

The Fundamental Guide to **Lead Generation**



Executive Summary

Lead generation: the process of procuring external interest in a product, service, or solution for the purpose of kickstarting the sales cycle.

Lead generation is an age-old concept, originating in (and prospering in) word-of-mouth marketing tactics that were leveraged for hundreds of years. Then there were billboards and decals. Then, with the industrial revolution, came the development of the printing press—unlocking a new form of lead generation—the newspaper. Then, over the past hundred years of technological development, we've further witnessed the introduction of magazines, radio, TV, email, and finally, the internet. Today, lead generation is explicitly tied to the internet. Within the internet lies a breadth of social marketing channels and digital communication tools.

Lead generation has also become essential. If your business operates in the B2B space, then lead generation must be at the forefront of your sales and marketing efforts. Without a well constructed strategy, you run the risk of failing to deliver your value proposition to prospective clients, and you also risk losing the resulting business to competing or alternative offerings.

The stakes are high.

Fortunately, this guide will provide an in-depth exploration of every lead generation tactic and strategy that's currently available to modern marketers. From product-led growth, to content marketing, to account-based strategies, you will find it all within the pages of this guide.

Though not all of these tactics and strategies can be leveraged simultaneously, you should utilize this guide as a tool to evaluate various lead generation alternatives and construct an integrated communications strategy that aligns with your organization and your unique goals.

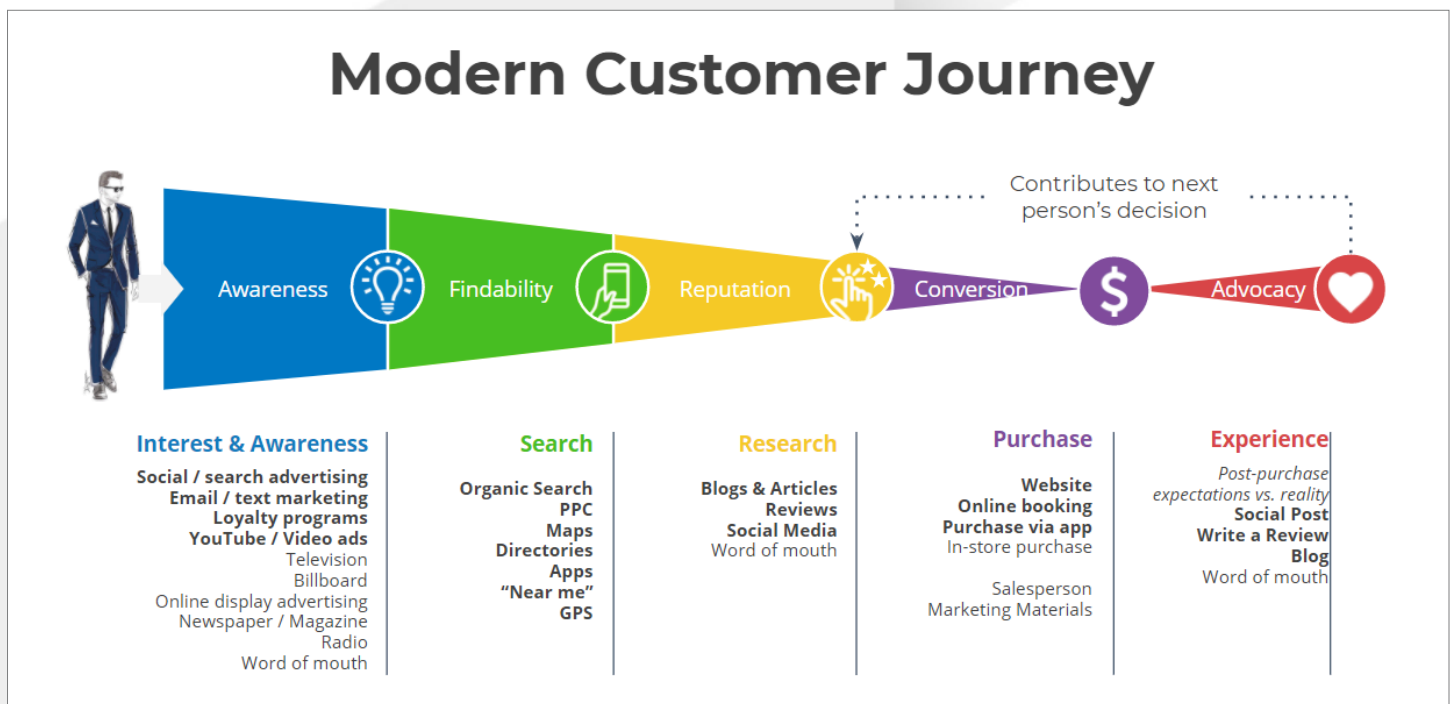
What is Lead Generation?

Simply put, lead generation is the systematic process of acquiring new business interest.

That being said, it's important to clarify that lead generation is different from sales or business acquisition as it is not explicitly tied to the procurement of new business. As a matter of fact, lead generation has become an inherently B2B term, corresponding to the acquisition of interest at any point along the buyer's journey.

The modern buyer's journey is comprised of five primary steps, those being:

1. Interest and awareness
2. Search
3. Research
4. Purchase
5. And experience

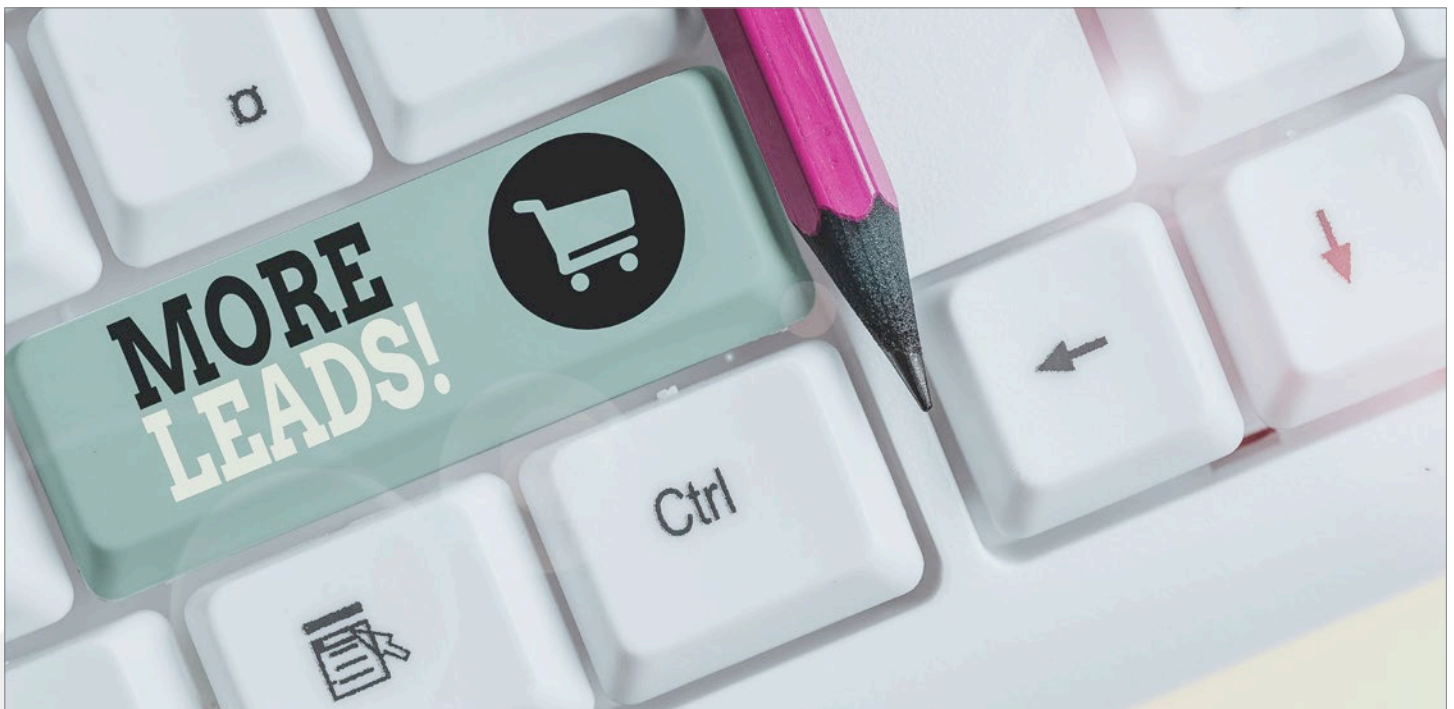


Lead generation tactics and strategies can be leveraged at any stage of the buyer's journey. Now, before we get into the purpose of lead generation and the specific tactics you can deploy, there are a few additional definitions that you should add to your repertoire.

Lead: A lead is a viable customer/client for your business or offering. This viability can be determined based on any number of demographic or firmographic factors and must be assessed on a case to case basis.

Marketing qualified lead (MQL): An MQL is generally a prospect that has been deemed "tall enough to ride the ride," meaning that they've exhibited interest in your offering and meet the initial customer requirements.

Sales qualified lead (SQL): An SQL is any lead that has been successfully vetted by both the sales and marketing teams and deemed to be ready for the next stage of the sales process. SQLs occur in organizations that have complex offerings and tiered sales processes.



Product qualified lead (PQL): This is a newer school of thought that aligns with the notion of product-led growth. A PQL is defined as any prospect that has experienced true value through a free trial or free version of your product offering. Under this model, less selling is required as the prospects have experienced value before they are sold on an upgrade.

Leads can be generated at any of these levels, or can graduate to these levels through the proper nurturing tactics. But before we get into those tactics, let's briefly explore the history of lead generation.

Lead Generation: A Brief History

Lead generation is not new. Though the terminology may be, people and businesses alike have been leveraging lead generation tactics since the market days of the middle ages.



Here is a quick overview of lead generation over the centuries:

- 25 BC - 500 AD: Roman markets are bustling with people and the tact for word-of-mouth marketing is refined.
- 1400s: The Gutenberg press is invented.
- 1800s: Coloured billboards and posters are created and the telegraph is used for marketing.
- Early 1900s: Door-to-door selling boom and radio/TV marketing make their introduction.
- Mid 1900s: Call centers become a marketing staple, TV continues to prosper, and email marketing enters the scene.
- Late 1900s: The first ever CRMs are developed, the internet is invented, and internet marketing begins to take flight.
- 2000s: The social media phenoms are born, mobile phones and mobile apps are invented, and information becomes more accessible and democratized than was ever possible before.

Source: [Brand Driven Digital](#)

It's important to understand the history of lead generation, because history provides an explanation of why we are where we are today.

Why Lead Generation is Essential

Lead generation is not new. Though the terminology may be, people and businesses alike have been leveraging lead generation tactics since the market days of the middle ages.

For B2B businesses in 2020, to simply “do marketing” is not enough. Running a Facebook ads campaign and writing blogs without any rhyme or reason is not enough. If you want to succeed in the modern era, your business must methodically set objectives and execute marketing programs with surgical precision.

There are three primary reasons why lead generation is absolutely essential to your business:

1. Lead generation tactics force you to clarify your target audience and your unique selling proposition(s).
2. Taking a lead generation approach to marketing ensures that analytics and objectives are at the heart of your effort.
3. Lead generation directly impacts sales and business outcomes.

Data needs to govern the scope of your efforts and inform your decisions. In fact, a study of [1,070](#) companies by LeadCrunch found that only 4 percent of them used a data-driven approach to generating leads, but that this same 4 percent outperformed their competition by greater than 500 percent in terms of sales productivity and efficiency. That is the lead generation way, and that is why it's SO essential to your business success.

The Future of Lead Generation

It's difficult to say for sure, but my intuition says: mass personalization. The founder and CEO of LeadCrunch.ai puts it like this:

"The future of lead generation will be defined by the unprecedented ability for artificial intelligence to find high-precision targets, then qualify them at machine speed and scale."

There was a time when marketing was all about mass communication; getting your message out to the greatest volume of people at a minimal cost. However, with the growth in technological advancement and the introduction of artificial intelligence in marketing technology, it is now becoming possible to tailor the prospect experience more than ever before and to do it at scale.

This is the future that technology is enabling, and this is also the future that customers are demanding.





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Summary

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Lead Generation

Social Media Marketing



1. Social Media Marketing

What is social media marketing?

Social media marketing can be described as all efforts made to promote your brand through both paid and organic social media avenues. Social media marketing occurs on a variety of platforms, some of the most prominent B2B ones being: Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter.

If properly deployed, social media marketing should be an integral part of a comprehensive marketing strategy and should serve to build your brand, better communicate with your audience, and drive your sales and marketing outcomes.

Social media marketing can be broken out into five core pillars:

- High-level strategy
- Planning and publishing
- Listening and engagement
- Analytics and reporting
- Advertising

This chapter of The Comprehensive Guide to Lead Generation will explore how to deploy integrated B2B social strategies that touch on all five of these pillars.

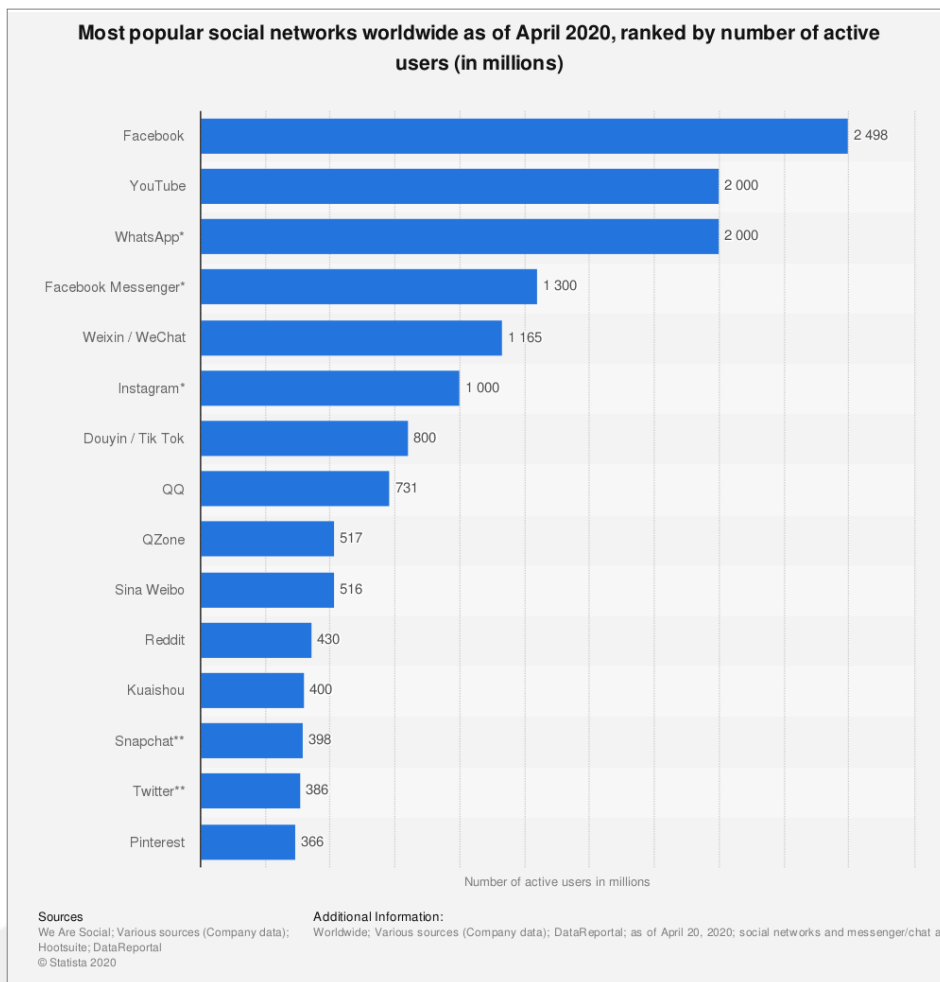
Why is social media marketing important?

Social media is the future of collaboration, communication, and socialization. Social media marketing is quite likely a major determiner of future B2B success. Here are some of the top reasons why every business should be leveraging social media as part of their marketing and advertising strategy.

1. Your audience is on social

Top social media channels are home to hundreds of millions (if not billions) of monthly active users. Growing an organic audience on some of these platforms should be a chief priority for all B2B marketers, and leveraging paid channels can be a cost effective and focussed way to further amplify that reach.

Here is a breakdown of social media platform users around the world:



Source: SproutSocial

Though certain platforms cater to slightly different user bases, you can be sure that your audience calls at least a few of these platforms home. For example, if you're a software company that's aiming to connect with financial professionals, then LinkedIn is going to be the best vehicle for doing so. However, if you're a photographer looking to market your work and generate new leads, then Instagram will be a better fit for you.

2. Drive multiple business outcomes

Social networks used to be hubs for people that wanted to connect and share content with their friends. Then businesses realized the potential in connecting with their audiences through these platforms. Today, social networks help businesses do everything from lead generation to customer service.

Here are just a few ways that social media can be used to drive business outcomes:

- **Monitoring.** Through mention tracking, modern social media platforms (like Facebook) enable businesses to monitor conversations that are happening surrounding their brands so that they can collect feedback, stay relevant, and engage in the discussion.
- **Reach.** Social media is one of the fastest vehicles for both building and growing an audience. Whether through the use of hashtags/shares in organic marketing, or by injecting some cash for paid promotion, social is one of the most cost effective ways to place your message in front of an interested and engaged audience.
- **Insights.** Built-in page analytics and ads dashboards allow business accounts to acquire real-time feedback on different messaging, identify top performing content, and constantly monitor overall performance.
- **Support.** Business pages have become major focal points for customers that are looking to receive after-purchase support and service. Staying active on these channels is a critical component in executing a comprehensive social media marketing strategy.

3. Build your brand

Brands are the lifeblood of businesses. They allow consumers to build emotional connections with the businesses that they interact with.

