



WEB MARKETING

GUIDE



www.marketing4entrepreneurs.org

GUIDE- WEB MARKETING

Introduction

It is recommended* to “split a digital marketing budget into three activity buckets: *home-based activities, outbound communications, and two-way communications.*

- Home-based activities are the *website, blog, search engine optimization*, etc
- Outbound communications includes: *pay per click ads, display ads, email marketing, podcasts, online public relations*, etc.
- Two-way communication activities are *social media, blog marketing, video marketing*, etc.

According to MarkingProfs “If you can only do one of the three categories, choose the home-based ones. These are the most important ones for any business”

For the purposes of simplifying an emerging, evolving and increasingly important part to a venture’s marketing strategy and programs; we’ll look at web marketing in three sequential steps:

- First you have start with the right Web Site for your business.
- Then you need to take account of Search Engine Optimisation
- And finally you must select the Online Marketing Strategies and Tools

* *How To Prioritise & Budget for Your Marketing Activities*, <http://www.marketingprofs.com/marketing/online-seminars/356>

STEP1.YOUR WEB SITE

BUYERS ARE ONLINE- SO MUST YOU!

A website and the right presence online is now becoming vital for businesses, because consumers and buyers are using information and advice they source online in their 'buying process'. If a business is not online, then they risk not being considered by the buyer.

In business-to-consumer markets, consumers are using online sources to help them through each of the six buying stages.

1. Problem Recognition.
2. Information Search.
3. Evaluation.
4. Purchase Decision
5. Purchase.
6. Post –Purchase Behaviour

In business-to-business markets, decision makers and buyers are also using online sources to help them make the right purchasing decisions. In 2007, for example, it is clear business decision makers (BDMs) rely heavily on *digital media*

- 70% rely on industry-specific Web sites for their jobs. (#1 rank)
- Over 60% visit industry-specific Web sites to enhance their B2B media experience. (#1 rank)
- Over 75% have used or plan to use emerging media at work.

Consumers in the age bracket 35-49 are the dominant group on all of the major online social and business networking sites – see Appendix 1

IT TAKES 4 JOBS TO BUILD ONE!

It takes significant 'project management' to build the right website for a business. All four 'jobs' required for the build, must be coordinated and managed along the path to successful completion:

1. A **copy-writer** to pen the content for the web site. The web site must content must engage the visitor with the right blend of 'sales' speak and 'advisory' information that guides.
2. A **graphic designer** to design the look and feel of the site (the 'skin'), overlay the branding, imagery and tone.
3. A **web builder** to code the architecture and functionality of the site , including a content management system (to make ongoing content changes and regular updates) , newsletter sign up, creation and issue, blog, search, etc

4. A **Search Engine Optimization** agency to ensure that the site has the best chances of being ranked highly by the various search engines (Google, MSN, Yahoo, etc).

WEB SITE ESSENTIALS

A good website will have at least these six features for visitors when they arrive on the site.

1. The businesses **brand positioning** will be clearly defined and reflected in the site name, logo and main messages. Brand positioning will clearly articulate:
 - The target audience it is speaking to. Content and tone will , for example differ depending on whether this is female or male, young, older, married, single, French or German, etc
 - The need category that is addressed by the businesses products and services. In the example of a supermarket, are you providing product in the ‘fresh vegetables’ category or section or the ‘fresh fruit’ or the ‘frozen preparation’
 - The unique valued benefit that is highly valued by the customer and not matched by the competitor
 - The proofs that are offered to the prospective buyer that assure them that they will get the valued benefit; such as customer testimonials, third party endorsements, etc

Each of these must be clearly, concisely and engagingly articulated on the landing page/ home page and repeated throughout.

2. It must be easy to **navigate the site** and easy to understand what to do. For example, a visitor will have the following five questions , each needing to be addressed by your sites navigation sections:
 1. *Why am I here* – Home Page sets out the ‘brand positioning’, highlighting the ‘need’ and the valued benefit being offered
 2. *What can you do for me?* - Products or Services Page sets out the detail of the valued benefit(s)
 3. *Prove you are good enough for my money.* Testimonial Page shows the Proofs
 4. *Ok so your work looks good. Who are you?* - About Us Page provides the reputation, tradition and history to the business, founders, advisors and associations
 5. *I'm interested in going to the next step* - Contact Us Page gives the visitor the ‘next step’ to getting more information, having query answered or purchase the product

3. **Have valuable information, Advice, Tips and Insights.** All purchases start with a quest for information and this increasingly takes place online. Your site should therefore provide that help to the searching buyer.
4. **Build ‘interactivity’ into the site.** Visitors are interested in receiving newsletters and alerts about issues and useful content, they are interested in ‘calculating’ costs and benefits to suit their own circumstances and they’re interested in having questions answered. Incorporating a blog and having a content management system facilitates interactivity.
5. **Update the content regularly.** A static site with unchanged content is like reading last week’s newspaper – it loses relevancy to the visitor and they’ll stop coming.
6. Don’t use **unprofessional photography or images, a lot of text** which is unattractive to the eye or **‘flash’** which slows down the speed of page opening and distracts the eye.

