



SOCIAL MEDIA 101

FOR DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES



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1 INTRO TO SOCIAL MEDIA

Especially in the age of e-commerce and digital marketing, social media tools can be a small business's best friend because they're simple, free, and the potential economic impact is immense. Here are some of the most common reasons why small businesses use social media:

- Social media offers low-cost/free brand recognition to clients and customers.
- Social media offers low-cost advertising opportunities that allow a business to target specific demographics or geographic areas AND it tracks important analytics.
- Social media is responsive, allowing businesses to build relationships with clients and customers with real-time communication and updates.
- Social media has easy tools to promote events and promotions AND even supports the sale of products and services either innately or through third-party services.

Here are some tips & tricks to using social media for your business.

PICK YOUR APP

- Facebook** This app is the most quickly-growing amongst older populations, with over 60% of Boomers using it, 74% of Gen X'ers, and 84% of Millennials. This is the most popular social media platform worldwide to date.
- Instagram** Over 1 billion users log into this app monthly worldwide with most of its popularity in the U.S..The majority of users are female and 1/3 are within the age range of 25-34.
- Twitter** This app is 13th in popularity worldwide with its top country for use being the U.S. with 68.7 million users. The majority of users are male and 31% of U.S. Twitter users earn over \$75k a year.
- LinkedIn** This app is top for employers and boasts users of both education and affluence. The majority of users worldwide are 25-34 and male with over 174 million users in the U.S.
- Pinterest:** 98% of people worldwide use Pinterest to try new things, 89% use it to inspire purchases and 85% of Pinners use the social media platform to start a new project. Ove 60% of users are women with the largest demographic between 30-39, though Gen Z'er use is increasing.
- YouTube:** This is the second most used platform worldwide with over 60 billion users. Over 72% of all male internet users in the U.S. use this app, which is also the same for females. 77% of internet users between 15-25 use this app in the U.S.
- Others:** Other social media apps exist but those listed above are the most common. Some professionals also consider email apps - like MailChimp or Constant Contact - as part of their "social media" strategies as well.

[Social Media Demographics Reports](#)



[In October 2020, social media users across the globe passed the 4 billion mark.](#)

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FIND YOUR CONTENT

It may feel like a burden on some days to identify what on earth to post about to your followers across social media platforms. Some people develop a "content calendar" and some wing it in the moment; whichever path you choose, you're surrounded by quality content!

- Products** Unseen products won't get sold. Feature products new and old with photos, info, pricing, and how to purchase. Offering a new product line? Let's see it. Received a new toy or dress? Snap a pic and post it. Have a new dish on the menu? Invite social media users inside your business by showing them your inventory.
- Services** Do you provide a service to clients or customers? Share what you offer through social media graphics, photos, video, and more. Can you special order products for customers? Do you have a space for alterations? Do you deliver? Let your followers know all the avenues available to them to support your business.
- Business Space** Did you just place your sandwich board outside letting pedestrians know you're open? Did you flip a sign on your door so folks know they can come in? Share the same courtesy with your social media followers - snap a pic of your storefront, your interior, a shelving makeover, signage, tables for dining, or more and encourage sales!
- Your Team** Businesses don't run themselves - it's the people that make the difference! Introduce members of your team to your social media followers. Allow folks to see you in action, running your business. Especially for small businesses, interpersonal relationships make a big difference in the conversion of sales; it's the difference between a first-time customer and a returning one!
- Your Clients/Customers:** Celebrate the people who support you. Did you land a new contract? Grab coffee with a client? Welcome a new customer to the shop? Extend gratitude and uplift your personality by sharing the stories of your clients and customers.
- Local, Regional, & National Holidays & Celebrations:** This is easy; mark your calendar for occasions you want to acknowledge with your business - like, Black History Month, Thanksgiving, Small Business Saturday, Memorial Day, and more - and share content that's related.
- Your City:** Downtown Marietta is a treasure trove of photo opportunities; snap a pic of the river, of a streetscape, of murals and fellow businesses, of historic markers, and more and share with your customers the beauty of your business location. Don't forget your own storefront!
- Events & Promotions:** Are you hosting a special sale or promotion? Are you participating in a downtown event like First Friday? Make sure your clients and customers on social media know what you're doing, when they can support you, and the special events and promotions you're offering to them.