Social media is unique because it allows businesses to express more brand attributes than other (more traditional) formats did. Where brands used to be built on radio jingles, newspaper advertorials, and what people had told their friends; social media has since allowed brands to connect with consumers at a greater depth than ever before.

Here are a few reasons why social media is a special branding mechanism:

- Social platforms serve to reinforce brand continuity when properly aligned with web and other consumer facing media.
- Frequency is a key determiner in shifting consumer attitudes and motivating action, and frequent brand experiences can be created with minimal resources through organic social media marketing and low cost social media advertising.
- Social media can build trust and communicate a greater degree of authenticity. Stuffy corporate content doesn't work on social media. Instead, businesses should focus on fostering a strong brand voice, communicating values, sharing cultural content, and readily engaging with consumers.



Source: Instagram @vendasta

4. Social media marketing is cost effective

By cost, I mean time, resources, and money. In comparison to other programs, social media marketing presents one of the greatest opportunities to optimize all three of these costs.

In terms of time, a HubSpot study determined that [84 percent](#) of marketers were able to significantly increase their website traffic with as little as six hours of social media related labour per week.

In terms of resources, most businesses can build a social media program without the need for any outside technologies or services. However, for those that want to pursue more aggressive social media growth, scheduling software like [Social Marketing](#) or Hootsuite can remove a lot of toil for your team. And if your team is still looking for more, you can always hire an agency to fulfill your social media marketing and digital advertising needs. Find out more [here](#).

In terms of direct costs, there are none associated with an organic campaign. However, paid campaigns can easily be scaled to match your budget and demand requirements. In 2020, the average social media advertising spend for B2B businesses ranged anywhere from [\\$200-\\$50,000](#).

If properly leveraged, social media is the gateway to stronger client relationships. Being active on these major social media channels is critical not just to drive awareness, but also to provide valuable customer feedback channels, and to drive additional conversions and sales.

5. Lead generation happens here

At the end of the day, the outcome of all B2B marketing and advertising efforts is lead generation. Fortunately, social media is one of the most powerful mediums for achieving this end.

Here are the stats:

- [74 percent](#) of people rely on social networks to help with their purchase decisions.
- [80 percent](#) of B2B leads originate from LinkedIn alone.
- Revenue increases for [24 percent](#) of businesses when leveraging social media for lead generation.
- [53 percent](#) of businesses believe that social media will be the best source of leads in the future.

What is the future of social media marketing?

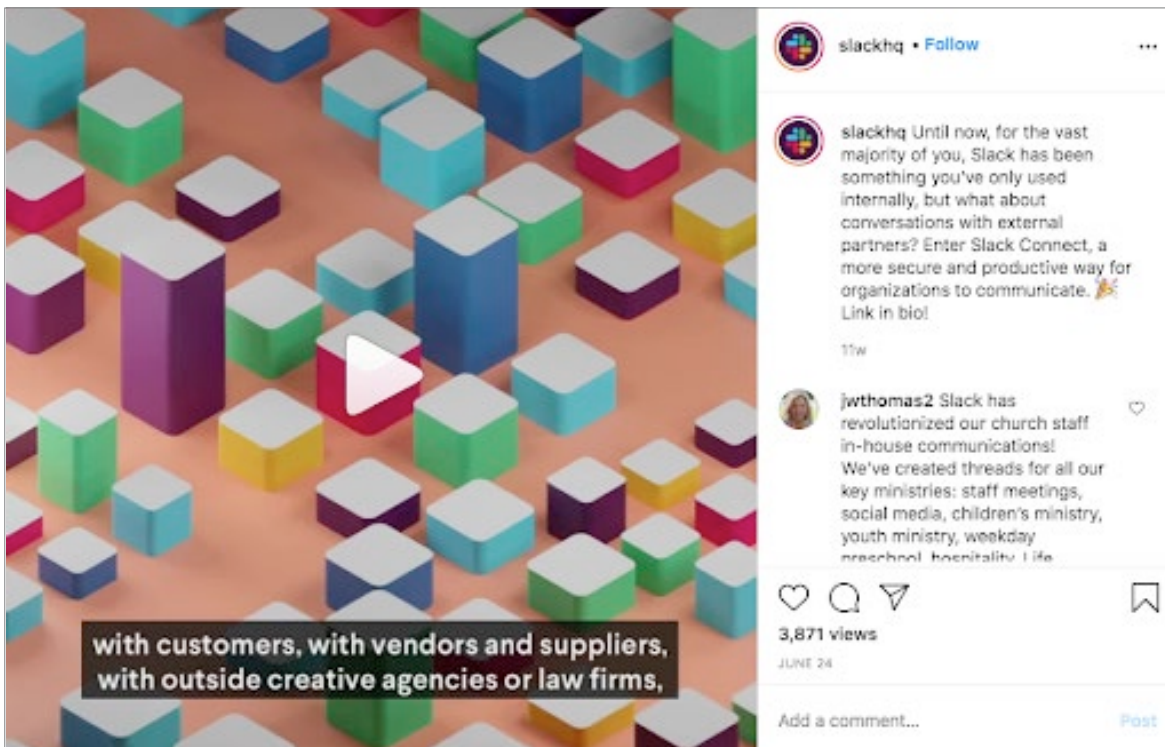
Social media is one of the most rapidly changing landscapes in the world. Twenty years ago the term had barely been conceptualized. Ten years ago, Facebook ran the world. Today, most consumers subscribe to 9 different social media platforms and spend over two hours per day using those platforms. And new challenger platforms are rapidly emerging (TikTok?).

Three of the most prevalent trends that will be sure to effect the future of social media marketing are as follows.

1. Video dominance

According to a study by Adobe, 52 percent of marketing professionals claim that video content generates the strongest ROI as compared to all other content formats.

Video is the optimal platform for everything from explainer videos, to feature releases, to exclusive behind-the-scenes content, to product testimonials, and everything in between.



Source: Instagram @slackhq

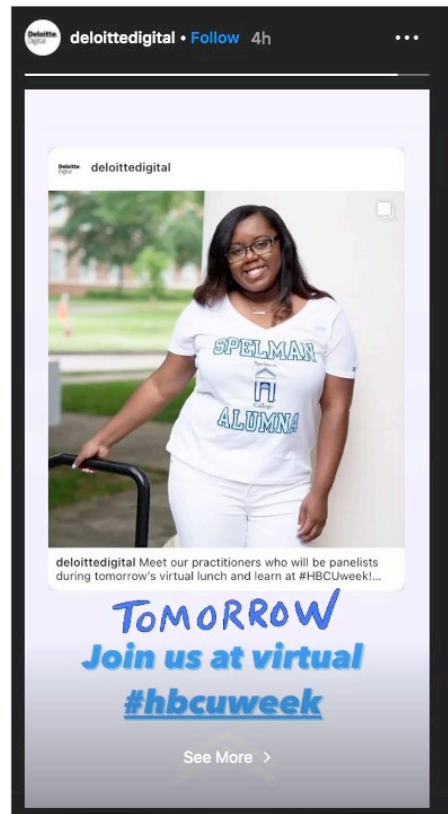
2. Limited accessibility content

Also known as ephemeral content, this is any content that has a limited lifespan or an expiration date. In other words, the usage of story posts on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok. Additionally, platforms like LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and Skype are also working on integrating story style features into their product suites.

Ephemeral content is effective because it provokes a sense of urgency in consumers. It also provides a higher involvement marketing format, from which users can interact with custom lenses, GIF integrations, polls, consumer drawing functionality, and more. Additionally, stories allow brands to share more bite-sized content that might not be suitable for full posts, such as: brief educational posts, quotes from articles, event promotion, and exciting cultural content.

Deloitte Digital is a brand that has mastered the art of ephemeral content:

Source: Instagram @deloittedigital



3. More influencer marketing

This one might have you rejoicing, or it might have you rolling your eyes. I fall somewhere on the latter side, but the numbers don't lie.

Here's what you need to know about influencer marketing:

- It's a [10 billion dollar](#) industry.
- [63 percent](#) of consumers trust influencer messages more than branded messages.
- In a study conducted by Convince and Convert, [58 percent](#) of participants said that they purchased a product in the past six months as a result of an influencer recommendation.

These numbers are only expected to climb as the purchase power of Gen Z continues to grow, and these younger consumers continue to embrace influencers wholeheartedly.

The following sections will explore the case and strategy for social media marketing on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

1.1 Facebook Organic

Pros:

1. **It's free!**
2. **Your audience is more inclined to trust organic content.** If someone has willingly followed your branded Facebook account, then they are much more likely to engage with your content as opposed to an unsolicited newsfeed ad.
3. **Question posts.** If you're looking to gather audience insights/ feedback, or do quick and dirty consumer research, Facebook is a great place to do so. The trick is to keep your questions short and to the point.
4. **Video reigns supreme.** If your business is creating lots of original video content, then there is an opportunity for you to improve traffic and engagement. Short-form videos are effective for diverting traffic to other pages (like your blog), long-form videos will garner the greatest reach and engagement, and live videos are most effective for collecting data or engaging followers immediately.
5. **Facebook groups.** Facebook marketers should create their own business group, plus join and actively engage with other Facebook groups. This is a great way to build meaningful relationships with users and prospects.

Cons:

1. **Reduced reach.** Recent algorithm changes have dramatically limited the reach that business account holders had come to expect from organic posts. In fact, organic post reach is currently hovering around the 1 percent to 6 percent range.
2. **External link limitations.** Sharing content that originates outside of the platform, such as your blog, your YouTube page, or otherwise will be given the least reach and the least resulting engagement.
3. **User preference.** Where Facebook was once the ruler of social media, it now carries a largely negative user perception, due to the scandals, data breaches, and ad infestations that have wrought the platform over recent years.



How to launch an organic Facebook campaign

1. Perform a page audit

Facebook business pages are robust. It's important to have your account set up as a business page and have properly filled out all of the relevant sections. It might seem mundane, but some simple tweaks will go a long way towards improving your online brand perception.

Some of the most important sections for most B2B businesses include:

- Completing your “about” tab so that users and prospects who discover you for the first time can quickly understand your business. Contact info is critical; about, company overview, story, products, and business categories are high priority. Information, such as the founding date and your mission statement, can help to round out the page.
- Ensure you have a high resolution logo/profile picture, and an eye-catching and creative wallpaper image that also serves to explain your offering.
- If you haven't been closely monitoring the reviews page, then this is a great place to go to better understand what customers are saying about you. If your review score is below a 4 out of 5, then it is something you need to work at so that you don't risk deterring future traffic.
- Photos provide a quick gauge as to whether or not your team has been successful in creating a branded experience across your recent posts. A quick scroll through all of the photos on your page will provide insight into things like color usage, vector usage vs image usage, and just the overall brand impression that your page is creating. Great pages should have a clearly defined brand experience that can be easily seen by scrolling through the page photos.

2. Set growth goals

Depending on your industry, a lot of business happens on Facebook. Unfortunately, determining and measuring ROI can prove challenging with organic social media tactics. That's why it's imperative that you set clear and measurable goals for all of your efforts.

Here are some steps to help you set great goals on Facebook:

1. Start with a broad objective.
 - a. Increase local engagement and build a stronger brand community.
 - b. Generate leads for a new product or service offering.
 - c. Generate leads for the core product or service offering.

2. Apply the SMART framework.
 - a. Specific. Clearly stated and simplified.
 - b. Measurable. One or more metrics can easily be applied.
 - c. Achievable. Possible within your current resource scope.
 - d. Realistic. Are you reaching for the stars or setting objectives that fall within your core competencies.
 - e. Timely. Define your timeframe, be it weeks, months, or a year.

3. Apply metrics to your SMART goal. Once you've beefed up your objective with the SMART principle, you need to identify specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and metrics that will measure your success. Each objective will have unique KPIs that are worth reporting, and these should be rather easy to determine. Here are a couple examples:
 - a. Increase brand awareness on Facebook by generating a 30 percent increase in website clicks over a one month span.
 - i. KPIs: post reach, total page impressions, profile page link clicks
 - b. Generate 10 leads for "x" new products over the next 30 days by posting on Facebook once per day.
 - i. KPIs: post link clicks, post engagement, post reach

Some broader (Facebook specific) goals that could be applied to the SMART framework include:

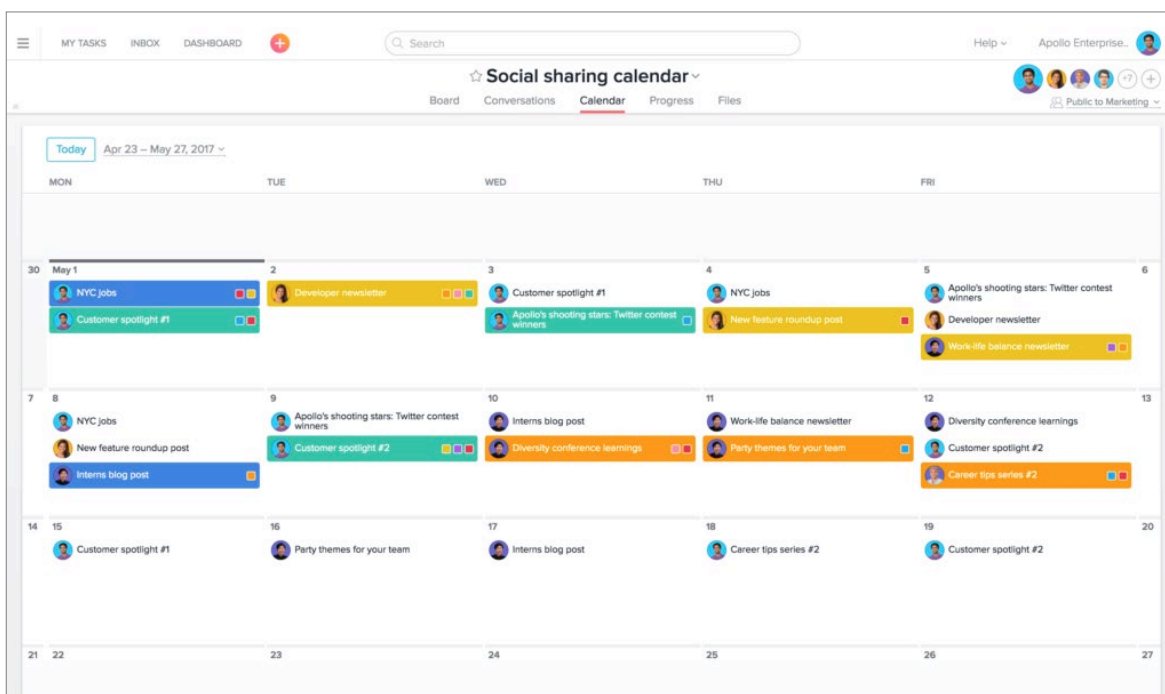
- Increase engagement through shares specifically (since Facebook posts tend to earn more shares than those on other platforms)
- Build feedback loops by creating and maintaining a Facebook group
- Uphold great customer service by interacting and engaging with customers and prospects

3. Construct a content calendar

Frequency is a major consideration in the Facebook algorithm. That's why businesses need to be active in order to optimize their organic reach. The best way to do so is by building a content calendar. Content calendars can also ensure that you stay on track with your objectives.

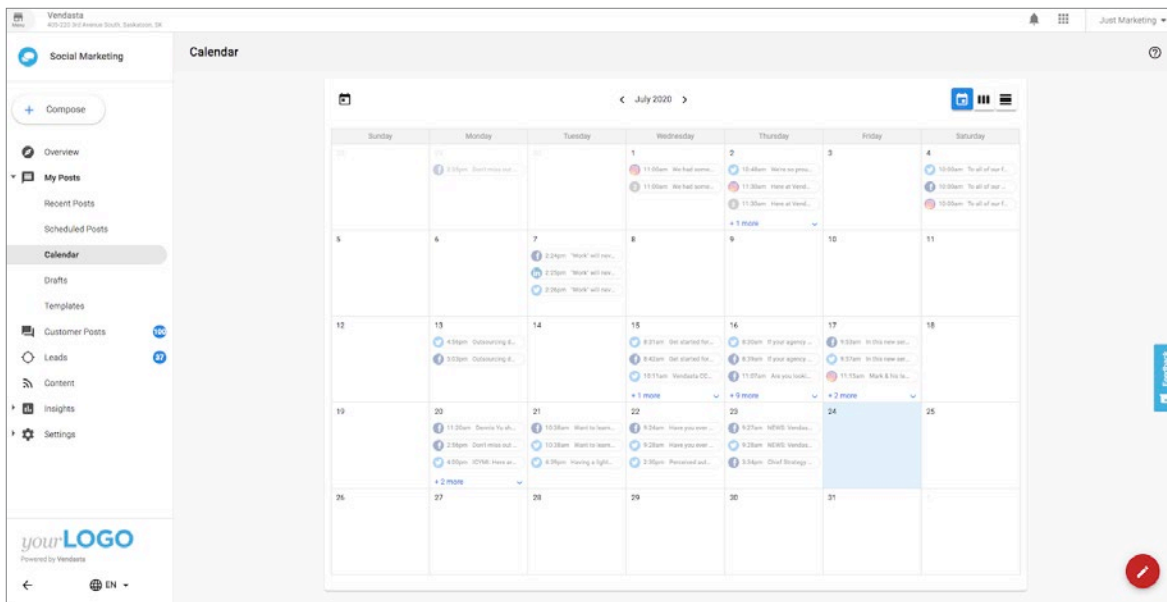
There are a few ways you can go about building a content calendar. Firstly, you can create your own via spreadsheets.

Secondly, you can look to leverage project management technology like Trello or Asana to build a content calendar. These platforms are very user friendly and often have necessary functionality in a free tier, but they are not capable of translating your calendar into actual social posts.



Source: Asana Blog

Thirdly, you can use scheduling software to build a content calendar, and schedule your social posts in advance. This option is by far the most efficient use of time and resources, but generally comes with a price tag. Example solutions include HubSpot, Hootsuite, and Vendasta.