STEP2. SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION

Search Engine Optimization is the process of making your Web site as easy to find as possible for search engines and, through them, your clients and customers.

For that to happen, your Web pages have to contain the **keywords** and **phrases** most likely to be used when a customer enters search requests in an engine, and your pages must be organized in way that's most "friendly" to those high-tech seek-and-find services.

THESE CAN HELP YOUR WEB SITE'S VISIBILITY:

1. **Get the most from your URL:** Be specific and creative with your domain name. Use one that uniquely identifies your company and your brand. List your business here www.google.com/placesforbusiness/ to help your customers find you on google. It's free.

2. **Research your keyword phrases.** The phrases you think your target market might be searching for may very well be incorrect. Use research tools such as Google Keywords <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal> and this free tool <http://www.goodkeywords.com/products/gkw/> Compile lists of the most relevant phrases for your site, and choose a few different ones for every page. Never shoot for general keywords such as "travel" or "vacation," as they are rarely (if ever) indicative of what your site is really about. Research your customers as well.

After you've done your good keyword research, you know what keyword phrases your customers are using to search

- You then need to know how competitive the keyword phrases you just discovered are
- You also want to know the prominent web pages that are ranking well for your keyword phrases

Use this free tool <http://www.goodkeywords.com/products/kwexplorer/appnotes.php> . This free tool enables you to check the visibility and popularity of your competitor and exemplar web sites <http://www.goodkeywords.com/products/gkw/docs/sitepop.php>

3. **Web site description, keywords, subject and local** This information is used by search engine crawlers to place your website in search results. It is important to include as many good keywords as possible in your website description, and in the keyword section of your pages. Once these fields are complete, you must tell individual search engines to 'crawl' and index your website. The details specified here will be used by the search engine crawler when indexing.

4. **Pick good page titles** The page title of each Web page is the most important on-page SEO factor. The page title is the text that appears in the top bar of your browser window and is the first thing a search engine looks at to determine what the page is about.

5. Emphasize your text links The wording of the links on each of your Web pages is another important requirement of SEO, and will significantly affect your search engine ranking. They should always include relevant keywords.

6. Page linking Be sure every page on your site is linked to the other pages. Search spiders follow these trails to rank your Web site.

7. The 2-Click Rule Navigating around your site should be as easy as possible for your customers. The same goes for search engines. Be sure that every page on your new business Web site is at most only two clicks away from the home page.

8. Fresh Content Search engines love fresh content on Web sites. Web pages or articles that have been published recently on an established Web site get an extra boost in the rankings.

These on-page SEO factors generate about 25% of a web sites ranking. Off-page SEO factors are things that happen outside your direct control but are roughly 75% of the reason you rank for a given search.

The most important off-Page SEO factor is the number and quality of links into your Web site.

Search engines use links as a measure of how interesting your content is, since more interesting content tends to get more links. Search engines also regard links from more-established Web sites as more important than links from less-trustworthy Web sites. **The more sites which link to you, the higher your site appears in the results.** To check this out for yourself, visit Google and search for 'link:www.yoursite.ie' this will show you a list of sites that link to you - if you have **less than 10** your site will underperform, irrespective of how good the design may be.

STEP3. ONLINE MARKETING

The following are the available digital channels mix for reaching /engaging with target audiences

