

THE ELITE

B2B Social Media Marketing Strategy Manual



The Importance of B2B Social Media Marketing

Social media plays an important role in helping B2B companies navigate the sales cycle, engage with customers, and improve customer service delivery. Yet, for many B2B companies, it can be easy to get caught up in the mindset that social media marketing is reserved for those in the B2C space.

B2B social media often seems unnecessary or even worse—boring. (Gasp!) You may wonder if social media marketing is right for your industry and think that focusing your efforts on tradeshows and conventions is more important.

But the truth is, B2B social media marketing isn't unnecessary or boring, and the fun isn't just reserved for B2C companies. Social media is just as important for B2B as it is for B2C companies because in addition to **increased awareness and engagement, social media marketing can help you make bigger sales.**

We know, getting started can seem like a lot. Will your audience show up and engage with your content? Do you even know what to post? **In this guide, you'll learn all about B2B social media marketing strategy, taking away tools and tips to confidently take the first step.**



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Creating a Strategy

When you don't have an established strategy, it's easy to end up posting on social media without any rhyme or reason. To avoid this, it's critical to create a dedicated social media marketing strategy.

Set SMART Goals

To be successful, your social media marketing strategy must be based on goals—just like any other channel. If you don't have goals in mind or measurable key performance indicators (KPIs) to work towards, you'll have no way of knowing if you've achieved what you set out for. **Your KPIs should always tie back to your goals.** Use the SMART framework to get started.

The SMART framework is great for setting clear, actionable goals, and one we always recommend B2B social media marketers use. If you're not familiar with the framework, SMART is an acronym for:



Specific: The more specific your goals are, the better. Be clear, simple, and defined.



Measurable: What KPIs are you going to use to measure each of your goals?



Attainable: Given all of the resources you have, is the goal (or goals) attainable?



Relevant: Are your social media marketing goals relevant to your business objectives?



Timely: Every goal needs to have a deadline, whether it's three months or three years.



EXAMPLES



Vague Goal: We want to grow our following on Instagram.



SMART Goal: We want to grow our following on Instagram by 1,000 followers within the next two months. Having a larger Instagram following will help us achieve the business objective of growing our brand.

Setting SMART social media marketing goals that align with your larger business objectives can help ensure that you achieve success.



TIP

Always be sure to revisit your goals, whether it's weekly, monthly, or quarterly, to determine if you're on track to meet them. And if something isn't working? Adjust until it is.

Conduct a Social Media Audit

Audit Your Social Media

Review your social media profiles and consider the following points:

- 1. Are each of your profiles complete?**
If they're not, spend the time adding any images, URLs, or bios needed. If a profile appears to be outdated, consider giving it a refresh.
- 2. Which platforms does your target audience use?**
Rather than trying to manage accounts on every social media channel, first put your time and energy into those where your audience also has a presence. **It's better to be regularly active on a few channels than to struggle maintaining a presence on them all.**
- 3. What types of posts are currently performing well? Which are performing poorly?**
Examining the level of engagement on your posts will give you helpful insight into what's working and what's not working. You can use these insights to guide your content strategy and develop a more effective content calendar.

Audit Your Competition

Next, you'll want to evaluate what your competitors are doing on social media. Your competitors are probably already using social, so you can use any information you find to your advantage and learn from them.

Thankfully, today's **social listening tools like [HubSpot's Social Media Management Software](#) and [Sprout Social](#) make it easy to analyze your competition.** These tools allow you to track activity in real-time, so you can determine which channels are providing the best results and decide where to put your resources.



TIP

If your competitors are more active on some social media platforms than others, you may be able to better reach your audience on the platforms where they're being underserved. Trying to win over your competitors' existing audiences will be nearly impossible, but you can make the most of these new opportunities.



Develop Your Ideal Buyer Persona(s)

If buyer personas are a new concept for you, here's a quick refresher: **a buyer persona is a semi-fictional representation of your ideal buyer based on data, interviews, and some educated guesses.** Think of them as a definition of your ideal buyer presented in a way that sounds like it's talking about a specific person.

Buyer personas help everyone in your company (and at your marketing agency) understand your prospective customers. With different team members strategizing, developing campaigns, and creating content, it's important that everyone is aligned on who they're talking to and what specifically they should be talking about.

What to include in your buyer persona(s):

- Roles/Titles
- Location
- Typical Responsibilities
- Needs/Pain Points
- Topics of Interest
- Education & Experience
- Preferred Social Media Channels



Create a Content Calendar

A content calendar is social media content calendar that provides an overview of your upcoming social media posts. We recommend using spreadsheet templates for content calendars. You can develop a spreadsheet template, a Google calendar, or use a template from a social media management tool.