Can't think of original content? Share content from a fellow business owner or from Marietta Main Street!



There really is no such thing as posting too often on social media. Posting daily, even 2-3 times a day, is normal!

SO, YOU'RE NOT A PHOTOGRAPHER?

Social media platforms are a tool for telling the story of your business; photography is a conduit for how clients and customers learn about you, your mission, and your products/services. Quality photographer can make a big difference in whether revenue is generated from any single post, so investing in thoughtful photos is important. But, you don't need to be a photographer to share great pics using your phone.

- **Pay attention to lighting.** Try to have as much natural or artificial light on your subject as possible - natural light is ideal. However, do not place the subject directly in front of a window or light source, since that will make them appear dark. And it's usually best to NOT use flash.
- **Focus the shot.** On most phones, a user can tap on the phone screen while taking a photo to focus on the subject. Make sure your photo showcases your subject clearly! For example, a product photo in your hand, focused, with a background of other products will highlight the subject more clearly than taking a photo of the product on a shelf with items surrounding it.
- **Frame the shot.** If possible, make sure there isn't unnecessary clutter in front of or behind the subject (person, building, object, etc. - the focus of the shot). Either remove the clutter (jackets on the ground, cups on a table) or reposition yourself. Tip: Add items that might enhance the shot!
- **Snap pics at eye level.** When taking photos of people, try to position yourself and the phone at their eye level. Or, with products, level yourself and the phone to view the item straight on.
- **Don't zoom in.** Don't use your fingers on your phone screen to zoom the subject in or out. Doing this reduces the image quality. Instead, position yourself closer to the subject, or crop the image afterward prior to posting on social media.
- **Don't use filters when taking a photo.** Don't use any phone or app filters when taking photos. However, shooting in portrait mode can be nice for close-ups of people. Filters can be applied afterward if needed, and photos can be edited using built-in options or app options.
- **You can never have too many photos.** To make sure you have enough good shots to work with, take a few different shots at a few different angles and at various distances (close up and further away). It's also good to have a variety of vertical and horizontal shots. Also, remember not to shoot in square or panoramic.
- **Real photos are better than stock photos.** If you have a real product in your hand or real people in your presence, it's far better to take photos of those real-life subjects than to use stock photography. It builds trust with the customer/client that your social media portrays a real experience, and it showcases the life of your business in a more genuine way.
- **Find social media accounts that inspire you and try to do what they do.** Do you follow other social media accounts that have photography? Don't invent the wheel if you don't have to - give a nod to your photography "role models" and see if you can snap pics like they do!

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TIPS & TRICKS

Growing strong, engaging social media platforms takes time, consistency, and trial & error to figure out what works best for your audience. And, social media is just one tool in your marketing toolkit - it can be hugely effective, but there's no need to stress or worry!

Check out the below tips that might help using social media for your business a tad easier.

- Be yourself.** Your personality, products, and services are what makes your business unique and why your clients and customers stick by your side. Don't be afraid to inject your personality into your social media accounts!
- Benchmark against yourself. You are your own competition.** Do you want more followers? Do you want more engagement on social media? Set individual goals - weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually - to help get you where you want to be on social media. Track the metrics that matter to you; there are SO many, so choose one or two, and don't get overwhelmed!
- Show off your customer service skills.** Utilize your social media apps to provide great customer service to clients/customers. Respond to messages in a timely fashion, share gratitude for positive reviews, and answer questions on posts.
- Ensure your information is updated.** If a customer is looking for your hours, a phone number, or a website, they'll likely search the internet first. Google, Facebook, Instagram, and more are all sought after to gain info on businesses. Make sure your info is accurate seasonally.
- Build social media into your daily schedule of operating your business.** Don't let social media be an afterthought; make it a part of your daily routine. Practice makes perfect. It's a worthy investment, especially as more and more consumers are looking for a digital shopping experience.
- Respect your branding.** In the spirit of maintaining updated and accurate social media accounts, businesses should ensure branding is a part of that strategy. Utilize your logo, colors, fonts, and messaging thoughtfully and appropriately. For example, a logo is the best use for your profile picture on Facebook as opposed to a product photo. Don't add any hurdles for clients or customers in recognizing who you are on social media!

Have questions? Don't hesitate to reach out to each other or to Main Street! We're all in this together.