	<p><i>Search Engine Strategy</i> Analyse and create a family of the right keywords. Incorporate into website. Build Inbound Links.</p>
 <p><i>Blogs</i></p>	<p><i>Blog Strategy Summary</i> Promote blog posts via search engine optimization, tagging, and RSS syndication to social profiles like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Monitor the blogosphere for relevant conversations and engage</p>
 <p><i>Twitter</i></p>	<p><i>Twitter Strategy Summary</i> Monitor the Twittersphere for relevant conversations and engage. Use for updating and breaking news</p>
 <p><i>Facebook</i></p>	<p><i>Facebook Strategy Summary</i> Find keywords that have high activity levels and use for the right messaging</p>
	<p><i>LinkedIn Strategy Summary</i> Create and manage a LinkedIn Group</p>
 <p><i>YouTube</i></p>	<p><i>YouTube Strategy Summary</i> There are two primary ways people will find a video that you post on YouTube: through some form of a search or through viral sharing of the video. If you can't ensure that your video will rank for relevant searches, either reframe the content or try to go viral.</p>
 <p><i>Mobile</i></p>	<p><i>Mobile Strategy Summary</i> Using bluetooth marketing for targeting users based on precise geographical location</p>
 <p><i>Online PR</i></p>	<p>A key tactic for maximizing online exposure is to optimize the content within press releases for search engines (search engine optimization, or SEO). And also use Twitter to pitch reporters and follow those journalists on Twitter and start engaging them by responding to some of their tweets and direct messaging them.</p>
<p><i>Myspace / Bebo</i></p>	<p>Younger aged communities 15+ for secondary school volunteering and third level students</p>

Online marketing has to start with your own website being market-ready. When steps 1 and 2 above are done now you can add the following functionality/ undertake these digital marketing activities:

- Use Listening tools to give you a good idea of what's being said about your company online, where messages are posted and where users spend time.

Google Alerts (<http://www.google.com/alerts>) emails you whenever a chosen keyword (e.g., company or product name, CEO name, campaign tagline, industry term, etc.) is mentioned in any form of online content.

Google Blog Search (<http://blogsearch.google.com/>) scans the blogosphere for any keyword or phrase you input.

Twitter Search (<http://search.twitter.com/>) scans all Twitter posts for your selected keyword or phrase.

SiteVolume (<http://www.sitevolume.com/>) reports how often keywords or phrases appear on Twitter, Digg, MySpace, YouTube and Flickr.

SocialMention (<http://www.socialmention.com/>) enables you to search keywords and phrases by specific channel category (blogs, images, news, video, etc.), or as a whole, and to receive email alerts when a new mention is posted.

Socialcast (<http://www.socialcast.com/>) offers real-time analytics on microblogging and other social activities and identifies individual users' level of activity. Unlike most tools, it also aims to quantify the value of "lurkers" who aren't visibly posting comments by how often they frequent a site.

- Insert your site in Local & **Online Directories**
- Provide an **E-Newsletter** for registered visitors and customers to give them regular new information and guidance on issues that matter to them
- Write a **blog** on matters of interest and concern to your target audience
- Offer an **RSS Feed** registration for visitors and customers, so that they are alerted to new content on your website
- Link **press releases** and online marketing, so that the media can visit your website via a link
- Write **content** for other web sites and link it back to your site. For example, help answer someones question on the insights exchange of www.smallbusinesscan.com or post a view or comment on www.boards.ie .
- **Email** (on a 'permission-based') campaigns and attach video presentations
- Use 'forward to a friend' on emails
- **Podcast/Vodcast** (audio or visual) information/advice from your website
- **Video-demonstrate** your (complex) product in use
- Add **Facebook, LinkedIN, Twitter**
- Integrate with **mobile marketing**

- Online Advertising (Banner Ads)
- Online Search Marketing Campaigns (Pay Per Click)

E-Newsletter

A recent Nielsen Norman Group (NNG) report shows that email newsletters are able to create a **genuine bond between users and an organisation**. 69% of users in the NNG study said they look forward to receiving at least one regular email newsletter. The majority of users said that an email newsletter had become part of their routine. As the NNG report says, there are very few tools that 'can claim this degree of customer buy-in'.

Email newsletters are a better way to stay in touch with customers than updates posted on social networks like Facebook or Twitter:

- A newsletter goes into the inbox and sits there, whereas social networks use a stream-based interface metaphor, where new postings constantly replace old ones.
- As we found when testing social networks, people turn to these services primarily to keep in touch with friends and family, and corporate content is often mismatched with this mindset.
- Newsletters are under your control design-wise and hold much more information. One user offered the following comparison of newsletters and Facebook updates: *"You get a lot more information in newsletters than on Facebook. Facebook to me is more just a general one-liner about something that's going on versus a newsletter that contains content and details on a variety of topics and subjects."*

[Email Newsletter Usability](#), Nielsen Norman Group

Email

Effective email is about reaching the right people at the right time. This is a challenge since the distinction between home and work is blurred for many people:

- 55% of businesspeople check work email from home on nights and weekends.
- 48% of businesspeople check personal email during the workday.
- 90% of consumers use email several times a day.
- Almost half of consumers have at least three email accounts, and 95% consider *one* of these addresses to be their primary account.