Social media content calendars typically include:

- The date the post will be published
- The social media network the post will be published on
- The post copy and assets such as photos or videos
- Any links that need to be included in the post
- Any accounts that should be tagged in the post

Your social media calendar may only include posts for one network, or it may include several. It all depends on how many resources you want to allocate to your social media marketing initiatives.

With your calendar template ready to be filled out, **decide what topics you want to post about and round up any resources or content you want to share.** If you have a content marketing program in place, always promote new content on your social media networks. Consider choosing a day of the week and dedicating it to a specific theme, such as industry news.

Think about the following questions:

- What types of content do you plan to publish on social media?
- Who is your target audience?
- How often are you planning on posting?

Here are some examples of the types of content you can post on your channels:

- Blog Posts
- eBooks
- Infographics
- Marketing Videos
- Company Updates



TIP

It is recommended to plan out your content calendar at least a month in advance.



Stay Consistent

When it comes to your social media marketing strategy, one of the best tips we can share is to be consistent with it. **If you want your audience to engage with you, you need to show up on their feed on a consistent, reliable basis.** Not posting at all is better than posting sporadically and without a clear strategy.

Another thing to keep in mind is that on social media, consistent engagement is usually rewarded. If your content performs well and the platform's algorithm picks up on that, your posts will likely be pushed out to a larger audience, allowing you to gain more followers.

Having a content calendar in place can help ensure that you always post consistently and never let your social networks turn stagnant.



TIP

If you don't have the resources to devote to creating consistent posts on multiple platforms, start with the one that will have the biggest impact for your business and focus on it exclusively. You can always add other networks later!

Test, Test, Test

Like any other marketing channel, best practices for using social media are always changing. And a lot of what people tell you will make your efforts successful may not necessarily ring true when you put it into practice. **This is why testing is such an integral part of any social media marketing strategy.**

To ascertain what works for your company, start by doing your homework and determining the recommended days and times to post on the social media networks you've chosen. Then, give it a try. If you find that your engagement is falling flat for a few weeks or months, test out posting at a different time. Then, try posting on a different day altogether.

The point here is simple: the best days and times to post can vary widely from one social media network to another, and **you won't know what will work best for your company without trying different things out.**



TIP

Using an automated publishing platform for your social media posts will ensure you're always posting at the best time of day to reach your target audience.



Establishing Your Brand Voice

Whenever your company communicates or connects with other people, you're exhibiting your brand voice. You might not think of regular communications as using your brand voice, but you are. And with each new communication, your audience, prospects, and customers are developing an impression of you. Are you sure you're conveying messages the way you want to?

Voice and Tone

When you're planning your content calendar, **think about the voice and tone you want to convey**. Just because you need to be a bit more professional or technical than a B2C brand doesn't mean you can't have fun with social media.

Voice

If you don't have a clear way to describe the voice of your brand, start by looking inward and examining your brand. **Pick out some core adjectives you can use to describe the culture of your company**. This exercise will help you develop a clearer picture of your brand voice.

It's also wise to consider **how you talk about your brand**. How do you discuss it with your customers? As you work to develop your brand voice, think about these answers. **Whatever voice you choose, try your best to ensure that it's one which will appeal to your target audience**.

EXAMPLE



Let's assume one of your core adjectives is relatable. Your brand voice would use first-person POV, contractions, and a conversational tone to help you relate to your target audience.

Tone

Tone is a subset of voice. The tone of your message indicates how it comes across to your audience. **If looking inward helps you define your voice, looking outward will help you determine your tone.**

And like any communication, the tone you use will (and should) vary depending on the topic or theme of the post, the audience you're speaking to, and other important factors.



Craft Unique, Original Content

Creating unique and original social media content is an important part of any social media marketing strategy for a number of reasons, including:

- 1. It makes your audience want to engage with your company**
Attention spans have gotten shorter and shorter, and people no longer have time to engage with content that isn't saying something unique and original. By saying something new and original that captures people's attention, engagement will likely follow. High engagement can also help move people further along in the buyer's journey!
- 2. It makes your audience want to learn more about your offerings**
Social media provides a great opportunity to communicate your key differentiators and get to know your audience on a more personal level. When you give your audience educational or unique content, they will naturally be curious and may want to learn more about your business. Relevant content that appeals to your target audience on a personal level may also motivate your audience to reach out to you directly.
- 3. It keeps both new prospects and existing customers interested**
New is exciting. Even for existing customers, seeing new content can help reignite interest in your company and motivate buyers to continue purchasing your products or services.