Source: Vendasta's Social Marketing

In order to avoid duplicate work, you're likely going to want to include all of your organic social platforms in this calendar. The following sections will refer back to this process and these suggestions.

4. Perform a post audit

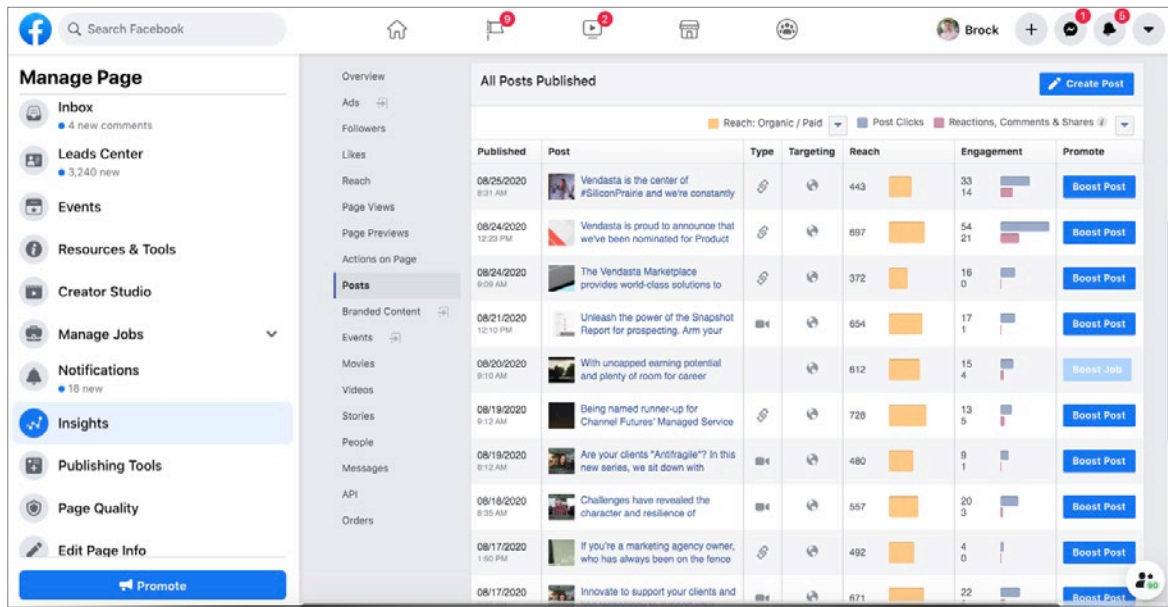
One of the greatest benefits to organic social marketing with Facebook is the breadth of information that's available to business users. You should take advantage of this data by performing an audit on your top performing posts to benchmark your successes, as well as identify winning content, tactics, and techniques.

Here's how to perform a quick post audit:

1. Navigate to insights on the left sidebar.
2. Click on the posts section.
3. Analyze your recent posts based on desired metrics (reach, clicks, engagements, etc).
4. Identify top performers.
5. Do some research on average social performance metrics of others in your industry and compare against yours.
6. Begin to look for trends and similarities that might separate your top performers from the rest of the pack.
7. Try to replicate these successes in future posts.
8. Compare performance and continue to benchmark against

previous post performance.

Source: Vendasta's Facebook



The screenshot shows the Facebook 'Manage Page' interface. On the left is a navigation menu with options like 'Inbox', 'Leads Center', 'Events', 'Resources & Tools', 'Creator Studio', 'Manage Jobs', 'Notifications', 'Insights', 'Publishing Tools', 'Page Quality', and 'Edit Page Info'. The main area is titled 'All Posts Published' and contains a table of posts. The table has columns for 'Published', 'Post', 'Type', 'Targeting', 'Reach', 'Engagement', and 'Promote'. Each row represents a post with its date, content, type, targeting, reach, engagement, and a 'Boost Post' button.

Published	Post	Type	Targeting	Reach	Engagement	Promote
08/25/2020 8:31 AM	Vendasta is the center of #SiliconPrairie and we're constantly			443	33 14	Boost Post
08/24/2020 12:23 PM	Vendasta is proud to announce that we've been nominated for Product			697	54 21	Boost Post
08/24/2020 9:09 AM	The Vendasta Marketplace provides world-class solutions to			372	18 0	Boost Post
08/21/2020 12:10 PM	Unleash the power of the Snapshot Report for prospecting. Arm your			654	17 1	Boost Post
08/20/2020 9:10 AM	With uncapped earning potential and plenty of room for career			612	15 4	Boost Job
08/19/2020 9:12 AM	Being named runner-up for Channel Futures' Managed Service			728	13 5	Boost Post
08/19/2020 8:12 AM	Are your clients "Antifragile"? In this new series, we sit down with			480	9 1	Boost Post
08/18/2020 8:35 AM	Challenges have revealed the character and resilience of			557	20 3	Boost Post
08/17/2020 1:50 PM	If you're a marketing agency owner, who has always been on the fence			492	4 0	Boost Post
08/17/2020	Innovate to support your clients and			671	22	Boost Post

5. Get posting

Now it's time to leverage that content calendar you've created, and take the lessons you've learned from assessing your top posts, and put those into action with new social content.

Here are a few posting tips:

- Mix up your post formats. Over the years, Facebook has expanded the posting options available to users. Today, B2B companies can leverage text posts, video posts, embedded link posts, live posts, story posts (image or video), as well as the full suite of ad offerings.
- Try upping the ante with your image and video content. For example, this might mean experimenting with new tricks on photoshop to add a little pizzazz.
- Experiment with posting at different times of the day.
- Experiment with your posting tempo. As long as you are posting at least five times a week, experiment with higher post volumes (some have reported effectiveness with up to four posts per day).
- Never use engagement bait or other spam tactics.
- Try and evoke an emotional appeal (unless it would be very off-brand). Think of the last Nike ad you saw and try to emulate some of the techniques that were used.
- Try running a contest.
- Try posting user generated content.

Bonus: Try the dollar-a-day strategy

This strategy ventures somewhat beyond the bounds of typical organic Facebook marketing, but can be a great way to utilize a little bit of budget to increase your reach and more readily identify your best posts. Coined by Dennis Yu, CEO and Founder of BlitzMetrics, this strategy employs a technique of boosting your top social media posts with a one dollar per-day bid and amplifying that spend on posts with viral potential.

Here's how it works:

1. Create great posts that share original content and genuine knowledge (Dennis Yu suggests video content of yourself specifically).
2. Identify your top performers. Dennis suggests that for a post to be considered great, it should have an above average reach and be generating engagements at 10 percent of that overall reach.
3. Select the right target audience for each post that you decide to boost. If you're a marketing agency and are posting about digital marketing strategy, then selecting an audience with a digital marketing interest would be wise.
4. Boost each of these top performing posts with a one dollar per-day bid for seven days.
5. Dump fuel on some fires and put out others. After seven days, top performers among your selection set should become very obvious (Dennis suggests that 90 percent of your posts are likely to fizzle out). Now, Dennis recommends that you ramp up your dollar per-day bid for an additional 30 days on that top 10 percent in the hopes of finding your unicorn post.
6. Stack additional budget on your unicorn posts as the ROI will be high. You can also experiment with switch-boosting strategies which involve the customization of audiences to extend the life of the ad (creating a custom audience if attending a conference one month, then switching it for the next month).

Download the ["Dollar-a-Day Social Marketing Strategy"](#) to find out more.

Note: This strategy was proven on Facebook, but can also be applied to other platforms (particularly Twitter and LinkedIn).

1.2 Facebook Ads

Pros:

- **User base.** As of the beginning of 2020, Facebook is home to 2.6 billion monthly active users, making it the largest social media platform in the world. That number alone is a compelling reason to explore the original “social network”.
- **Cost per lead (CPL).** Like all advertising platforms, the level of spend is entirely up to your discretion. However, in terms of CPL, Facebook remains the best bang for your buck. The average cost per lead on Facebook coming into 2020 was \$1.72.
- **Available audiences.** Being home to 2.6 billion users means that Facebook has the largest potential prospect base of any advertising platform in the world.
- **Effectiveness.** Although effectiveness (based on conversion rates and CPL) has diminished somewhat over recent years, the fact of the matter is simple: Facebook ads are still effective. In fact, 67 percent of social advertisers deem Facebook to be the most effective ad platform.
- **Targeting and retargeting.** Get into the nitty gritty by targeting people based on age, gender, location, job title, industry, marital status, and interests. Retargeting allows you to serve ads against users who may have visited your website, used your mobile app, or provided their email address. Then, use lookalike audiences to expand your marketing efforts based on users similar to your current audience.
- **Ease of use.** Facebook Ads Manager is the original social ad platform, meaning that it has some of the most advanced options available to advertisers, but it is also one of the easiest for new users to navigate.
- **Robust analytics and tracking.** Unparalleled is a word that could be used to describe the depth and breadth of reporting capabilities baked into Facebook Ads Manager.
- **Viral potential.** Let’s face it, no one is going to share your Google Ad with a friend, but if you have a hilarious ad (Manscaped ads come to mind for me), then you might reach new audiences at no extra cost.

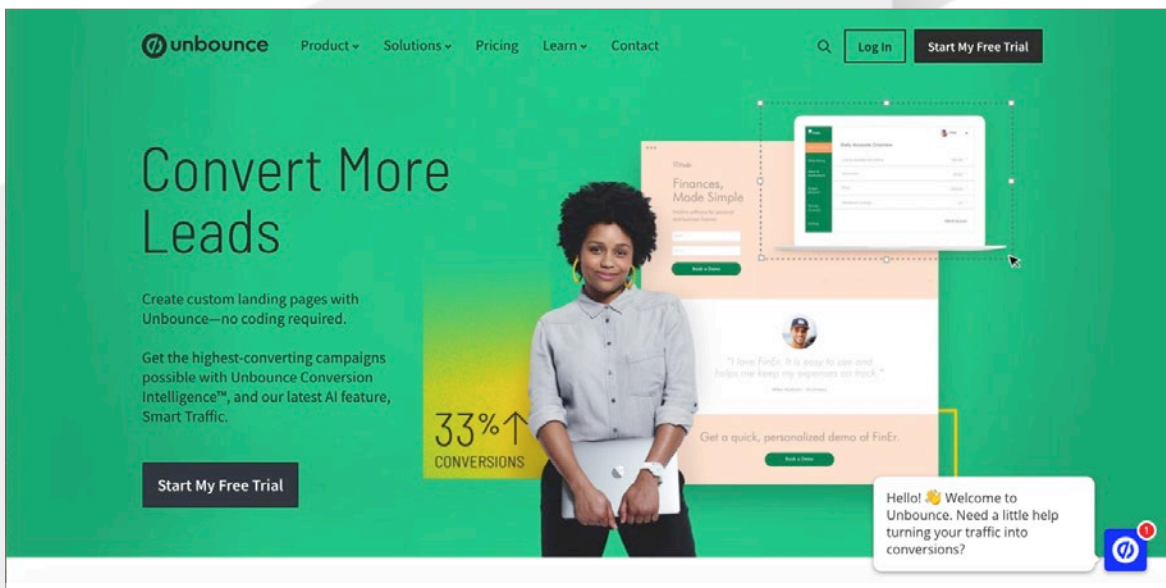
Cons:

- **Limited enterprise effectiveness.** If your target audience is predominantly companies with 100+ employees, then Facebook isn't going to be the optimal platform for you. If this is your target demographic, then you better explore Facebook's big brother (LinkedIn).
- **Loss of platform preference.** Years of over exposure to ads, data breaches, and public scrutiny have undoubtedly weakened "The Social Network". As millennials and Gen X cling to Snapchat, Instagram, and Tik Tok, ad effectiveness has certainly declined.
- **(Potential) metric misreports.** Over the years, there have been claims that Facebook has inflated numbers on video play metrics, app referrals, and repeat visitors. However, Facebook claims to have fixed these errors.

How to launch a Facebook ad campaign

1. It all starts with your unique selling proposition (USP)

The first step in any ad campaign is to isolate your unique selling proposition(s). For some companies, the USP is obvious and may already be established. For example, Unbounce is a B2B company that has both a simple and great USP: convert more. Landing pages are their game, and the result they drive is simple.

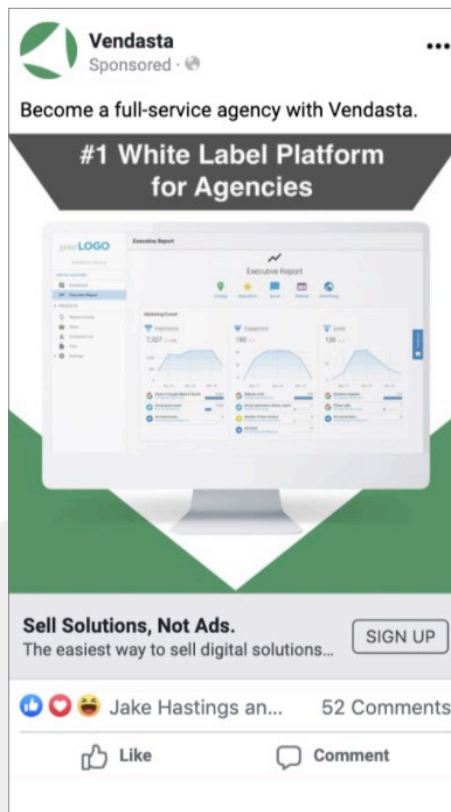


Source: Unbounce

However, for other companies, USPs can become much more complicated to determine. If you are one of those companies, there is a general process that can help you isolate your USP(s).

1. Create a list of competitors and competing offerings
2. Use this list to identify your unique attributes and differentiating qualities
3. Hone in on customer benefit qualities, not product qualities
4. Shape those qualities into a customer promise
5. Work and rework until you've identified ideal keywords
6. Cut it down, USPs should be short and impactful
7. Test and adjust until you're driving optimal conversions

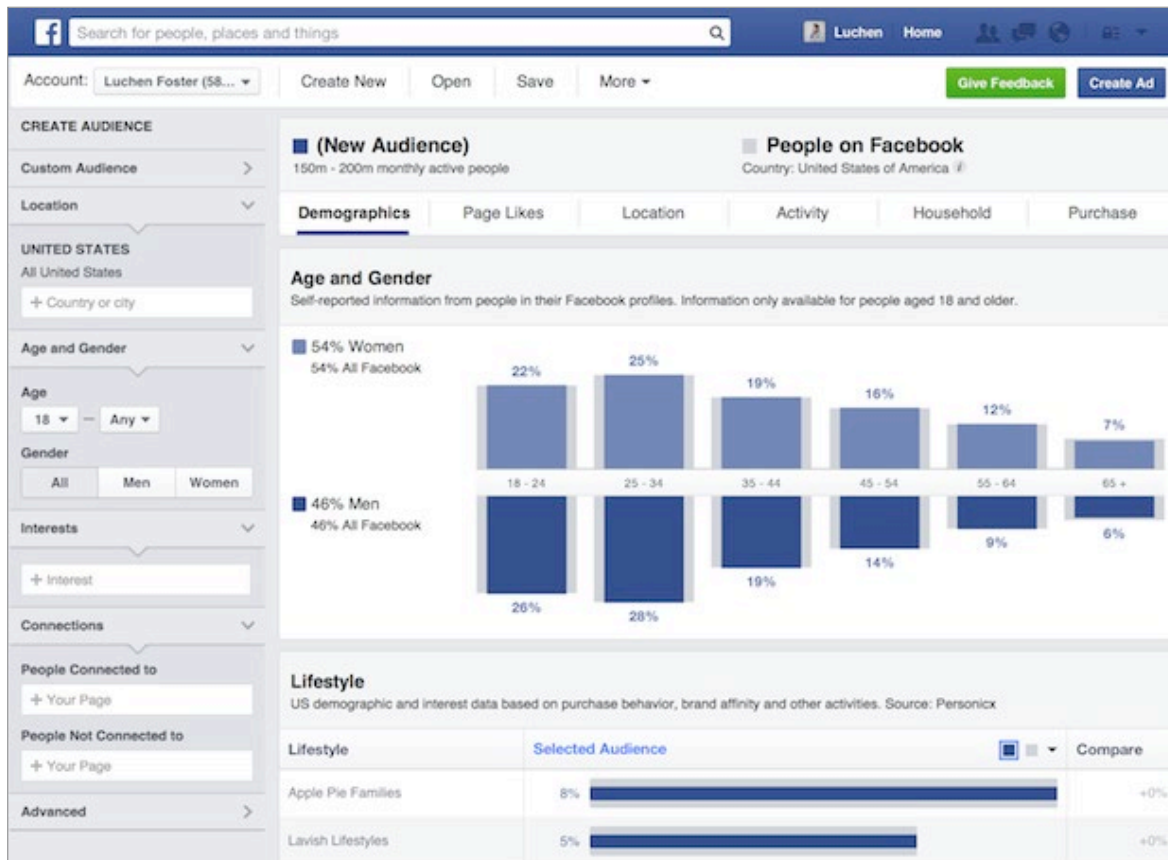
Here is an example of one of our USP-based ads that caters to one of our primary audiences and has been highly effective in generating leads via Facebook.



Our offering is a little more complicated than landing pages, but the proposition to marketing and advertising agencies is still rather simple: grow your business from point solutions to a comprehensive marketing offering.

2. Identify your audience

The easiest way to find your audience is by digging into the advanced audience mining capabilities that are baked right into Facebook's Audience Insights.



Source: Facebook Audience Insights

Here's how it works:

1. Use Audience Insights to analyze the people that are already following your page as well as people that follow other pages, have specific interests, fall within various demographics/psychographics, and more. These variables allow you to fine tune your targeting and create audience lists based on your needs.
2. Create and save these audiences within Audience Insights.
3. When creating your next ad in Ads Manager, these audiences will be available for you to choose from.