This makes it extremely important that you have recipient's primary email address.

Source: DoubleClick "Sixth Annual Consumer Email Study"

1. FROM LINE:

This is the *No. 1 factor* that influences the success of an email marketing campaign. The from line is what recipients see in their inbox. If they recognize who the email is from, they are more likely to read the subject line.

When developing your from line, you have several options: It can be your company name, brand or product, market, newsletter name. Once you establish a from line, stick with it!

2. SUBJECT LINE:

This is the second most important factor influencing the success of your email marketing campaign. The subject line is the headline that recipients see before opening your message. It provides a brief description of what the email is about.

A good subject line states a benefit to the recipient, makes an offer or stimulates the recipient's curiosity. Your goal is to make the subject line compelling so that the recipient is motivated to open your email. Most recipients' email inboxes are cluttered; you want *your* message to stand out.

3. TEMPLATES:

Templates allow your organization to provide a consistent look and feel to your communications. You may want to create several variations that use the same general design.

Five Common Measurements of Email Success

4. OPEN RATE:

Tells you how many recipients opened your message. This metric is trackable only with HTML messages. Open rates can be misleading. For example, if recipients preview messages, that could be considered an open. Therefore, it should be used as a relative measurement. Another open metric is "unique opens," which measures the number of different individuals who open your message, rather than the total number of times your message was opened.

5. CLICK-THROUGH RATE (CTR):

Measures the number of recipients who clicked on a link or image within your email and hyperlinked to your Web site for additional content. This data can be expressed as Total CTR, Unique CTR, CTR on Specific Links or CTR by Individual Recipient.

6. PASS-ALONGS:

The number of recipients who forward your message to a friend or colleague.

7. UNSUBSCRIBES (OPT-OUTS):

The number of recipients who ask to have their email address removed from future mailings.

8. BOUNCES:

The number of emails that did not reach their destination and were bounced back to you. Information is included with the returned message so that you can determine why the message was undeliverable. You must have a bounce strategy to improve your ability to get your email delivered. Good email deployment software can recognize and categorize bounces as follows:

Hard bounces: The domain or the recipient's email address no longer exists.

Best practice: Retire these domains and email addresses *immediately*.

Soft bounces: This is typically a temporary condition that makes the email undeliverable. For example, the recipient's mailbox could be full or a server could be down.

Best practice: Continue to send to this email address for three or four separate campaigns. Retire the email address if it continues to bounce.

Whitelists and blacklists

ISPs and companies subscribe to blacklists and will block any mail coming from an IP address (server) that is on the list. To see if you are blacklisted, go to sites such as <http://rbls.org/> and enter your IP address. If you are listed, contact the site and confirm the block. Most have a form you can fill out with a request to be delisted.

If you are mailing to businesses and a company blocks you, you may want to contact a recipient at the company to enlist his or her help in getting delisted.

ISPs and companies employ whitelists. For example, AOL has a standard whitelist. You can read AOL's requirements and apply to be on its whitelist at <http://postmaster.aol.com>. As long as your bounces, spam complaints and other factors remain below the thresholds that AOL sets and monitors (but does not publish), you will remain on its whitelist, and this will reduce the filtering that takes place on your inbound mail. AOL also maintains an enhanced whitelist of mailers who meet more rigorous standards. You cannot apply for this. Your ongoing practices determine whether you will be included. Mailers on the enhanced list will not have any image blocking applied to their emails.

Email authentication—why you must register

ISPs found their customers were plagued by phishing (fraud and identity theft) and spoofing (forged emails) schemes. To address this they developed authentication technology to verify that an email is really from the marketer or business it claims to be from.

Register your IP addresses (servers) that you send mail from at these two free sites:

- AOL's SPF (Sender Policy Framework)—<http://spf.pobox.com>
- Microsoft's SIDF (Sender ID Framework)—<http://microsoft.com/senderid>

At some point, the ISPs may require authentication. Another authentication technology is Domain Keys Identified Mail (DKIM) sponsored by Yahoo and Cisco Systems. This goes beyond simple authentication and uses public key cryptography and key server technology to verify the source and content of messages.

Register to receive spam complaints

- Set up an abuse email address on your site where people can report problems. Register this address at <http://abuse.net>.
- ISPs do not tell you which recipients identified your email as spam. You can contact AOL on its postmaster site and request that AOL forward spam complaints to you. MSN, Hotmail, RoadRunner, Juno and NetZero will also provide this information if you request it.