Showcase Your Company Culture

We love utilizing social media to showcase company culture. Marketing on social media isn't just about generating leads and moving prospects further along in the buyer's journey. **You can also use it to find stellar additions to your team who can deliver new ideas, send more great employees your way, and contribute to making your existing culture even better.** And when employees are happy, customers will be happy too.

Engage with Your Followers

Social media marketing is all about building relationships. And just like relationships that take place IRL (in real life), you need to listen to your target audience's concerns and needs if you want to build a healthy, mutually beneficial relationship with them.

Look to your competitors. Are they actively engaging with their followers on social media? Are they contributing meaningfully to conversations happening within your industry? How can you add value to the lives of those in your target audience? To your industry?

Listen to what people have to say about your company and respond to questions, concerns, and needs appropriately and in a timely manner.

Understanding the Nuances of Social Media

There are a lot of nuances when it comes to social media marketing. There are nuances within marketing, within each social media platform, and within the various trends that permeate social media.

Organic vs. Paid Social

There are two types of social media: organic and paid. Your social media marketing strategy should be comprised of both.

Organic

Organic social media refers to any activity on social media that doesn't involve any advertising spend. Organic social makes use of free tools to build a following organically, i.e. without spending money.

Paid

Paid social media is any activity on social media that requires advertising spend to launch. One of the most popular methods of paid social is cost-per-click (CPC), which involves paying for an ad based on the number of clicks it receives. PPC social ads can be targeted to your audience based on a variety of factors such as demographics, interest, or user data.

Benefits of Organic Social

- It's free to use no matter which platform(s) you choose
- You can develop campaigns based around custom hashtags
- It's a great tool to establish trust with your target audience
- User-generated content (UGC) relieves teams of content creation tasks

Benefits of Paid Social

- It's easier than ever to target your ideal audience
- Paid social enables you to reach more people with your posts
- Paid campaigns can help reinforce messaging promoted organically
- It can provide a quick conversion rate boost to high-performing content

Retargeting

Another benefit of paid social is the ability to run retargeting campaigns. **On Facebook and LinkedIn, advertisers have the ability to develop custom audiences and target ads to users who are already familiar with their company.** You can even take it a step further and personalize ads to increase the likelihood of a conversion even more.



New Social Media Platforms

New social media platforms are always being introduced. How do you know if a new platform is right for you? Start by considering your target audience. Think about the demographics of your audience and determine where they fall in regarding the new platform. Is the new platform primarily targeting millennials and younger generations, but you're looking to target outside of that age range? It might not be worth the investment of time and money. But if all signs point to go, it won't hurt to give a new social media platform a try.

Adapting to Trends

To be successful in marketing your company, you need to be able to adapt to trends. This is true for any channel, but especially for social media marketing, where trends come and go every day. Keeping abreast of social media trends can help you create an effective social media marketing strategy and ensure that you always differentiate your business from the competition.

Here are a few of the top social media trends for 2021 and beyond:

- Video content will continue to dominate
- Augmented reality adoption will increase
- Influencer marketing will remain popular
- User-generated content will gain momentum





Monitoring Analytics & Tracking Traffic

Monitoring the analytics provided by social media platforms and tracking the traffic you receive is a critical component of your social media strategy.

Google Analytics

Did you know you can use Google Analytics (GA) to monitor what's working in your social media marketing campaigns and what's not working? Well, now you do. If you're a digital marketer and you're not using GA to monitor the effectiveness of your social media campaigns, you're missing out big time.

With GA, you can get helpful reports that provide insight into:

- Which social media platforms give you the most traffic
- What content is performing best on which social platform
- How many conversions you're getting from social media

Having this data in your back pocket will allow you to get the biggest return on your marketing investment (ROMI) and help you plan more effectively for future campaigns.

Tracking Traffic

Social media marketing is all about ROI which can be notoriously difficult to calculate. But, as long as you stay focused on the results you want to achieve from your goals, you'll have a good idea of what metrics to focus on to measure success.

You can track the following metrics:

- Website traffic
- Content traffic/consumption
- Content likes
- Content shares
- Social mentions
- Platform/audience growth

Popular tools you can use to track these metrics are Google Analytics, [HubSpot](#), [HootSuite](#), and [Google Analytics Campaign URL Builder](#).

What Are the Benefits of Analyzing Social Media Traffic?

- You can get a clear picture of which accounts need more strategizing, content, and time devoted to them.
- You can get a feel for how engaged your target audience is with your content by analyzing engagement metrics such as comments and shares and assessing the amount of time users spend on your website. Having all of this data can help you better determine if you're targeting the appropriate audience or if your content calendar needs some adjusting.
- You can calculate how many new vs. return users are visiting your website and clicking through to engage with the content on your website. If you find that the pages your content is housed on aren't performing well, it may be worth considering an adjustment to your strategy.