3. Set up tracking with Tag Manager and Ads Manager

Before you launch any campaigns, you will need to add your Facebook pixel to Google Tag Manager.

Here's are the steps you need to follow:

1. Log into Google Tag Manager
2. Navigate to your website's container and click "Add a new tag"
3. Choose "Customer HTML Tag" and add a name for your tag
4. Navigate to "Events Manager" on Facebook and select "Add Event"
5. Select "Install code manually"
6. Select "Copy Code" to copy the entire base code
7. Return to Tag Manager and paste the entire code in the HTML container
8. Click the "Advanced Settings" dropdown and select "Once per page" under "Tag firing options"
9. Under "Fire On," select "All Pages"
10. Create the tag

If you need further assistance, find out more [here](#).

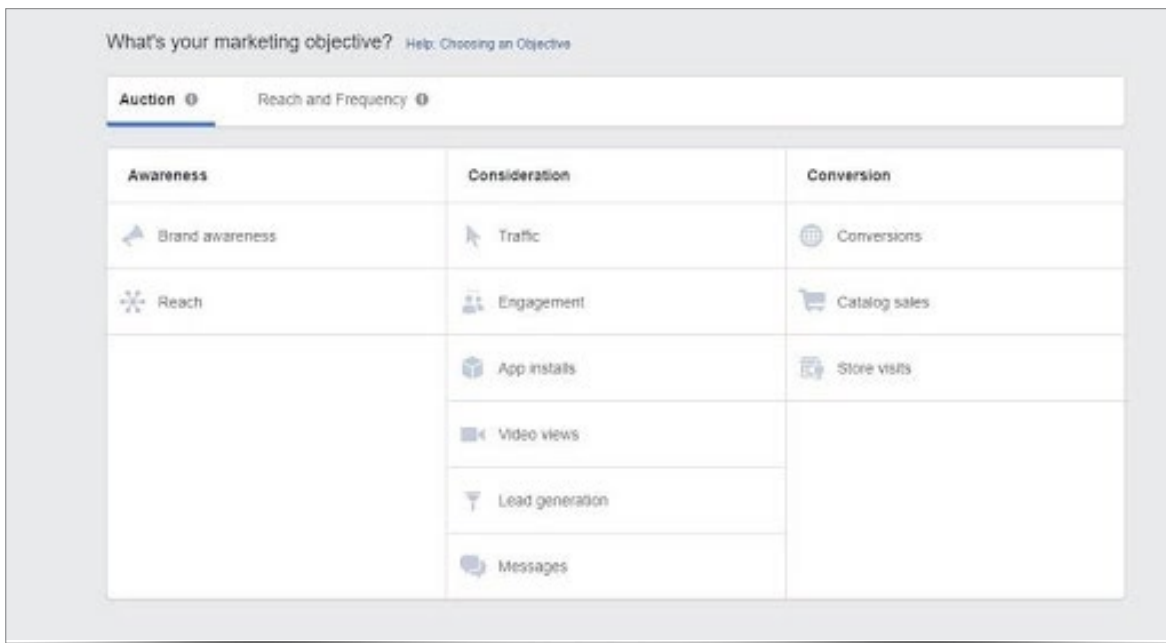
4. Identify your CTAs and conversion goals

What action are you enticing? Are you expecting prospects to fill out a Facebook lead form? Are you redirecting them to a landing page? A page on your site? A blog perhaps? What is the next step in the buyer's journey?

CTAs are not a science, and you may want to experiment with a variety of the aforementioned CTAs (as well as others) to identify the best performers. The key is to make sure that your CTA aligns with your ad messaging so that it doesn't create a disjointed user experience.

Once you've decided where you want your ad traffic to go, then you'll need to set conversion goals in Ads Manager.

Here are your objective options in Facebook Ads Manager:



Source: Facebook

Based on your offering and the stage of the buyer's journey that you are aiming to impact, there are a variety of options available. That being said, if you have a fairly complex product/service offering, "Lead generation" will almost always be the best objective to fill your inbound sales funnel.

5. Create eye-catching visuals/videos

It's time to talk about audio-video (AV) and design. Competition on Facebook is fierce, and if you don't have world-class graphics and video content to pair with your ads, then you aren't going to earn your share of audience attention.

Here are some tips for visuals on Facebook Ads:

- Use text in your graphic if your CTA is conversion focussed (ex. A guide download).
- Text free visuals can be impactful if your CTA is educational (ex. A blog link).
- Use real people in your graphic if it aligns with your copy.
- Location specific visuals can drive greater engagement if you have the bandwidth.
- Think about standout visuals, not necessarily standout colors. It's true that certain colors (ex. Red) will demand attention from your audience, but if you want to convert viewers, the secret sauce is in showing them something that doesn't look like every other ad in their newsfeed.

Here are some tips for videos on Facebook Ads:

- Keep them short. Fifteen seconds or less is a good benchmark if you want to get full-length views from prospects.
- Add captions so that your video makes sense without audio as most users have autoplay audio turned off.
- Use real people and real product screenshots as much as possible. Vector-based video is becoming a thing of the past.

These are a few general best practices, but the reality is that the only way you will find out for sure what exactly works best for your business is by testing extensively.

6. Create ad variants

One of the greatest digital advertising mistakes you can make is not creating ad variants. By creating variants, you can test different copy, different images, different CTA text, etc. This allows marketers to identify top performers and turn off variants that aren't up to spec.

When launching a new campaign, it's best practice to create four ad variants. This allows you to split test two different graphics with two different text pairings at any given time.

Here's an example from AdEspresso:

The image displays two side-by-side Facebook ad variants for AdEspresso. Both ads promote a '500+ Facebook Ads Examples Collection' eBook. The left ad features a photo of a woman reading, while the right ad features a cartoon illustration of a man holding a smartphone. Both ads include the same text: 'Need Inspiration for your Facebook Ads? Download this unique collection of 500+ real world Ads by Top Advertisers around the world and get inspired!' and 'Get It Now ==> http://hubs.ly/y0kxDz0'. The left ad has 24 likes and 5 comments, while the right ad has 1 like and 1 comment.

Source: AdEspresso

7. Monitor and optimize your campaign

When running Facebook ads, your work is never done. Optimization is arguably the most important part of the entire process.

Here are some best practices for Facebook ad optimization:

- Continually introduce challenger ads. Once you've honed in on your best variant in a given campaign, turn off the bottom performers and create new ads to replace them. Best practice is to use elements from your top performer in each new variant (ex. Graphic in one, text in another, CTA in another). This is important because these challengers might grow to outperform the original top variant.
- Experiment with new audiences. If you have a top performer, try running that ad against a new audience.
- Ramp up the budget on top performing ads and reduce the budget on low performers. Allocating budget to testing is important, but don't burn ad spend on campaigns that aren't converting.
- Experiment with different value propositions and CTAs. For example, if you are aiming to drive a conversion, try one variant with a demo form CTA and one with a sign-up CTA.

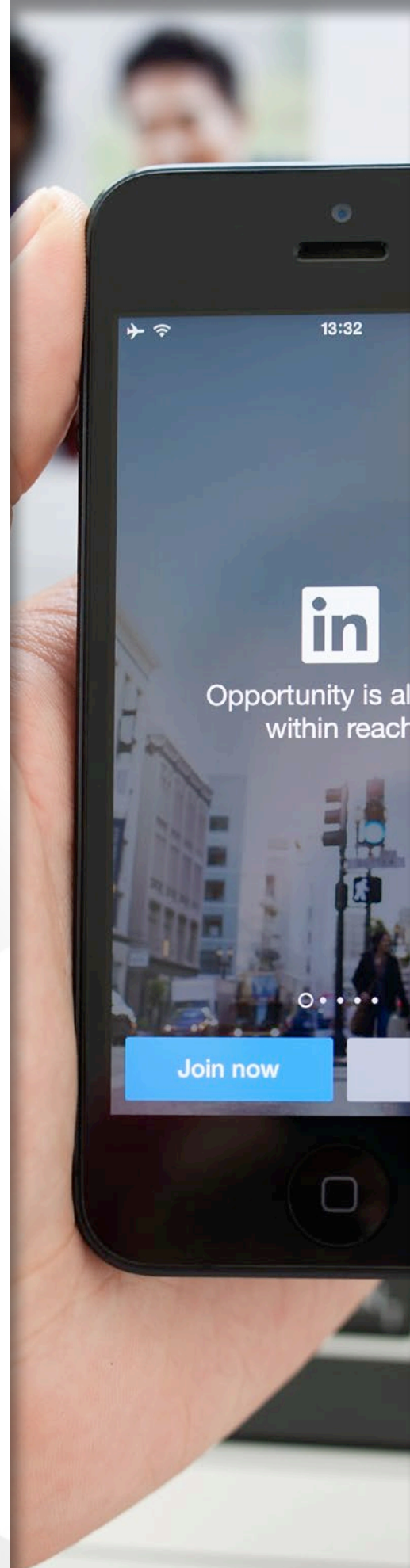
1.3 LinkedIn Organic

Pros:

- 1. B2B lives on LinkedIn.** Although LinkedIn doesn't boast the largest user base, it's a concentrated community of professionals, meaning that there is a lot less waste for B2B marketers. In fact, 61 million LinkedIn users are senior level influencers and 40 million are in decision-making positions.
- 2. Long newsfeed lifespans.** Unlike Twitter and Facebook algorithms that focus primarily on recency in filling the newsfeed, LinkedIn focuses on engagement. That means that as long as your posts are continuing to generate likes, comments, and shares, then your posts will continue to live in the news feed for days—and sometimes even weeks.
- 3. Niche hashtags.** If you want to reach users outside of your core follower base, niche hashtags can be a highly effective way to reach relevant professionals (ex. #b2bleadgeneration is much more effective than #marketing).
- 4. Community mentality.** Where platforms like Instagram and Twitter can be prone to unfavourable comments and replies, LinkedIn has a far stronger community mentality. Question posts can be an effective means of leveraging this to promote knowledge sharing and relationship building.
- 5. Audience insights.** LinkedIn allows all business accounts to define their target audience and then access content suggestions based on that audience. This feature can be used based on the accounts you already follow, or the entire LinkedIn community (if you have a smaller follower base).
- 6. Users want to interact with brands.**

Cons:

- 1. Reaching younger audiences.** If your target buyer persona is under the age of 35, LinkedIn actually has somewhat low audience penetration. According to Statista, the 2019 audience penetration rate of internet users by age segment yielded 16 percent across users aged 15 to 25, and 27 percent across users aged 26 to 35.
- 2. Short newsfeed lifespans.** The engagement based algorithms that can keep LinkedIn posts in the newsfeed for days on end are the same algorithms that can have your posts written off before they really see the light of day. Quick engagement and high levels of engagement are massive determiners of organic success on LinkedIn.
- 3. User base.** LinkedIn has 675 million monthly active users, coming in as the second smallest user base among social platforms (next to Twitter). That being said, it is a highly focussed and highly engaged audience.



How to launch an organic LinkedIn campaign

1. Beef up your LinkedIn page

Many conversions on LinkedIn actually stem from company page visits, so you don't want to miss out on those.

Key areas to focus on include:

- Company description. This is the first thing a prospect will read when they land on your company page.
- Location. This is especially important if you serve a localized market.
- Hashtags. Up to three hashtags can be added to your profile to enhance your searchability by industry and offering.
- Custom button selection. This is your primary CTA, so ensure that it's driving traffic to your desired destination, be that your website, a contact us page, a sign up page, or otherwise.

2. Set growth goals

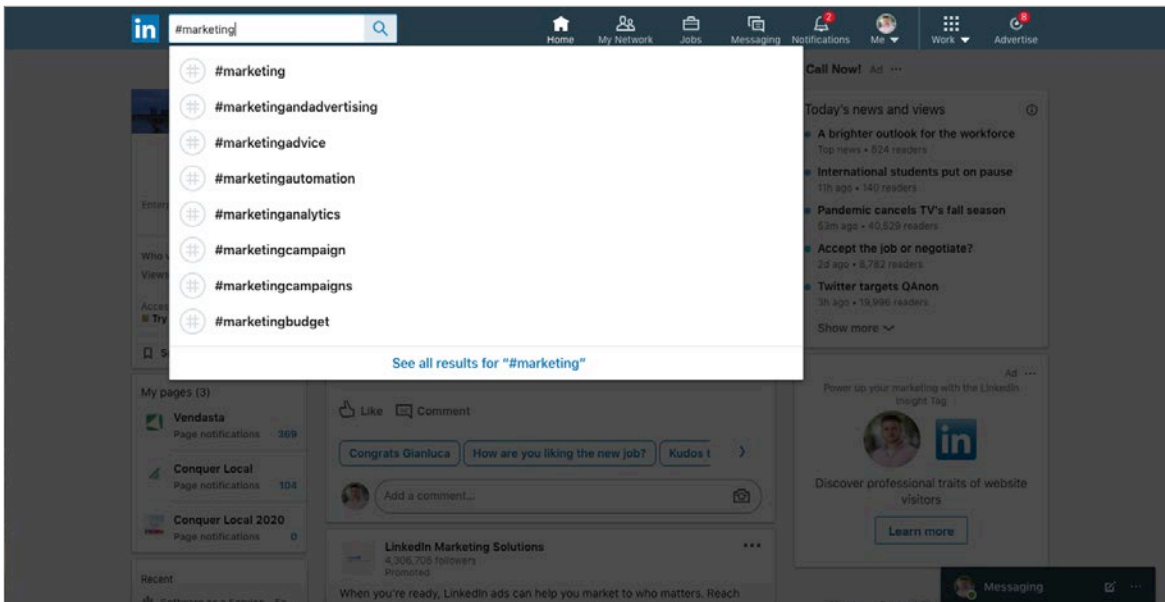
Refer to the objective setting section (1.1) under organic Facebook strategy to refine these broader goals into actionable objectives.

Some LinkedIn specific B2B goals include:

- Sales qualified leads that can be directly attributed to organic social efforts.
- Growth in average post engagement (reactions, shares, and comments).
- Increasing branded page actions (website clicks, directions clicks, etc).
- Improved LinkedIn group/community presence by joining groups and engaging with other members.

3. Do some hashtag research

LinkedIn users are increasingly using hashtags to help them search up relevant content on the platform. That means that there are two reasons for you to do some hashtag research. Firstly, so that you engage in the conversation on relevant topics/hashtags. Secondly, so that you can use those hashtags in your posts to drive new traffic organically and spark conversations.

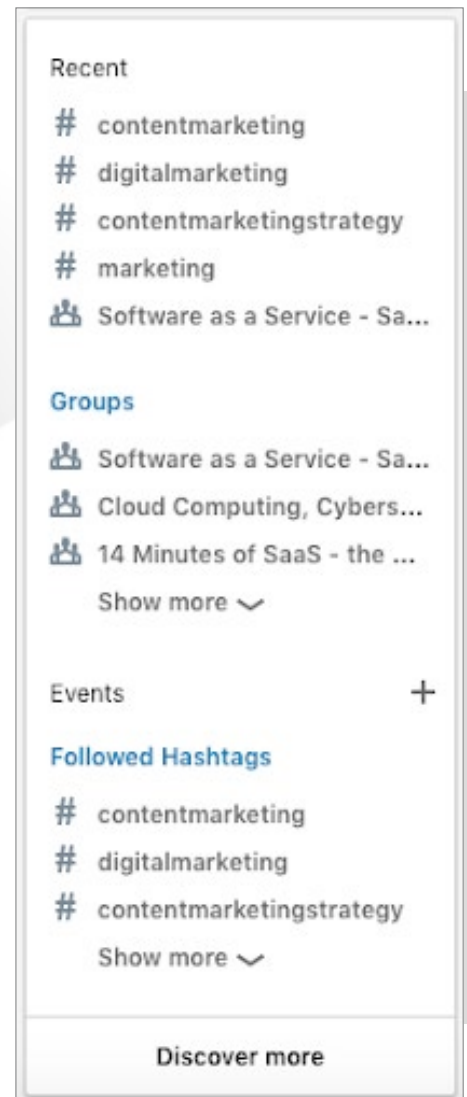


Here's what you need to do to:

1. Add a tab/section to your existing spreadsheet/document
2. Start searching hashtags based on your industry category, SEO/ PPC targets, competitors, and buyer characteristics (ex. #marketing if you're an ad agency, #leadgeneration if that's a service you offer, #hubspot if that's a competitor, or #restaurantproblems if that's a market that you serve).
3. Follow relevant hashtags so you can use your personal account to interact and engage with the people and the businesses that are using them.
4. Use LinkedIn to get additional hashtag suggestions. On your personal account homepage, you will want to navigate to your left sidebar. On the bottom of this sidebar is a "Discover more" button which will provide you with suggestions on new people to connect with and new hashtags to follow based on your account behavior.
5. Organize your hashtags based on the ones that you're following, as well as the categories listed in step 2, and get ready to start using them in posts.

4. Join the conversation on hashtags that you follow

LinkedIn is a buzzing business community. "Stranger danger" certainly doesn't exist here, and most people are willing and interested to engage with brands and people that they might not know personally. Posts stemming from hashtags that you follow will show up in your newsfeed alongside the content being posted by other accounts and connections that you follow.



Source: LinkedIn

There are a few ways that you can engage with these posts:

- Like/react to the post
- Comment on the post and provide your opinion on the issue at hand
- Share the post if you think it would be valuable to your network
- Connect with the person that posted
- Send that person a direct message pertaining to the post

The trick here is to ensure that you're never selling anything, only engaging in an authentic and genuine way. After all, in the B2B space, people always want to feel that they've arrived at their own conclusions and not as though they were sold.

5. Add LinkedIn posts to your content calendar

Akin to the previous two social platforms, frequency is still important with business posting. That's why it's important to include LinkedIn in your content calendar.

See the Facebook section for more in-depth insights into creating a content calendar.

6. Curate great posting content

You've got all of the building blocks in place, but now it's time to construct the posts that are going to make or break your organic success on the platform for B2B business.