Social Media

The most frequented social media sites are, in order: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Wikipedia, Flickr and blogs. Facebook leads the way with the most users and the most time spent on the site, according to Nielsen Online. But that's not to say that those rankings are reflective of your customers' or potential customers' usage. B2B companies might find more fitting connections on business networking sites, such as LinkedIn.

Global organizations will likely find that niche sites take more precedence in certain parts of the world. Use your customer-listening research to determine where to concentrate your efforts. After you have pinpointed the best networks, spend time developing a working understanding of each (e.g., what it's about, its features and how users interact within the space). Also check out how both social media and industry leaders are interacting and engaging their customers within the space. This will provide ideas and insight into best practices.

Furthermore, be sure to secure your brand's username on each site and check to make sure no one else is illegitimately representing your organization. A simple search on Google or **Namechk** (<http://Namechk.com/>) will tell you if your preferred username is available.

Next, determine your goals and planned approach. What are you looking to get out of this investment today and in the future? What steps do you need to take to make it happen? Consider how to:

- **Expand brand or product awareness:** How you will get your brand name out there (advertising, promotion, integration with other media, blogger outreach, and initiation of peer sharing and user-generated content campaigns, etc.).

- **Build community:** How you will attract fans (awareness building, advertising, promoting, appealing to a specific target audience, etc.) and keep them engaged (tailored content plans, tone, frequency and types of interactions, special offers and activities, etc.).
- **Qualify fans and convert them to customers:** How you will solicit information from users (surveys, contests, Facebook applications, conversation starters, measured content views, data mining and analytics, etc.) and use that insight to further the relationship (sales team involvement, product sampling, boosting the one-to-one nature of the conversation, etc.).
- **Improve customer satisfaction:** How you plan to offer exceptional service and support, and how you will go above and beyond their expectations.

Facebook

There are a number of good reasons for businesses to participate in and maintain a presence on Facebook. Here are a few:

- Get found by people who are searching for your products or services
- Connect and engage with current and potential customers
- Create a community around your business
- Promote other content you create, including webinars, blog articles, or other resources
- Generate leads for your business

On Facebook, **Profiles are meant for people, and Pages are meant for businesses.** Do not create a personal Profile for your business. Profiles are for people; Pages are for businesses. Facebook has built significant functionality specifically for businesses, and all of this functionality is only available for Pages. We'll talk about Pages more in a later section.

There are a few key differences between Business Pages and Personal Profiles:

- Pages allow you to designate multiple administrators so you can have more than one person help manage the account. In addition, if one of your administrators leaves the company, you can still have control over the Page.
- Pages are, by default, public, and are starting to rank in Facebook and public search results.
- Pages are split into different categories (local businesses, brands, musicians) that help you get listed in more relevant search results.
- Personal profiles have friends, which require mutual acceptance, whereas anyone can become a fan of your Page without needing administrator approval.

With a Facebook Page (essentially, a mini website on Facebook), you can post company news, announce events, offer tutorials, highlight videos, conduct polls, and create community with discussion boards.

Facebook Pages are good for building your brand and creating conversations, allowing users to get more deeply connected with your business.

Recent changes to Facebook Pages mean they're now more like personal profiles, with a real-time news stream and the ability to create your own specialized tabs. Facebook Pages are also searchable from outside Facebook, and they're easy to set up.

They're also potentially viral. That's because when Facebook members become "fans" of your site, your name and logo will appear on their personal-profile newsfeeds (your status updates—usually text-only messages—also appear in their newsfeeds). News Feed also tells their friends they've become a fan, which in turn (if they join) can alert their friends, creating a viral effect.

Settings:

Pick your settings carefully to manage your site. You can choose which tab will be your default landing page (e.g., you may want newcomers to land on your About page rather than your homepage), and whether you want more than one Admin to operate the Page. You can also allow readers to write on your wall and post photos, pics, and links (or not).

Create a compelling Page:

Make your Page as rich and compelling as possible. Facebook Pages are organized by tabs: dynamic information (see below) is in the "Wall" tab; the info tab contains static info such as your mission statement and website links; and Photos tab contains pics, fan photos, etc. The "boxes" tab is where you can add applications. You can choose up to six visible tabs, and more in the background.

Facebook has made many of its most popular applications available for tabs, including **Events**, **Reviews**, and **Discussions**. But you're not limited to those; you can create your own. Importantly, you can also choose any of these tabs as your landing page—if, for instance, you want new users to land on a special promotion (rather than your homepage).

