Call to Action (CTA):** A call to action is a specific sentence or phrase that requires the viewer to engage with your post. A CTA is generally going to be in the caption of your post, but it can also be in the image or video itself. Clear CTAs will ask something specific of the viewer, so whether that is for them to leave a comment tagging a friend or reacting with an emoji, or directing them to your stories, or another post, or best of all directing them to the link in your bio to go to your website (which gets you one step closer to conversion). If you head over to my [Instagram](#) you can see examples of CTAs being used and help that inspire you to create your own.

- **Scheduling:** If you I feel like posting consistently requires too much of your time and energy, I highly suggest scheduling your content ahead of time. After you batch create your content, find a scheduler that works for you (I personally love Facebook Business Suite) and schedule your content the same day that you batch it. This requires you to completely finish creating the content, including the captions, and scheduling it to go out at a very specific time. The best times to post are based on your audience, so go in and look at your insights and analytics and see when your audience is most active.

PRO TIP for posting without scheduling:

I'll be completely honest, I rarely schedule my own content. I do it for all of my clients, but I like to kind of wing it for my own business. But what I normally do to make sure that my audience is active at the time I want to share is I open up the LIVE option and see how many of my followers are currently live. If the number seems fairly high, I'll go ahead and share that post if it seems low, then I'll wait a little bit and check again later.

Now that you've got your strategy in place I want to give you some links to my personal favorite tools to help manage social media. Most of these are going to be free, but a lot of them do have a pro or paid membership and most of the time it's super beneficial to go pro because you get access to so many more features!

Creating Content

[Canva](#) - Canva offers tons of free templates and graphics to create compelling social media posts. While there is a free version, I highly suggest the paid version as it comes with many more features!

[Adobe Express](#) - Formerly known as Adobe Spark, express is very similar to Canva, just has fewer features. If you already have an Adobe membership, Express is included for free.

[OpenAI/Chat GPT](#) - This website helps you create captions or come up with ideas. This is great when you're stumped! It has you enter in your keywords and tone and generates options for you.

Scheduling Content

[Meta Business Suite](#) - Meta (Facebook) Biz Suite is free to use and allows you to share to both Facebook and Instagram. You can even change your captions for each platform at once.

[Planoly](#) - Planoly allows you to plan for Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. It even allows you to see your grid to make sure it fits your brand aesthetic! They also offer informative blogs and how-to guides similar to this one!

still think you need some help with your social media?

awesome, my team & I can help!

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