Here are some critical tips to optimize your posts:

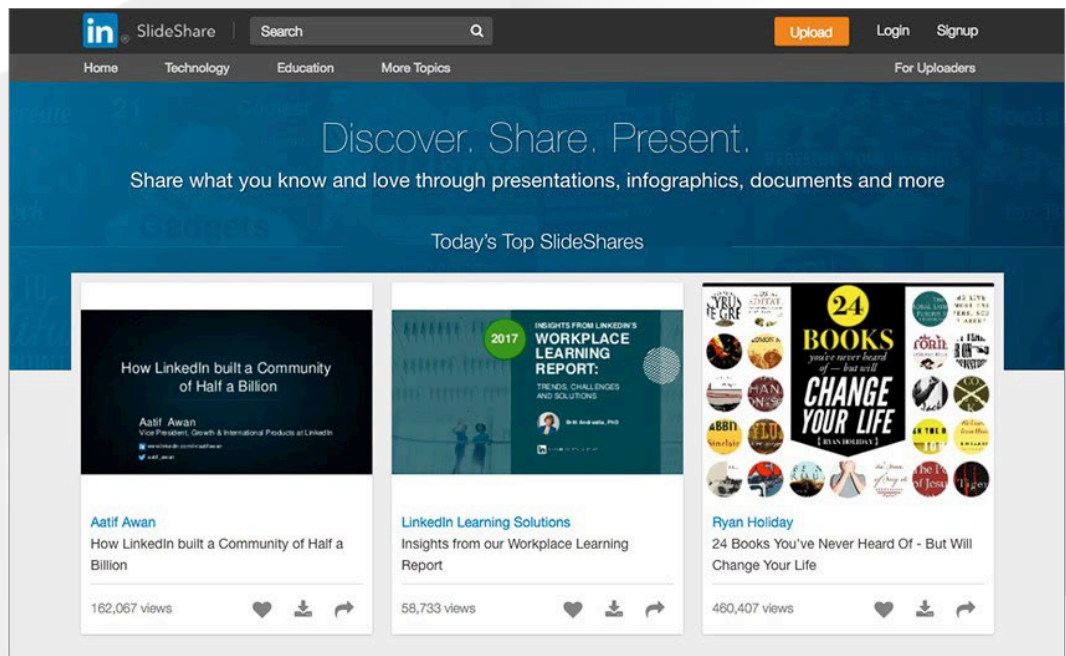
- 1. Keep it business oriented.** Your latest vacation doesn't have a home on LinkedIn because it's not what users enter the app to discover. After all, 80 percent of all B2B leads originate from LinkedIn, so make sure that you get down to business with your organic posts.
- 2. Say more with less.** Studies have shown that posts with shorter character lengths can see up to an 18 percent boost in organic engagement.
- 3. Embed catchy content.** Edgy headlines and eye-catching graphics will make your posts much more clickable, and the more clicks you generate, the better your odds of being favored by the LinkedIn algorithm, and the more traffic you are successfully directing to your site.

4. **Leverage hashtags (carefully).** Now that you've done all of this great keyword research, your first instinct might be to slap a bunch of hashtags onto your posts so that you can reach the greatest breadth of people. That would be a mistake. LinkedIn doesn't limit the number of hashtags that you can put on each post, but the more you use, the more spammy your post will appear, and the less engagement they will get. Best practice suggests that, like Twitter, three hashtags is plenty. You can either have these tags tail your post, embed them in the text content, or else separate them with a paragraph break. Being that these tactics can all be effective, it's simply a stylistic decision.
5. **Post a few times a day.** The more often you can post, the more favour you will earn in the eyes of the LinkedIn algorithm, and the better engagement all of your posts will receive. The trick here is to use the same embedded content, but change the copy so that a greater portion of your audience has a chance of seeing it.
6. **Leverage automation.** LinkedIn is just one platform, and managing multiple posts per day on numerous platforms can become a burden. Thankfully, there are tools like Hootsuite and Social Marketing that can alleviate some of the strain in organic social media marketing.

Bonus: Experiment with SlideShare

Have you heard of SlideShare? It's the slide hosting service that can translate presentations, infographics, and other visual content into adaptable formats that can be embedded on the LinkedIn SlideShare site or other sites. This matters because SlideShares reach 70M unique visitors per month. Source: envatotuts+

Check out this [LinkedIn help page](#) to find a step-by-step guide to using SlideShare with LinkedIn.



1.4 LinkedIn Ads

Pros:

- **LinkedIn is the B2B holy grail.** As a matter of fact, according to a study conducted by Grafton, an alarming [80 percent](#) of B2B leads originate from LinkedIn.
- **Account-based functionality.** LinkedIn was built for enabling business-to-business commerce. That makes it the ideal platform for businesses to connect and engage with other businesses.
- **Advanced targeting options.** When you're targeting a B2B market, certain audience variables, like job title/position become more important. LinkedIn enables you to narrow your market with advanced variables like location, job title, job function, seniority, company name, company size, industry, degree, skills, professional interests, and more.
- **Personalization.** Sponsored InMail is a great way to deliver customized messages directly to members of your target audience. This can be effective for inviting users to download gated content, inviting users to an event, or even motivating a purchase.
- **Ad variety.** LinkedIn offers a number of ad platforms, some of which are unique to the platform. The primary offerings include sponsored content, sponsored inmail, video ads, dynamic ads, carousel ads, and display ads. This variety allows LinkedIn to cater to the needs of almost every B2B marketer.
- **The Lead Accelerator.** LinkedIn goes beyond the first touchpoint by enabling users to track high-value prospects and deliver additional ads that can be customized for those high-profile accounts. It also has remarketing features that can be turned on based on recent website visitors and account lists.
- **Industry leading conversion rates.** A year long study by HubSpot found that LinkedIn ads more than triple the conversion rate of Google Ads. Where Google Ads customers can expect a conversion rate in the ballpark of 2.58 percent, HubSpot users experienced an average conversion rate of [9 percent](#) on LinkedIn.

Cons:

- **COST.** LinkedIn ads are substantially more expensive when compared to the other social ad platforms. For comparison, the average CPC of Google Ads has been reported at \$3.35, while LinkedIn ads average \$5.74.
- **The spillover effect.** In the B2B landscape, prospects are unlikely to engage with your brand on the first touch point. The result of this can be leads that originated on LinkedIn manifesting themselves in organic conversions. In other words, the prospect saw your ad on LinkedIn (maybe even clicked through), then they closed the tab, but got thinking about it later, so they started researching you on their mobile device and converted from that second touch point.
- **Limited reporting and analytics.** Where the Facebook Ads Manager can offer industry leading insights, LinkedIn's Campaign Manager is limited in comparison.
- **Bumpy user experience.** LinkedIn Campaign Manager is getting better with every update, but the user experience remains somewhat bumpy, with glitches being a regular part of the ad setup experience.

How to launch a LinkedIn ad campaign

1. Start by identifying your unique selling proposition (USP)

If you haven't already, use the tactics outlined in section 1.1 to help you isolate your USP.

2. Choose your ad objective

First things first, choose your ad objective. Being that most B2B leads aren't as willing to convert on lead ads, we've often found that a "Website visits" objective can be as effective or more effective than other conversion objectives.

Objective ⓘ **NEW**

Let's get started! Select the objective that best fits your goals below.

Awareness	Consideration	Conversions
Brand awareness	Website visits	Lead generation
	Engagement	Website conversions
	Video views	Job applicants

Source: LinkedIn

3. Find your audience

There are a couple ways to isolate your audience on LinkedIn. Firstly, you can use the tools and segmentation variables that are built into the Campaign Manager to target prospective customers. Secondly, you can create custom audiences leveraging lookalike and audience expansion style strategies. And lastly, you can upload a list to target specific LinkedIn accounts/companies. For an expansion on the list approach, visit section 3 under Account-Based Tactics and Strategies.

Here's how to build an audience on LinkedIn:

1. Start by defining your audience location (the only mandatory targeting parameter on LinkedIn). Get specific or keep it broad.
2. Build your audience based on optional variables
 - a. Company: connections, followers, industry, name, size.
 - b. Demographics: age and gender.
 - c. Education: degrees, fields of study, member schools.
 - d. Job experience: function, seniority, title, skills, years of experience.
 - e. Interests: groups and member interests
3. Ensure that your target audience estimates remain over 50,000 for sponsored content and text ads, and over 15,000 for message ads.
4. Consider A/B testing your audiences. This can be done by duplicating your campaign and slightly altering your audience parameters.

Note: LinkedIn also has audience templates available if it's your first time creating an audience.

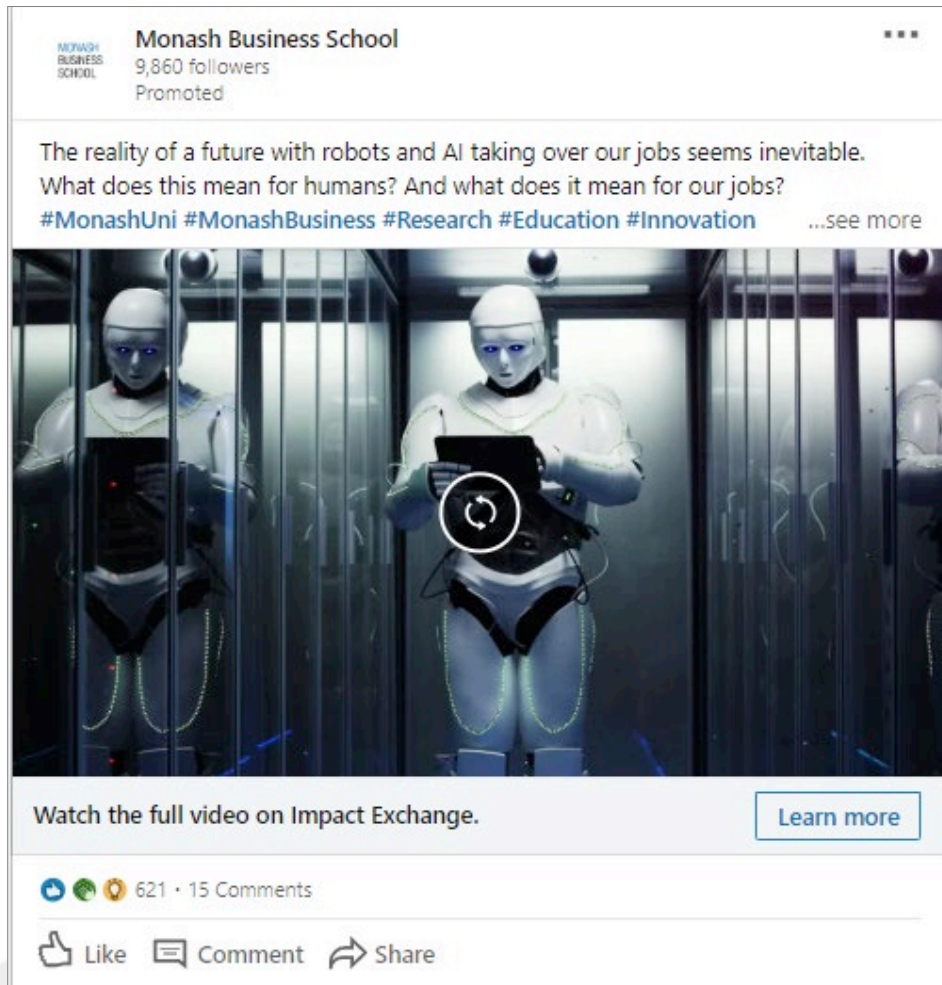
Here are a couple ways to use AI to create custom targeting on LinkedIn:

1. Enable audience expansion as you build your audience. This feature will automatically identify additional audience members that are similar to your specified target audience, and add them to your campaign. This is best used when targeting specific facets where there is a risk of missing members, such as: job titles, skills, groups, etc.
2. Create lookalike audiences. Lookalike audiences behave much in the same way, but are best used when looking to hone in on specific audience variables through a lead generation campaign objective.
3. Use matched audiences features. This allows you to coordinate your LinkedIn targeting with other business data, like re-engaging website visitors or nurturing existing prospects.

4. Determine your ad format

LinkedIn offers three ad formats that can all be effective if paired with the right content and the right audience. The three choices include sponsored posts, message ads, and dynamic ads. Your choice in ad format will also serve to help you identify your CTA (and vice versa).

Sponsored content appears in the newsfeed and resembles an organic post with the exception of a “Promoted” designation and a CTA button.



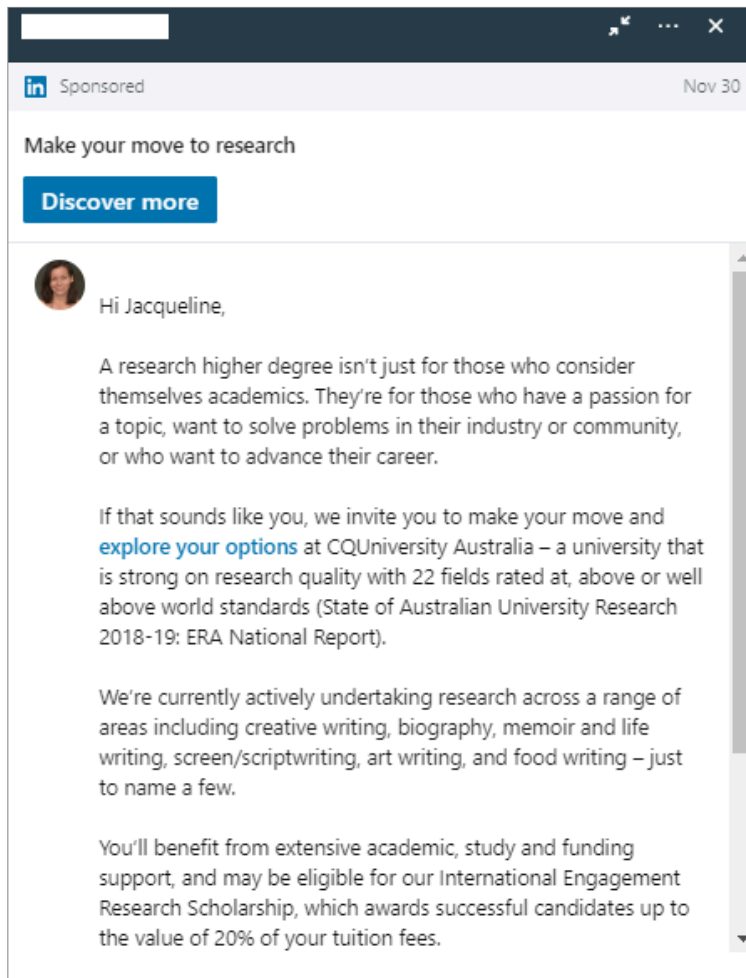
The screenshot shows a LinkedIn sponsored post from Monash Business School. The post header includes the school's name, 9,860 followers, and a 'Promoted' label. The main text asks about the future of jobs with AI and robots, followed by several hashtags: #MonashUni, #MonashBusiness, #Research, #Education, and #Innovation. Below the text is a video thumbnail showing two humanoid robots in a server room, one holding a tablet with a refresh icon. The video player includes a 'Watch the full video on Impact Exchange.' link and a 'Learn more' button. At the bottom, there are engagement icons for Like, Comment, and Share, along with a notification of 621 likes and 15 comments.

Source: SproutSocial

Benefits to sponsored posts:

- The most organic ad format as it appears in-line with other organic content.
- Users are conditioned to consume ad content in the newsfeed.
- Image, carousels, and videos can all be used as the primary ad content.

Message ads are ads that are delivered via LinkedIn InMail. They are delivered in a similar fashion that a DM to a connection would be, but they are accompanied with a sponsored designation.

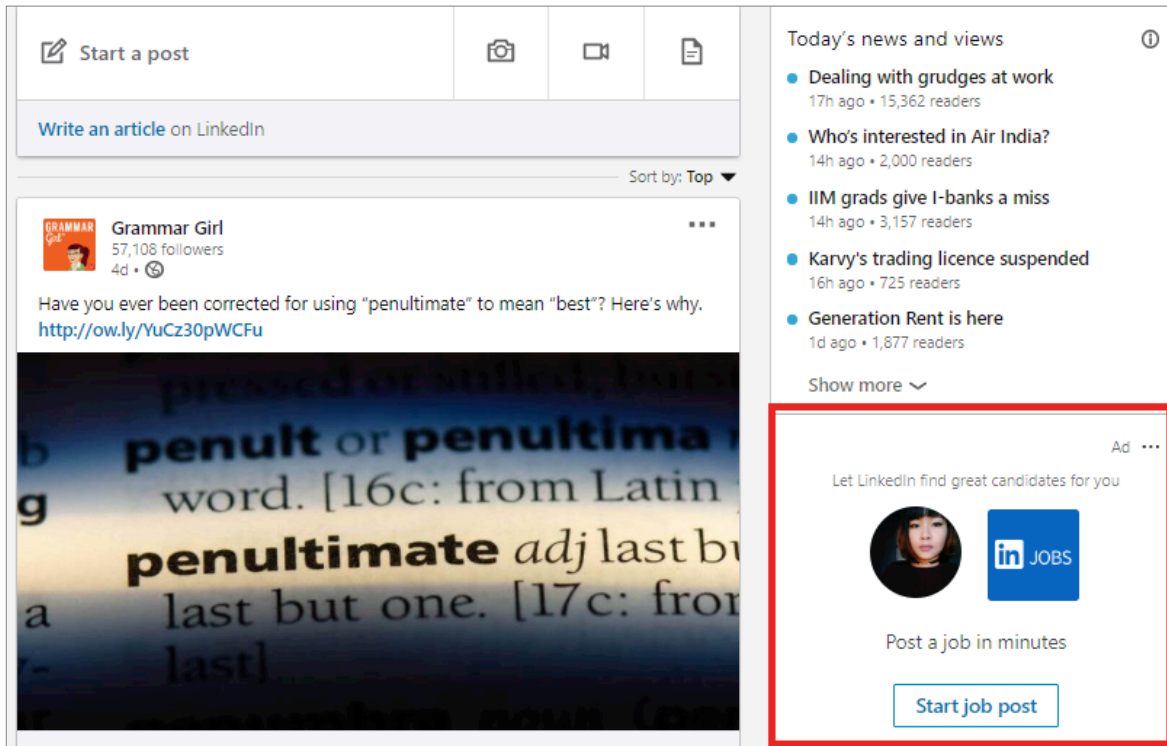


Source: SproutSocial

Benefits to message ads:

- Greater personalization. InMail messages behave a lot like email in the ways that they allow advertisers to personalize their messaging with variable tags, like company tags, and more.
- More content. Sponsored and dynamic ads are both limited in the volume of content that can be used, but InMail messages offer a lot more room for elaboration.
- Great for niche markets and hyper-targeted audiences.