The core of your Page is the "**Wall**," where readers post comments and engage in conversations and discussions. When your "fans" interact with your Facebook Page, their activities can show up in their friends' news streams, allowing you to keep reaching a wider circle of people. It is this viral nature of Facebook's news stream that makes it so powerful.

There are thousands of applications on Facebook that further help you share content and interact with others. To browse the applications you already might be using or to search for more

applications visit <http://facebook.com/applications> to browse available applications. Popular applications include Photos, Events, Movies, and Causes.

Research tool:

Most companies neglect this, but you can query and poll your audience.

Events:

Events are huge on Facebook Pages. You can list an event for a grand opening sale, upcoming promotion—or a big conference coming up, where your company is presenting. Encourage your fans to invite their friends, and watch the numbers grow (hopefully).

Resources:

One surefire way to get people returning is to continually offer good resources.

10 Facebook-for-Business Best Practices:

- 1. Be interactive, fun and helpful.** When people reach your Facebook page, they are looking for some kind of interaction. Don't disappoint them. As an example, a hardware company offered their Facebook fans links, applications, and engaging information, and within a short time, they added 26,000 fans!
- 2. Embed videos on your Facebook page.** There is no reason why you should send people to YouTube to watch your videos. Keep 'em right on your page with embedded videos!
- 3. Create a connection between Facebook and the outside world.** I recently read a case study about how sales reps worked with local retailers to promote their events through Facebook updates and photos. Consider something similar.
- 4. Create contests on Facebook.** Contests are a fun and engaging way to encourage participation from fans and even generate new fans. For example, in order to enter a contest, one company asked people to comment on a thread announcing a giveaway in Facebook.
- 5. Integrate traditional advertising with Facebook.** The Facebook icon/logo is well known. Add it to your print ads to promote your Facebook presence. Another great idea is to use traditional ads to promote contests that encourage people to sign up on your fan page.
- 6. Use Facebook to grow your email list, and vice versa.** Use your email newsletter to boost awareness of your Facebook page. In addition, promote your email newsletter to your existing Facebook fans. The end result will be growth in your email list *and* your Facebook fan base.
- 7. Introduce new products on Facebook first.** People who sign up to be fans of your Facebook page are likely your most loyal evangelists and customers. Reward them by giving them

information about a new product/service/feature before everyone else. If you do it right, they will help you promote it to others.

8. Welcome new page visitors. When thinking about Facebook, a new metric comes to mind: visitor-to-like. As a B2B company, you ultimately want to maximize the percentage of people who visit your Facebook Page and click the "Like" button. One important way to achieve this goal and establish expectations with new fans is to implement a 'welcome' landing page that invites new visitors to Like your Page. Technically, there are many ways to execute this. HubSpot customers, for example, can install the free Facebook Welcome Application

9. Integrate social content on your Facebook Page. Facebook is the gateway to the internet for many people. They use it as a home base. In fact, one in eight minutes on the internet is spent on Facebook. Because Facebook has become such an online home for people, it is important to incorporate content from other social channels like YouTube and SlideShare to extend the life and reach of that content.

10. 'Like' other businesses' Facebook Pages. Remember that social media is, well, social. By Liking the Pages of business partners, valued vendors, and customers, Facebook will notify the administrators of those Pages. In return, some of them may also decide to Like your Page, which will also expose it to the individual fans of their Pages. Think of this as leveraging Facebook for co-marketing efforts.

LinkedIn

Step1. Create your Personal Profile

Upload a professional image

This is your best opportunity to make a great first impression, and it is essential to attracting connections.

Create a compelling headline

You only have 120 characters at the top of your profile to describe what you do to the world and grab their attention. Use brief, descriptive, compelling keywords so the right professionals on LinkedIn can discover you.

List your current position and at least two past positions

Use descriptive keywords that you quoted in your headline if possible, and be sure to describe your role for each position.

Complete the "Summary" section of your profile

This is your chance to really describe who you are and how you help people. I recommend that you write your summary in the third person. Otherwise, you'll be using the letter "I" quite a bit, which can be off-putting.

Complete the "Specialties" section of your profile

Utilize customer-focused keywords, as these are the terms that will help you show up in search results within LinkedIn. When thinking about these keywords, brainstorm words and phrases that people in your target markets might search for to find someone with your background, experience, and service offering.

Give recommendations first

Request recommendations that can be displayed on your profile. The best way to receive recommendations is to first give them! Hint: You will need at least three recommendations in order for LinkedIn to label your profile “completed.”