Choosing Social Media Platforms

With billions of users worldwide, social media networks provide an effective platform to build your brand, expand your reach, and grow your audience simultaneously.

Facebook

For businesses looking to get started with social media marketing for the first time, Facebook is an obvious first choice. It may not be the most straightforward in generating leads for your business, but it provides a great platform for promoting your company culture and what makes you unique. On Facebook, you can also be more casual and conversational, thus demonstrating the humanness behind your brand. This can go a long way in helping you make connections and build relationships.

Instagram

If your product or service can be highlighted visually, Instagram is another great option. You can promote your products on a platform where people actually want to buy them. In fact, a whopping [80% of Instagram users](#) say the platform influences their purchasing decisions.

LinkedIn

[96% of B2B content marketers](#) use LinkedIn for organic social marketing, making it the top platform for B2B content marketing.

Not taking advantage of this platform may mean you'll lose out on a large potential audience that's highly likely to understand (and want to engage with) your content. Encouraging employee participation can also big rewards, because it gives employees an opportunity to connect with other professionals in your industry and build relationships.

Twitter

Twitter is often used as a resource for industry news, making it a great channel to adopt if you want to position your company as an industry thought leader on multiple channels. And, as you continue to grow your audience and gain more followers, you can share original content and encourage users to visit your website for more—generating even more traffic and leads.

Pinterest

If your products or services can easily be represented and understood through photographs, Pinterest is another platform to consider. You can group images into boards by topic, theme, features, and more to create a visual catalog that followers can see, share, and pin.

Pinning products or services with links back to your site also count as backlinks, which are important for SEO and can help signal to search engines like Google that your content is what people are looking for.

YouTube

You might not think of YouTube as a social media channel in the same way you view the others we've listed, but it is. As a B2B company, YouTube can provide a wealth of opportunities for growing your brand and improving brand awareness and recognition. **Start by creating a branded YouTube channel**, then add explainer videos and other educational videos. You can even optimize your videos for SEO to drive more visitors to your website.

Implementing Your Social Media Marketing Strategy




Delegate Implementation Tasks

Congratulations! By now, you've done the hard work of outlining your goals and developing a comprehensive strategy. To get started, you'll need to assign implementation tasks to a team member (or team members) within your company.

Encourage Employee Engagement

Employee engagement on social media is one of the most underrated tactics in social media marketing. If you haven't considered encouraging your employees to engage with and re-share your content on social media, it's time to start.



Don't have the time or staff available to implement your strategy? You can always outsource these tasks to a marketing agency.

Just think about it. Each of your employees has their own social media audience, so whoever shares your posts and content is magnifying their reach. Employee engagement is an easy (and free!) way to boost your performance on social media. So don't wait any longer, give it a try!

No matter which path you decide to take, it's important to ensure that whoever is in charge of implementation always sticks to the strategy and any style or tone guidelines you've developed. This will ensure consistency throughout your posts and help guarantee that you're always on track to achieve your goals.

Track and Evaluate KPIs

Having goals is great, but if you're not tracking KPIs to ensure you're meeting them, what's the point? Tracking critical KPIs like reach, impressions, comments, conversions, and click-through-rates will give you the data you need to determine if you've achieved your goals. All of the social platforms we've covered here provide analytics so you can easily track your results.

Interact with Your Followers in Real-Time

Your social media team member, staff, or agency should always have time dedicated to interacting with your followers in real-time. This will make people feel seen and heard, and even if they're only dedicating 15 or 30 minutes a day, it can go a long way in building your brand.

Measuring and reporting on your results also demonstrates the value of social, which can make it easier to calculate your return on investment (ROI). Social media teams or team members should always create monthly reports to track highlights and areas of improvement to keep things moving in the right direction.

You should also include guidelines for this engagement alongside your style and tone guidelines, so they're followed by everyone involved.



About Sagefrog Marketing Group

Sagefrog is a top-ranked B2B marketing agency that specializes in healthcare, technology, industrial, and business services. We have offices in Doylestown, Princeton, Philadelphia, and Lehigh Valley, and we're dedicated to accelerating our clients' success through brand building and integrated marketing. Our services include branding, websites, digital content marketing, public relations, social media, and traditional tactics which are strategically integrated and optimized through our proven process, JumpStart™.

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Accelerate Your Social Media Marketing Success

Need help getting started with social media marketing?
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