Text and dynamic ads are banners that appear on the side carousels of various LinkedIn pages. These are a little different than your standard banner ad, however, as they allow marketers to personalize them to address users by name and profile picture.



Source: SproutSocial

Benefits to text and dynamic ads:

- Great for company spotlight based ads, content ads, or job posting ads.
- Great for generating awareness when paired with other LinkedIn ad formats.

5. Create your visuals

Depending on your chosen ad format(s), you will want to either create graphics or video content. These are general insights to help guide your content creation, but the reality is that the only way to know for sure what will perform best for your brand is to test both formats with different messaging against different audiences.

Here are some tips for LinkedIn ad graphics

- Ensure that sponsored images are 1200x627 and that carousel images are 1080x1080.
- Keep it real. Authenticity reigns supreme on LinkedIn, so integrating photography is always a good idea. Faces are powerful, but product pictures can also be powerful depending on the industry in which you reside.
- Overlay text that supports your offer. There are few cases when using some text on an image ad is not a good idea. The graphic is the first piece of your ad to garner audience attention, so presenting your offering or key details in the image can be a great way to drive further action.
- Consider adding a “button” to the image. Adding a graphical button is a great way to boost performance by giving your audience another place to convert.

Here are some tips for LinkedIn ad videos:

- Ensure that videos also meet either the 1200x627 or 1080x1080 dimensions.
- Use a “Video views” ad objective if you are simply trying to generate awareness. Otherwise, a lead generation objective will still be effective for driving conversions with video content.
- Add captions so that the video makes sense without audio being that most users have autoplay audio turned off by default.
- Include a clear CTA in the video as well as the ad copy so that there is no confusion surrounding the action that you are trying to elicit.

6. Write your ads

It's important that you always start every LinkedIn campaign with four ad variants. This gives you a chance to test different graphics, different text, and different CTAs while also optimizing your ad rotation (LinkedIn rotates four ads per day). It's best practice to do a two-image/video, two-text split so that you can determine the best performing combinations before you introduce new challenger ads.

Here is an example of a Vendasta competitive campaign that's queued for launch:

Objective ⓘ **NEW**

Let's get started! Select the objective that best fits your goals below.

Awareness	Consideration	Conversions
Brand awareness	Website visits	Lead generation
	Engagement	Website conversions
	Video views	Job applicants

Source: LinkedIn Campaign Manager

Pro-tip: If you are running blog ads, try removing the CTA button entirely so that the ad looks organic when it appears in the newsfeed. We were able to increase our click-through rate by more than 300 percent when we used this trick on a batch of radio ads that we ran.

7. Optimize, optimize, optimize

After your campaign has been running for some time and has generated leads, clicks, or otherwise, then you can begin to tweak your ads to optimize your performance.

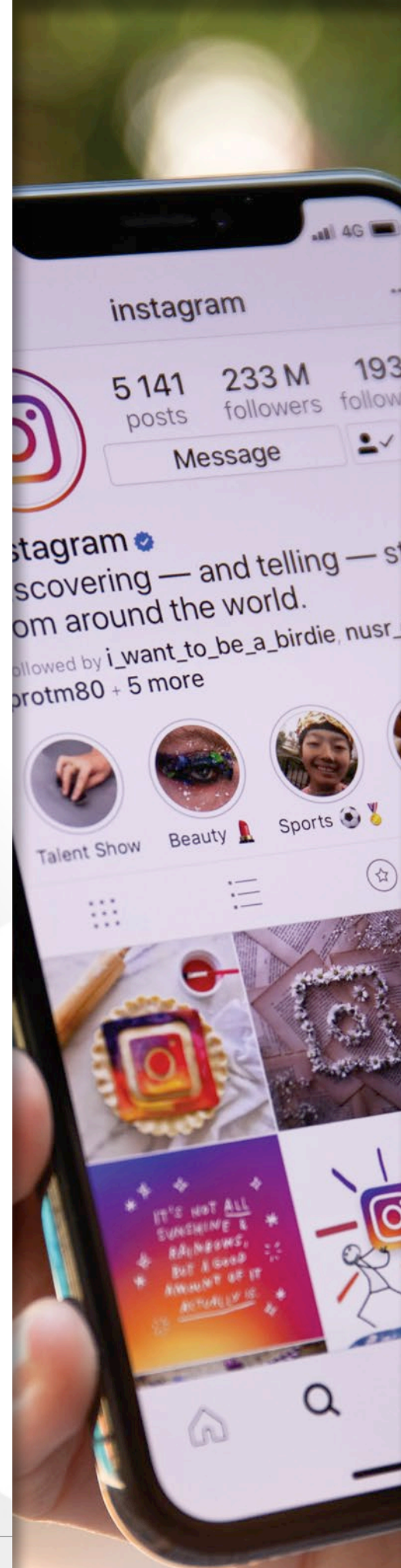
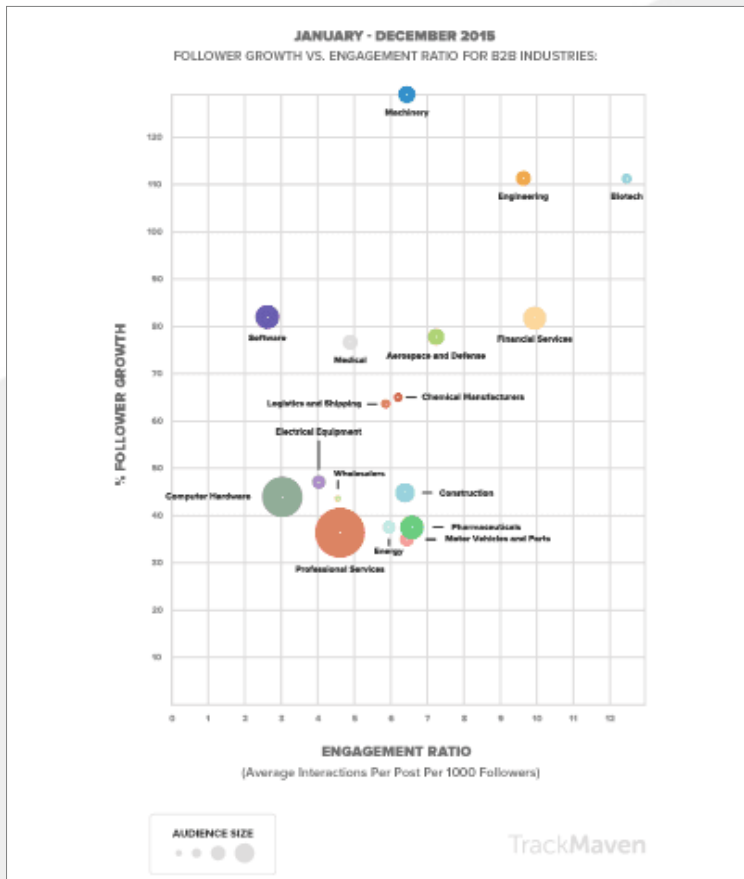
Here's how to best optimize your ad performance:

1. Eliminate the worst performers. Certain ad variants are going to outperform others, and it's your job to eliminate the ads that aren't living up to expectations. However, when you turn one variant off, you should always create a challenger ad that is crafted in the image of one of your top performers. You should continue this process of turning off ads and creating challengers for a few weeks until you've identified clear champions.
2. Tweak audience variables. Once your ads have begun achieving your desired results, you will be able to gain new insights through the demographics function. Once inside your campaign, if you click on demographics near the top, LinkedIn will provide you with detailed information on the professionals that have clicked and converted on your ads. These insights can help you adjust both your content and your audience segmentation.
3. Inject new media content into top performers. After a few months, even top performing content needs a refresh, otherwise you run the risk of creating ad fatigue and experiencing performance drop-off.

1.5 Instagram Organic

Pros:

- **Hashtagging.** Instagram gives users the opportunity to not only follow accounts, but also to follow hashtags. This provides B2B marketers with a massive opportunity to reach new prospects through hashtags that they might be following, and entice them to engage with your brand or offering.
- **Graphic dependency.** If you have a physical product, or a service that is easy to depict graphically, then Instagram is a potential gold mine in not only paid, but also organic strategy.
- **User base.** Since mid 2018, Instagram has maintained over 1 billion monthly active users, making it the second largest social platform in the world, only falling behind Facebook.
- **Low B2B competition.** Only 25 million B2B companies around the globe are currently leveraging Instagram for business purposes.
- **Engagement.** According to a study conducted by TrackMaven, B2B companies experience their highest engagement ratios, which means that your posts will get the most engagements as a percentage of your followers across all of the major social platforms.



Source: TrackMaven

Cons:

- **Graphic dependency.** This point earns itself a seat on both sides of the line because depending on your offering, it can be a benefit or a drawback. It can be a drawback if your offering cannot be easily captured in an appealing way; ergo, service businesses.
- **Link integration.** One of the greatest challenges with Instagram is the fact that business accounts cannot insert links directly into their posts unless they are verified
- **People and culture focus.** Instagram users aren't interested in your latest blog content, so doing B2B marketing on Instagram is often more of a support mechanism to your other channels—a place to share achievements and showcase culture so that you can build trust among prospective customers.

How to launch an organic Instagram campaign

1. Set growth goals

Refer to the objective setting section (1.1) under organic Facebook strategy to refine these broader goals into actionable objectives.

Some Instagram specific B2B goals include:

- Growth in relationships with industry leaders and influencers.
- Increased brand awareness through a regular posting cadence, hashtag strategy, and outreach.
- Growth in top of funnel (TOFU) website traffic.
- Attracting top talent through powerful cultural content.

Note: For B2B businesses, it can be difficult to drive conversions from the photo-first platform, but it is the optimal place to achieve many of the above objectives.

2. Do some hashtag research

The fastest way to grow your Instagram following and attract an interested and engaged audience is through hashtag strategy.

Here's how to find relevant hashtags:

1. Navigate to the Insta pages of your existing clients and see what hashtags they're using. This can be a great way to track down niche hashtags that might be popular among your target audience.

2. Use your SEO strategy to help identify hashtags. If you've already got a strong keyword strategy in place, then you should use your existing keyword library to help you expand your hashtag research.
3. Search a breadth of hashtag categories. Community hashtags (#lovetheocean), branded hashtags (#Inbound), audience descriptive hashtags (#fitnesschicks), product descriptive hashtags (#carwraps), niche hashtags (#3mcarwraps), and location-based hashtags (#torontogymlife) should all be researched and leveraged (if applicable) in your organic posting strategy.
4. Let Instagram do the heavy lifting. As you begin typing in hashtags, Insta will populate a number of suggested tags, and these suggestions can be very helpful in expanding your search.
5. Investigate each prospective tag. You're going to want to scroll at least the top nine posts on each tag to determine if the hashtag aligns with your brand and services your audience.
6. Don't forget to log all of your keyword research into a spreadsheet so that you can continually expand it and refer back to it later.

Here's what you need to know about hashtags before you start posting:

- There are two places where you can use hashtags on Instagram: in the post caption or in the post comments. Functionally, these strategies both perform the same, but it can distract from other CTAs in your caption if you also include hashtags—so keep that in mind as your team decides on a strategy.
- Instagram limits you to 30 hashtags per post, and studies have shown that the best engagement rates are achieved when using 11 or more hashtags (79.5 percent interaction rate per 1k followers with 11 hashtags).
- Use a combination of higher density and lower density hashtags to diversify your impact.
- Don't use the same hashtags in every single post, otherwise you eliminate the opportunity of reaching different audiences across multiple posts. Testing different combinations might also reveal different results, so it's critical that you remain fluid in your posting.
- Never use gimmicky hashtags like "#follow4follow" and "#likeforlike". These hashtags aren't targeted, attract the wrong traffic to your page, and can dilute your brand in the eyes of your existing audience.

3. Add Instagram posts to your content calendar

Unlike Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, your content should look a little different on the photo-first platform. Whereas the aforementioned platforms are geared towards informational content, Instagram is better suited for cultural content. You will still want to build Instagram posts into the same content calendar, but you will want to focus your Instagram content on workplace happenings, awards, and micro-video content as opposed to sharing blogs, long-form videos, and posting questions.

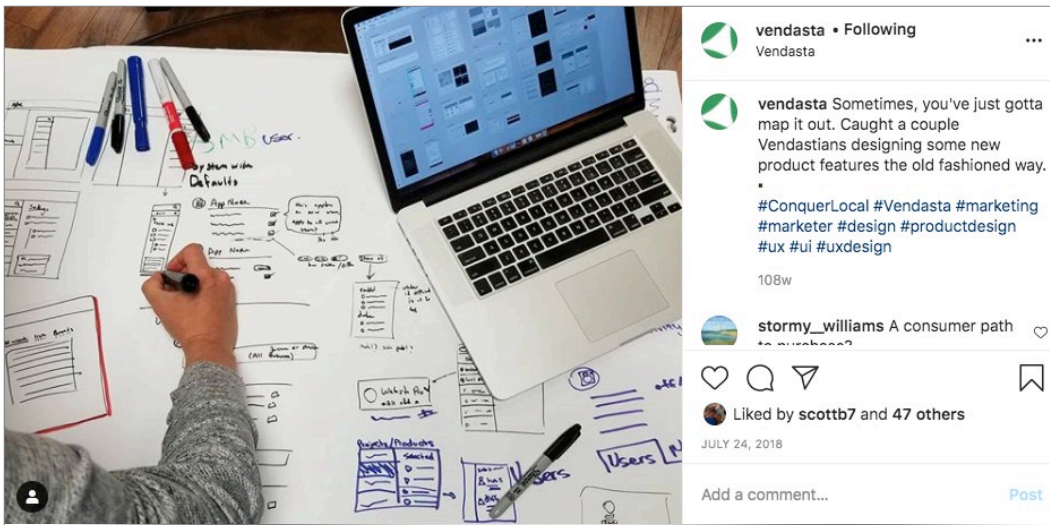
See the Facebook section for more in-depth insights into creating a content calendar.

4. Capture great images

Instagram is an image first platform, unlike it's Twitter counterpart. This means that many viewers don't even make it to the caption, so you need to ensure that your images are enticing enough to direct action or direct your audience towards the details in the caption.

Here's what you need to keep in mind when capturing photos for Instagram:

- Shoot in high definition. Whether you're using your phone or a camera, ensure that you're shooting images in the highest possible resolution. This allows you to crop and condense them later as you see fit.
- Maintain a consistent style. This is not to say that you can only post pictures if they have white backgrounds, but your page should have a very distinct style as users scroll through your posts.
- Use natural light and avoid image filters. We all remember the early days of Instagram when everyone ran sweet Clarendon filters on every post. Fortunately, those days are behind us, and so too should they be behind your business. Additionally, the usage of natural light serves to enhance the authenticity of your posts.
- Take vertical photos when possible. Standard Instagram image size is 1080px x 1080px, but 1080px x 1350px is effective for portrait, and 1080px x 608px is effective for landscape. That being said, the taller your photo content is, the more newsfeed space you're going to occupy.
- Send a message. You don't necessarily need to be selling something in every photo, but you should have a goal or outcome in mind for each post. As you will see in the example below, the goal of this post was to position Vendasta as a subject matter expert in the UX/UI spaces.



Source: Instagram @vendasta

5. Keep it fun

Instagram is not as business intensive as a platform like LinkedIn, so you shouldn't be afraid to showcase some personality in your posts.

Here are some fun ways to keep your Insta page lively:

- Use Instagram stories. Since 2016, Instagram stories have been a great way for users to showcase more of their day-to-day happenings and focus less on image quality. Brands can leverage stories to show off behind the scenes business activity, promote events, conduct polls, and more
- Publish video content. If your company has created a great video, then Instagram is the ideal platform to amplify it's impact. How-tos, promotional product videos, and cultural happenings are just a few ways that you can leverage video.
- Live streams. If you want to take your video strategy to the next level, try live streaming presentations that are public friendly.
- Host contests. Contests can be a great way to promote a conference or event while also growing your Instagram page organically. Make sure and have a clear CTA (ex. Tag 3 friends to be entered), give away something valuable, and prepare for an influx of engagement.

Bonus: Use the \$1.80 strategy

Gary Vaynerchuk coined the “\$1.80 strategy” for what he describes as: leaving your two cents on 90 Instagram posts per day. This is a bonus section because it’s incredibly time consuming and labouring work, but it can also be a great way to boost your organic following by targeting an active and engaged audience of potential customers.

Here’s the process:

- Search up relevant hashtags (use your existing hashtag research)
- Scroll through the top posts on at least 10 of those hashtags
- Like those posts
- Leave your two cents in the comments until you’ve commented on roughly 90 posts
- Repeat each work day

Check out this in-depth article on [Instagram for Business](#) to find out more.