Complete the “Interests” and “Groups and Associations” sections

Each of these terms will be hyper-linked and will take you to other users in the network who share these interests.

Step 2 Optimise your profile

Edit your public LinkedIn URL

An example of a personal LinkedIn URL, is <http://www.linkedin.com/in/yourname>. Such customization will optimize your LinkedIn profile to show up in search results on major search engines when someone searches for your name. It is important to claim those results for your name as they provide a gateway into your personal brand.

Customize your “website” listings

Under the “websites” section of your LinkedIn profile, you can list up to three URLs. Choose the “other” option when setting up each of these links and describe them with relevant terms. For example, rather than using the terms “my website,” I use “Smart Social Pro Blog.” Not only is this more descriptive, but it also gives me a better opportunity to rank for these keywords in search engines.

Include a link to your Twitter profile

You can have more than one Twitter account listed. Give folks an additional method to use to connect with you!

Make your entire LinkedIn profile publicly visible to everyone

You want other professionals on LinkedIn to be able to find you and contact you anytime. Being invisible won't help you build your network

Step3. Use LinkedIN Apps

SlideShare

Use this application to bring in presentations you've uploaded to Slide- Share. It gives you a chance to show expertise visually. Also, you can embed video or audio into your SlideShare presentation that will automatically play when someone visits your LinkedIn Profile. This can certainly be an effective way to make your profile stickier. Most likely, if the visitor hears your voice they will scroll down to this part of your profile

Reading List by Amazon

We are what we read. Don't miss this opportunity to create a window into your passions and interests by showcasing and reviewing your latest reads. Alternatively, when you are searching through profiles on LinkedIn for potential connections and introductions, you can glean the same insight about others if they have this application installed.

My Travel and Events

They give you the opportunity to showcase the part of your schedule that mostly involves connecting! You may want your connections to see where you are travelling and also the events you are attending. Don't miss any opportunities to meet a LinkedIn connection face-to-face.

WordPress or Blog Link

With these applications, you can automatically pull blog posts into your profile. If you are taking the time to create great content on your blog, you must get it out into the world.

Step 4 Setting up your Company Page

Inbound marketing on LinkedIn begins with ensuring that your company can be found in the LinkedIn Companies directory and your company can be "followed" by users who want to stay up-to-date with your organization. Especially with the release of the status update feature, LinkedIn Company Pages are quickly becoming an alternative free source of company information where you should absolutely be present. Should someone be searching for a company with your expertise, you want to ensure that they can find you. Follow these steps to be sure the best information is on display for potential customers:

Edit the description of your Company Page Overview

Make sure it is in sync with your company website. Add details about the value your company offers.

Add keywords within the Specialty Section

There is also an opportunity to enter 256 characters under the "Specialties" section. Make sure that any keywords for which you want your company to be found are here.

Pick your industry

You can choose a main company industry. Make sure you choose the most appropriate, as this is a field that may be used in a search to find your company.

List your location

There is also a search field for location. LinkedIn gives you the opportunity to enter up to five locations. Use this if your company is represented in multiple regions.

Link to your Blog RSS

Enter your corporate blog's RSS feed to showcase your latest blog entries

Post status updates

Make an effort to post regular status updates on your page, including links back to your website and blog. This is your chance to make your page dynamic and interactive, as well as send traffic back to your website.

Step5. Create a LinkedIn Group

The purpose of LinkedIn Groups is to allow those with similar interests to come together to discuss and share news on the topics that mutually interest them. LinkedIn Groups presents a discussions board, where it is possible to post a link to a web article of interest or simply engage in a conversation. Through groups, you can also do a member search and directly send a message to someone, provided they are using the default setting LinkedIn provides. In other words, by attracting your target demographic to your group, you can now directly engage with them regardless of your connectivity status.

There is one very important thing to consider that will make or break your group: its name. While using a social networking site, no LinkedIn user wants to be directly sold to. Therefore, in the spirit of inbound marketing, the name of your group should NOT be your company name. On Facebook or Twitter, it is wise to have a page or username that represents your company. On LinkedIn, however, you want to win the mindshare of your target audience and attract them to become members of your group. You can do so by naming your group appropriately.

Once the name of your group is chosen, it is important to brand it in a way that will be attractive to the target audience and different from your exact logo, while maintaining consistency with your established look and feel.

Step6. Promote your Group

Once you start a LinkedIn Group, what do you do next? It's all about promotion, and that starts with introducing your community to relevant professionals in your own LinkedIn network. This is where you are already at an advantage if many of your employees are already established users with LinkedIn connections.