1.6 Instagram Ads

Pros:

- 1. Instagram ads aren’t intrusive.** Whether leveraging newsfeed ads or story ads, Instagram users don’t find ads disruptive, in fact, most users actually enjoy the ad content they are being served.
- 2. Instagram users are among the most engaged.** Regular Insta users spend 53 minutes per day on the platform.
- 3. Shopify integration.** If you leverage Shopify to enable ecommerce, then you can easily integrate Shopify with Instagram and sell products instantly through the platform.
- 4. Access Facebook data.** Ever since Facebook bought Insta, the two networks have been connected, enabling audiences to easily transfer, as well as the ability to launch entire Instagram campaigns straight from your Ads Manager dashboard.
- 5. Users discover brands on Instagram.** In fact, 83 percent of Insta users discover new products and services on the platform.

People surveyed say Instagram helps them with the following:



discover new products or services



research products or services



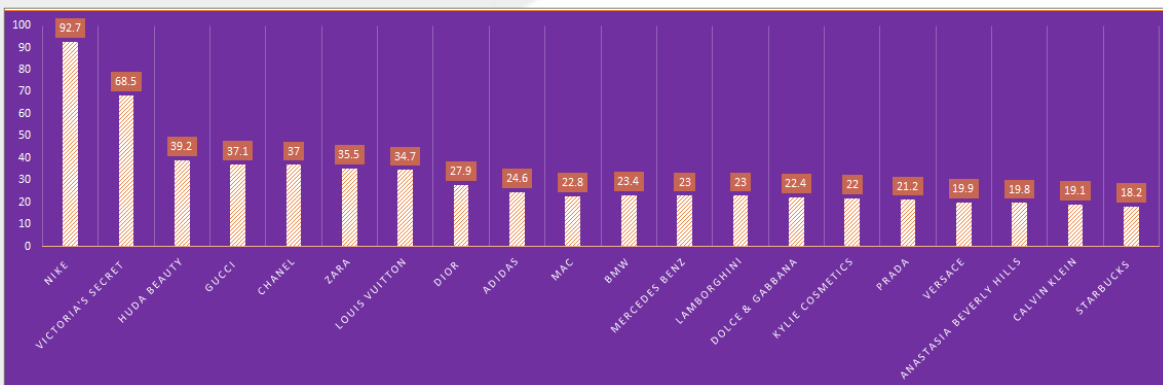
decide whether to buy a product or service

Source: SproutSocial

6. Users like businesses on Instagram. Ninety percent of users follow at least one business account, 78 percent see brands as popular, 76 percent as creative, and 72 percent as committed to building a community.

Cons:

- 1. Younger audience demographics.** The largest Instagram user segments are 18-24, with a 75 percent penetration rate in the US and 25-30 with a penetration rate of 57 percent. This means that high cost business-based products might not reach the desired (older) audience on this platform.
- 2. Fashion and beauty focus.** If you look at the top 20 most popular brands on Insta, they all fall within the fashion or beauty categories with the exception of Starbucks coming in at #20. This means that B2B products have yet to achieve such brand prevalence and user preference as of yet.



Source: [Business of Apps](#)

- 3. Influencers run the Gram.** Users flock to names like Cristiano Ronaldo (234M followers) and Arianna Grande (196M followers). Messages delivered from the likes of these names hit much harder than any brand can ever hope to alone—but this presents influencer marketing opportunities.

How to launch an Instagram ad campaign

1. Start with your unique selling proposition (USP)

If you haven't already, use the tactics outlined in section 1.1 to help you isolate your USP.

2. Use Facebook Ads Manager to build your campaign

Although Instagram allows you to run ads directly through their platform, the best way to enhance your campaign targeting, monitor performance, and save time is to use Facebook Ads Manager.

Here's how it works:

1. Connect your Facebook business page to your Instagram business account (if not done already).
2. Navigate to Facebook Ads Manager. If you choose to run ads natively on Instagram, you will be drastically limited in your segmentation and targeting variables.
3. Select "Create".
4. Choose an ad objective that supports Instagram as a placement.
5. Select "Continue".
6. Fill in the details for your ad set.
7. Choose your placement option. If running "Manual Placements," you can choose to place your ad on Instagram. Or, if you choose "Automatic Placements," your ad will run across a variety of formats on both Facebook and Instagram and optimize the value you get out of your expenditure.
8. Select continue.

Find out more [here](#).

3. Choose your ad format(s), objective(s) and CTA(s)

If you choose to use manual placements, then Instagram offers six different ad variations that B2B companies can leverage to enhance lead generation efforts.

Here are the six formats and some further objective/CTA details:

1. Story ads. Story ads appear in between the organic stories of Instagram users and can be used in both photo and video format. These ads are best used to complement photo ads in-feed and receive the highest engagement levels of all ad formats on the platform.
2. Photo ads. These are the equivalent of standard feed ads, but they're all about the imagery on Instagram. Photo ads are most effective if your brand is already creating high quality visuals or has the means to do so.
3. Video ads. These also appear as in-feed ads, but offer advertisers 120 seconds to broaden their sensory appeal through auto-play content in either landscape or square format. Video ads are most effective for simple offerings where an emotional response can be evoked in a short period of time.
4. Carousel ads. This is a variation of photo ads that allows users to swipe through a series of product or service offerings that all have their own associated link. These are beneficial for advertisers that are looking to highlight multiple products, tell a multi-part story, or really explore a complex service offering.
5. Collection ads. This is an edgy ad option that was essentially built for the ecommerce application, as it allows users to click an ad and be directed to an Instagram-based storefront where users can actually make a purchase.
6. Ads in Explore. Explore is where users go to discover content from accounts that they aren't following. These ads do not appear directly in the explore recommendations, but rather, in the newsfeed after a user has clicked on a post. Both regular photo and video content can be used in explore for additional placements.

Across these placements, there are a variety of objectives and CTA buttons available to marketers. Here are a few of them:

- Available objectives include: app installs, brand awareness, catalog sales, conversions, engagement, lead generation, messages, reach, store traffic, or web traffic.
- CTA button options include: apply now, book now, book test drive, call now, check availability, contact us, donate, download, get directions, get showtimes, get quote, get offer, install now, learn more, listen now, open link, order now, play game, preregister, request time, see menu, send message, send WhatsApp message, shop now, sign up, subscribe, use app, or watch more.

Your choice in ad format(s) and CTAs should be informed by your broader social media marketing strategy and overall marketing objectives. For example, if your marketing success is measured based on app installs, then pairing a story ad campaign with a “app install objective and either a “download” or an “install now” CTA would be a logical tactic.

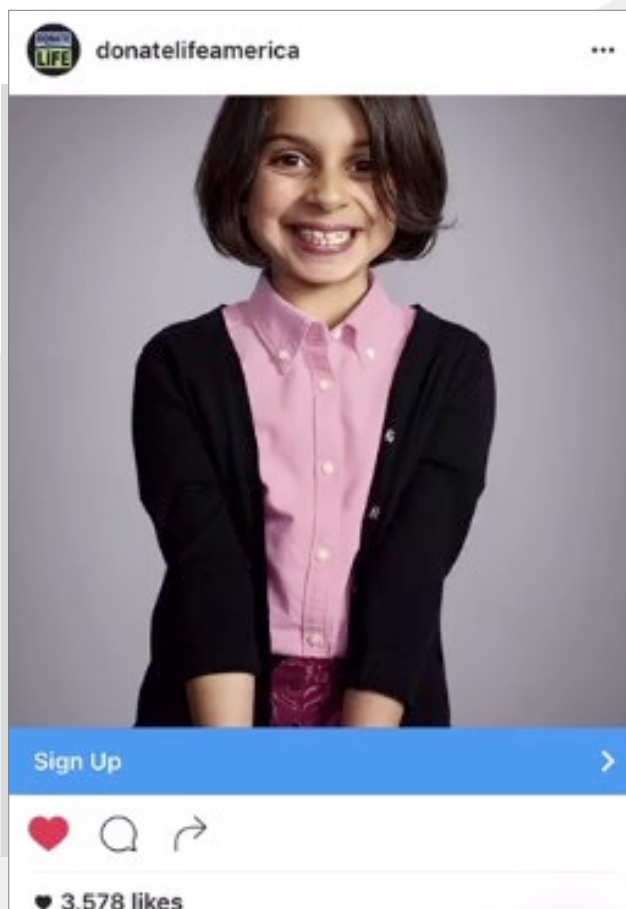
Explore Instagram business ad formats further [here](#).

4. Create compelling visuals/videos

Imagery and videography are more important on Instagram than Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter because Instagram was born as a visual-first platform.

Here are some tips for photos:

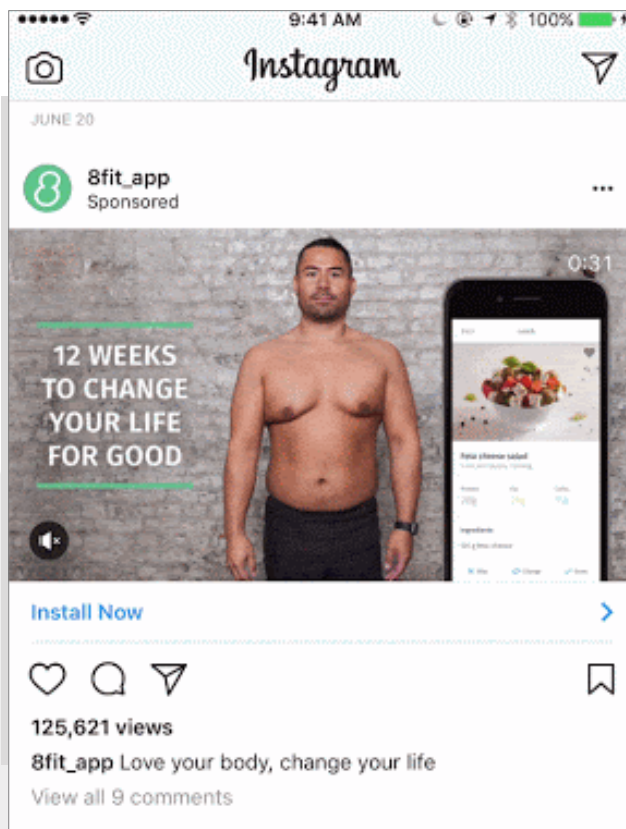
- Shoot in 1:1 ratio (1080x1080) for newsfeed photos and 9:16 (1080x1920) for stories.
- Focus on realism. Real people and real photography are two of the most powerful tools available to Instagram marketers. Skip the after effects and think more about capturing an authentic shot that tells a story.
- Try and say it without the words. Unlike platforms like LinkedIn where it's advised to use text in your imagery, Instagram newsfeed photos generally perform better without the text or with minimal text.



Source: WordStream

Here are some tips for videos:

- Shoot in 1:1 ratio (1080x1080) for newsfeed videos and 9:16 (1080x1920) for stories.
- The first second matters A LOT. Instagram users are perpetual scrollers, so you don't have time to be artsy with slow openers. What can you show in the first second that will compel your audience to stop and watch further.
- Add captions. Like most social media platforms, autoplay audio is set to mute by default. Captions ensure that viewers get the message regardless of whether or not they have their audio turned on.
- Evoke an emotional response. Try and think of creative ways that you can use your product or service to make prospects feel something.
- Organic sells. The less your video looks like an ad, the more likely it is to perform. If your content can mesh and blend well with the other content in your prospects' feeds, it will be met with much warmer perceptions.



Source: AdEspresso

Here are some tips for stories:

- Shoot all photos/videos at 9:16 (1080x1920).
- The first slide of your ad is make or break. A study by RivalHQ determined that brands are losing about 20% of their audience by the second frame of their story ads. Great ways to grab attention right away include distinct colors and interesting graphics.
- Clear and concise messaging. You have a maximum of 15 seconds to convey your message in a single slide. That means you need to get to the point as quick as possible.
- Maintain brand visibility. It can be especially easy for your branding to be overlooked on story ads as there are often so many other stimuli. Try to cleverly integrate or overlay your branding into visual elements, or focus on your products in the imagery that you use. Also try and keep your colors on-brand.



Source: SproutSocial

These are some general guidelines that should help to improve your overall performance, but the reality is that you won't know definitively what will work best for your brand until you experiment with some different content.

5. Create ad variants

Following the same four-variant principle that is most effective on LinkedIn and Facebook, it is generally advised to craft two text samples and two image samples that can be split tested in a four variant campaign. This will allow you to test different visuals and content to determine top performers.

Here are some tactics to test in your ad variants:

- Single line text for newsfeed ads. Instagram users don't give the text much attention, so try keeping it to a single line that reinforces the CTA or message delivered in the photo/video.
- Product images. If you have a physical offering, try and showcase it with high resolution photography in either newsfeed or story ads.
- Video testimonials. If you have a B2B service offering, testimonials can be an effective way to provide social proof in an engaging matter.
- Experiment with CTAs. "Learn more" style CTAs are generally more effective for complex offerings, whereas "Shop now" can be a powerful purchase driver for B2C products.

6. Monitor and optimize your campaigns

Instagram ads should be optimized in a similar fashion to their Facebook peers. In fact, if you are running both simultaneously, you can easily monitor and optimize all of your ads from the Ads Manager dashboard.

That being said, here are some Instagram specific recommendations:

- Benchmark CPLs, click-through rates and other key metrics against averages in your industry to accurately measure performance.
- Introduce challenger ads. Once you've identified the top performing variants in a given campaign, you need to turn off the bottom performers and introduce new challenger ads. Best practice is to leverage either the same image/video as a top performer, but try new text—or vice versa.
- Experiment with special offers. Although often perceived as spammy on other platforms, offers can actually be an effective way to drive clicks on Instagram.
- Try lookalike audiences. If you have a large following, you should try running follower lookalike campaigns that will allow you to reach prospects that have the most in common with your biggest fans.
- Refresh graphics/videos every few months. Struck gold on an ad? Just like a gold mine, it will eventually run dry. That's why it's important to have new content ready to inject into those top performing campaigns for when their effectiveness begins to dwindle.

See Section 1.2 for Facebook Ad optimization recommendations.

1.7 Twitter Organic

Pros:

- 1. Hashtag reach.** Unless you're a zoomer, you're probably old enough to know that Twitter was the original hashtag platform. But, not only is it the original, it's also one of the most effective platforms to generate hashtag traffic on (next to Instagram). Just don't use more than three per post or else engagement rates will start to fall.
- 2. Twitter attracts non-users.** In fact, 500 million people view Twitter pages and posts each month without logging into an account. Most of this traffic stems from organic search traffic that is being directed to Twitter.
- 3. Twitter lists.** Twitter has a feature that allows any user to create a list of accounts. This list can then be selected and only activity from the accounts on that list will be shown. This is a great way to research prospects for account-based marketing strategies.
- 4. Twitter users are older, more educated, and earn more.** If you have a sophisticated product or service, then it's likely that your target audience is on Twitter.
 - a. The median age of twitter users is 40
 - b. 42 percent of US Twitter users have college degrees
 - c. 41 percent earn over \$75,000 a year

Cons:

- 1. Chronological news feed options.** Unlike other top social platforms that deliver each user curated content based on their algorithm, Twitter gives users the option to filter based on chronological order. This means that post timing is more important on Twitter than other platforms.
- 2. Crowded feeds.** Similar to the issue that faces Twitter advertisers, Twitter feeds tend to be more crowded than other platforms, which can make it easy for your followers to miss your posts.
- 3. Limited audience.** As mentioned earlier, there are only 330 million monthly active users on Twitter as of the end of 2019.



How to launch an organic Twitter campaign

1. Set objectives

Refer to the objective setting section (1.1) under organic Facebook strategy to refine these broader goals into actionable objectives.

Some Twitter specific B2B goals include:

- Building a community around a branded hashtag.
- Growing a peer/influencer network by collaborating with others in your industry.
- Increase brand awareness through followers, retweets, and reach.
- Increase leads through Twitter-specific traffic

2. Do some hashtag research

Twitter invented the hashtag, so you better believe that using hashtags in your posts is a must. Hashtags serve the purpose of grouping tweets and conversations around similar topics, so that users can easily find and interact with them. As B2B marketers, hashtags serve the purpose of providing additional reach and exposure to otherwise limited posts.

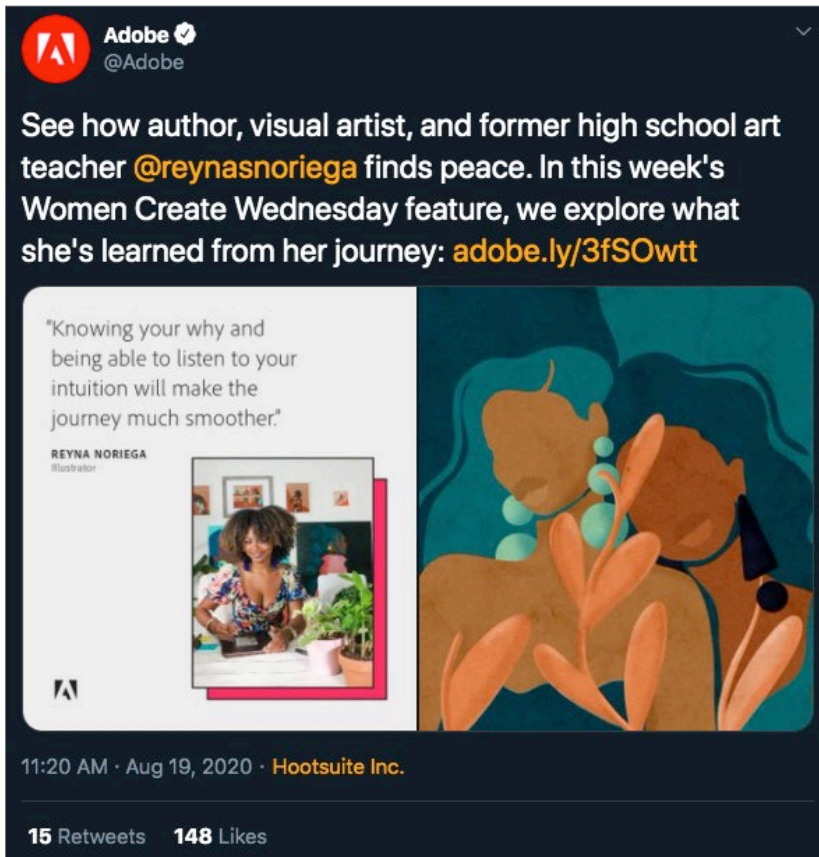
Furthermore, LinkedIn and Instagram have also become major proponents of the hashtag, so from here on out, hashtags will become an integral part of your organic social media strategy.