Of course, your employees should only be introducing your group to those that are in your target demographic and would feel it is a valuable resource; otherwise, the innocent introduction of

your group could be perceived as spam. Here are some tips to help you promote your group:

Use other social media assets to promote your group

Promotion doesn't and shouldn't stop with just LinkedIn members. Once you begin to strategically engage in social media, you need to optimize your own website for social media. For the LinkedIn Group, it can be as simple as posting a logo and a link to your group in a prominent area of your website. In this way, your website visitors not only find out about your community, but they can also easily join it. If you have an email newsletter, don't forget to feature your group's logo there as well. An occasional tweet or Facebook post introducing your LinkedIn Group is another way to efficiently utilize social media to "advertise" your LinkedIn Group.

Keep LinkedIn group policies in mind

If you have ever been a member of a LinkedIn Group, you will know that many are filled with spammy link-building "discussions" that tarnish the atmosphere of the group and potentially the brand of the company sponsoring it. Social media marketing is really about relevance, so it is important to keep your group relevant by actively managing and keeping the irrelevant information out. Your first step in doing this is by creating a LinkedIn Group Policy.

LinkedIn has provided group managers with the ability to create a group policy under the title "Group Rules." It is here where you can set your expectations and rules for the group so that there are no misunderstandings with members should you need to remove them for posting spam. It is also a way to show your company's professional approach to managing the group, so Recommend you take an extra step and customize the template that LinkedIn provides you in welcoming new members to either list the group rules or remind them to read them

Create a LinkedIn group engagement strategy

Similar to how those who engage with your Facebook Page will help get your news noticed in each fan's personal news feed, engagement in your LinkedIn Group will be posted in members' network updates. So how does one foster group engagement?

When starting a group, you need to assume leadership by proactively starting conversations, posting relevant and timely news, and quickly reacting to the discussions and questions of others. This can be done in a time-effective manner by pre-scheduling some activities and utilizing LinkedIn's feature that allows group managers to receive updates about new discussions and comments the moment they happen. As membership grows, the discussions tend to become mostly self-generated, but it's still important to check the engagement volume on a regular basis and generate new discussions as needed.

LinkedIn Groups are powerful in that LinkedIn allows group managers to send out an announcement to all of its members at most once a week. This should not be used every week,

nor should it be used for purely self-promotional means. The LinkedIn community could perceive sending out announcements in this manner as spam, and it could give people reason to leave your group.

When should you use the announcement feature? Only when there is a strategic “event” that would be extremely relevant and timely to present to your target audience. For instance, you could announce that you’ll be exhibiting at a (physical) industry trade show and include a link that provides them a discount to attend. Have a free webinar or resourceful whitepaper that you are giving away? This may be something you want to announce as well. There is no one rule as to how often you should send announcements or what content should be included, but proper utilization of this feature can help your business maintain mindshare and strengthen your brand awareness within LinkedIn.

Step7. Create Thought Leadership

Use the following tools to help you develop thought leadership:

Status Updates

Just as tweets can be a powerful way of sharing your knowledge, so can the LinkedIn status update. While only your LinkedIn connections will see your status update in their network updates, you can display your status update for public visibility so that those who visit your profile can see what you are saying.

LinkedIn is not Twitter and it is not about quantity of updates, but rather quality. Aim for two to four updates a day on information that you find compelling or noteworthy. For instance, you can share news about your company that might be interesting to your target demographic. Note that businesses can also make updates via their Company Page,

LinkedIn Answers

LinkedIn Answers is a Q&A database submitted by LinkedIn users. Many businesses with real problems are posing questions on LinkedIn Answers because they know that answers will come from members of the professional community with real profiles attached to their names, not anonymous submissions from who-knows-who like on past internet Q&A sites. There are a total of 22 answer categories that cover most industries and disciplines, and some of these categories have multiple sub-categories

This is the forum for you and your company to display your expertise by responding to questions that appear in the category(s) where your target audience is most likely present. Not only do the answers you submit to LinkedIn Answers become part of your profile (should you want them to be), but they are also indexed by Google and thus may come up in future search results. Furthermore, if the answer you provide is chosen as the “Best Answer” by the person who submitted the question, you have the potential of being listed as an “Expert” on the page of your target category and/or sub-category.

LinkedIn allows you to create a widget on your homepage through which you can subscribe to an Answers category, or you can simply import the RSS feed into the reader of your choice. All it takes is a once-a-day check to stay on top of your category for chances for your organization to display expertise.