Here's how to do hashtag research on Twitter:

1. Start a spreadsheet or a document to log all of your hard earned research (besides, you're going to need it for LinkedIn and Instagram as well).
2. Audit competitors and clients to determine high intent hashtags.
3. Audit your SEO targeted keyword lists and current PPC terms to determine possible hashtags.
4. Research each prospective hashtag and assess the accounts that are following it, as well as using it, to ensure that it is the right intent for reaching your target audience.
5. Start to categorize your hashtags based on their origins (branded, trending, product, event, seasonal, etc).
6. Start picking and pairing some of these hashtags with upcoming post content and measuring results to determine winning hashtags.
7. Rinse and repeat.

3. Develop a distinct Twitter style

Tweets should look a little different than other posts on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram. Authenticity is a big proponent of a successful organic Twitter presence, and this can be created by identifying and staying true to your brand voice. B2B brands like Adobe have been successful in growing a large and dedicated audience on Twitter by leveraging brand collaborations, featuring consumer generated content, promoting new features, and directing traffic to impactful website content.



Source: Twitter @Adobe

Tips for creating an authentic Twitter voice include:

- Don't break your brand guidelines.
- Don't use too much humour if it's not part of your broader brand identity (if you're familiar with Wendy's Twitter presence, then you know that too much humour can be a risk).
- Address topics that matter to your target audience.
- Keep messages short and impactful (even more so than other social platforms).
- Avoid jumping on trends to try and stay relevant.

4. Add tweets to your content calendar

The best part about building content calendars across multiple platforms, is that you can essentially post the same content across most of them—just make a few small changes. Odds are good that Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn content is all cross-compatible.

See the Facebook section for more in-depth insights into creating a content calendar.

5. Experiment

Twitter is quite a distinct platform compared to its colleagues in this section. That being said, there are some different methodologies that can really engineer your success.

Here are some of the best experiments you can run on Twitter:

- Try various tweet times. Since many Twitter users still organize their feeds by recency, posting at certain times can yield greater post performance. If you're in the B2B space, you should be cognizant of the work hours of your target audience relative to their times zones.
- Repeat your tweets. As a byproduct of the above, it can be useful to tweet to the same blog or piece of content a few times over the span of a few days (with different captions of course).
- Length and style. Try running really short tweets with no image, try longer tweets with an image, try posing a question, try posting thought leading comments, try referencing other influencers, etc.
- Try different link structures. One of the more recent updates enabled users to generate preview windows for web links (like LinkedIn and Facebook). But, many brands still use shortened text links with great success. Or, if you're feeling really edgy, you could even try both in the same post.

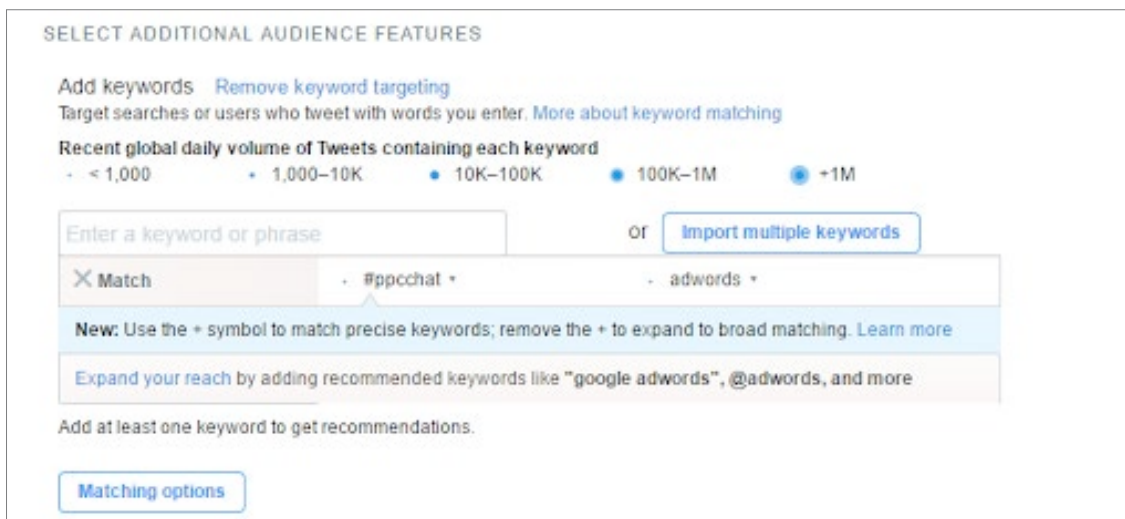


Source: Twitter @Vendasta

1.8 Twitter Ads

Pros:

- 1. You only pay for performance.** Unlike other platforms where you might not achieve your desired object and invest hundreds or thousands in the meantime, Twitter only bills based on achievement of your goal/action (ex. You pay for clicks or installs rather than engagements and impressions).
- 2. Keyword targeting.** This is a unique Twitter ads feature whereby you can target specific tags that your desired audience might be engaging with (ex. You could use #ppcchat if you're a marketing agency and want to engage with the ppc community on Twitter).



The screenshot displays the 'SELECT ADDITIONAL AUDIENCE FEATURES' section of the Twitter Ads interface. It includes a search bar for keywords, a volume filter for tweets (with '+1M' selected), and a list of keywords including '#ppcchat' and 'adwords'. A 'Matching options' button is visible at the bottom.

Source: WordStream

- 3. Limited competition.** As compared to the other social platforms that are home to millions of advertisers, Twitter is only home to 130,000 business advertisers.
- 4. Low CPC.** In Q3 of 2017, Twitter reported that cost per engagement declined 54 percent year-over-year while ad engagements increased 99 percent in that same period. The result? Clicks can actually cost cents on Twitter.
- 5. Link embedding.** For years, link embedding was never an option on Twitter, but that has recently changed, allowing advertisers to hyperlink blog posts or feature previews instead of just a shortened URL like the olden days.

Cons:

- 1. Limited analytics.** The breadth and precision of Twitter analytics is not comparable to that of Facebook or Google, so don't expect any advanced features to accompany your campaigns on this platform.
- 2. Twitter is cluttered.** This is a user experience bit, and unlike Instagram where it's almost impossible to miss an ad, Twitter users might just stumble right past your content.
- 3. Limited audience.** As of 2019, Twitter was reporting 330 million monthly active users, which is still more than LinkedIn, but much less than Facebook and Instagram. LinkedIn is also a more focused B2B platform as compared to Twitter.

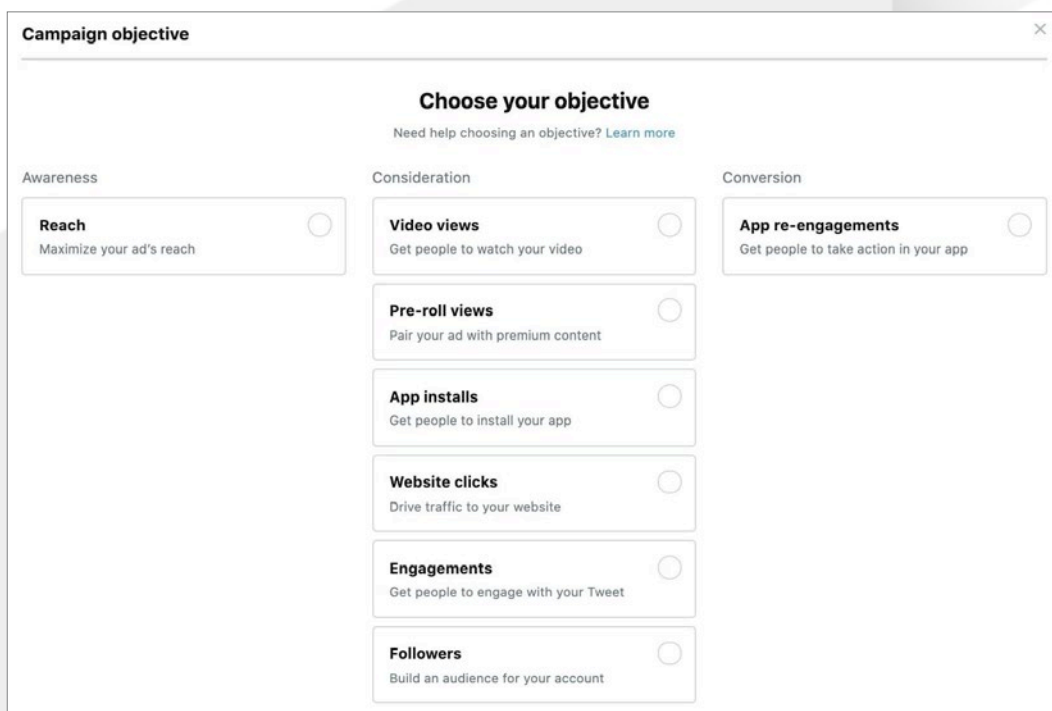
How to launch an effective Twitter campaign

1. Start with your unique selling proposition (USP)

If you haven't already, use the tactics outlined in section 1.1 to help you isolate your USP.

2. Choose your ad objective

Here are your choices:



The screenshot shows a 'Campaign objective' selection window. At the top, it says 'Choose your objective' with a link to 'Learn more'. Below this, there are three main categories: Awareness, Consideration, and Conversion. Under Awareness, there is one option: 'Reach' (Maximize your ad's reach). Under Consideration, there are five options: 'Video views' (Get people to watch your video), 'Pre-roll views' (Pair your ad with premium content), 'App installs' (Get people to install your app), 'Website clicks' (Drive traffic to your website), and 'Engagements' (Get people to engage with your Tweet). Under Conversion, there is one option: 'App re-engagements' (Get people to take action in your app). Each option has a radio button next to it.

Source: Twitter for Business

Here are some additional details to help guide your objective selection:

- **Awareness**

- Reach. Classic billboard style advertising. The more eyeballs, the better, and you're billed per 1,000 impressions.

- **Consideration**

- Video views. A little further down the funnel, you might want to introduce a salesy video. You get billed per view.
- Pre-roll videos. Your video ads get put in front of the videos of premium content partners, and you get billed per view.
- App installs. Great for SaaS companies looking for a quick download, and you only get billed per download.
- Website clicks or conversions. Classic digital ad CTA where you will get billed per website visit.
- Engagements. Best paired with promoted tweets that you're aiming to maximize likes, replies, and shares for. You are then billed per engagement.
- Followers. Best paired with a promoted accounts campaign and you will be billed for each new follower that you acquire.

- **Conversion**

- App re-engagements. Get existing app users to get back into your app, and you're billed for each app click.

3. Choose your ad format

On Twitter, there are only a few different ad formats which makes it rather simple for users to launch B2B campaigns.

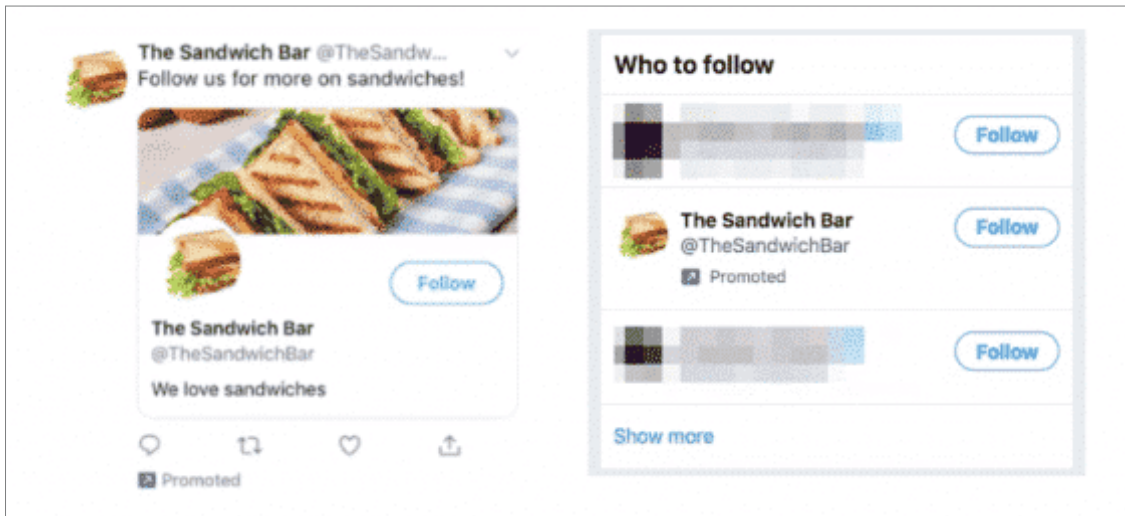
Here are the available Twitter formats:

- **Promoted tweets.** These are your standard newsfeed ads that are prompted to people outside of your existing audience. These ads consist of text, image/video (with video autoplay), as well as hyperlinked URLs. These ads will appear in user timelines, on user profiles, and at the top of search results for both mobile and desktop users.

Source: Twitter for Business

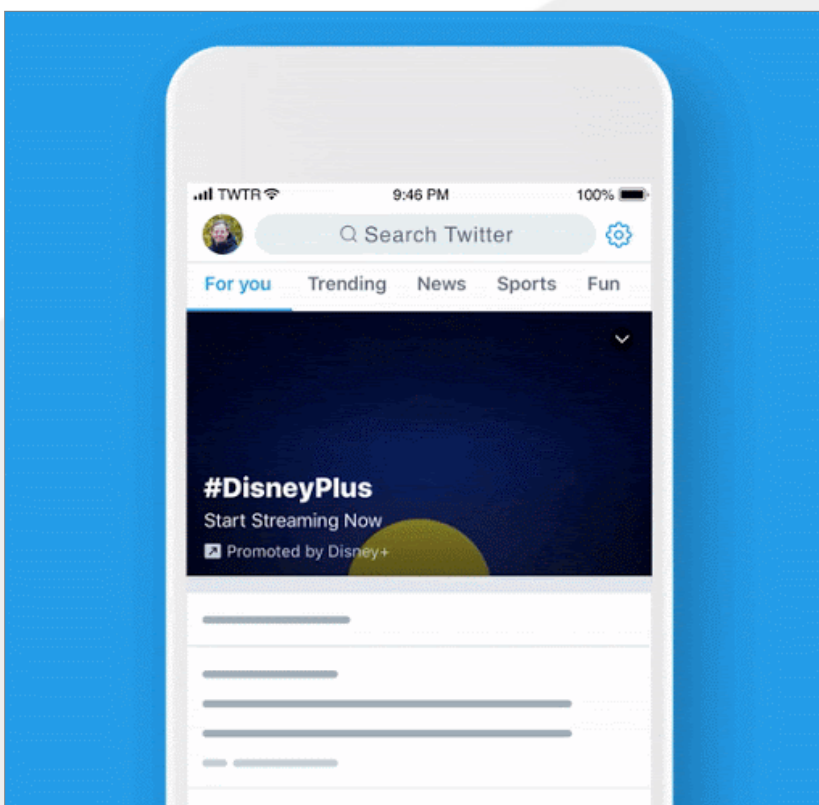


- **Promoted accounts.** This is an opportunity to promote your brand's entire Twitter account. These ads are displayed in potential followers' timelines, the "Who to follow" suggestions pane, as well as search results windows.



Source: Twitter for Business

- **Promoted trends.** A promoted trend shows up on the right-hand side of the newsfeed on desktop as well as the first result in the "For you" section under explore. When clicked, trends will see the search results for that topic, but with one of your branded tweets as the top result. As seen below, Twitter also recently released video and GIF support for this ad type.



Source: Twitter for Business

- **Promoted moments.** These are essentially Twitter story ads, allowing users to curate a collection of similar tweets that tell a story.

4. Create your audience

Twitter allows users to create audiences from a variety of demographic, audience, and custom features. The most unique segmentation variables are surrounding the ability to isolate Twitter users based on the conversations that they might be participating in on the platform, as well as targeting users based on their movie and TV preferences as a key interest variable.

Here are some of those features:

- **Demographics**
 - Geography, gender, language, and age.
 - Device models, carriers, OS versions, and platforms.
- **Audience features**
 - Conversation targeting.
 - Event targeting.
 - Tweet Engager targeting.
 - Keyword targeting.
 - Movies and TV show targeting.
 - Interest and follower lookalike targeting.
- **Custom audiences**
 - Audiences from lists.
 - Audiences from the web.
 - Audiences from mobile apps.

Find out more details on these ad formats [here](#).

5. Set up your ad group and bidding strategy

Twitter is somewhat unique when it comes to ad groups and bidding strategy. Although it might be easier to stick to a single ad group, you should run multiple so that you can experiment with different audiences, creative, timing, budget, and more.

Other platforms generally don't allow you to target different audiences within the same campaign, so this can be a great way to test theories and prove hypotheses without costing you too much time.

Now, it's time to set your bid type. For those new to Twitter ads, "automatic bidding" can be a great way to see how bidding works and establish benchmarks for future campaigns without blowing your budget. However, if you want to get serious about your Twitter ad game, then you may want to test "target cost" and "maximum bid" options.

Why target cost?

- You identify what an action (website clicks) is worth to you (ex. \$4.00).
- The Twitter ad algorithm will win you bids at auctions above and below this mark (ex. \$3.50 and \$4.50) to create this average, providing access to larger markets that may have exceeded a set price.

Why maximum bid?

- You determine the most that you're willing to pay for an action at auction, setting a firm ceiling on your ad spend.
- The ad algorithm will still win you auctions that are below your maximum bid.

6. Write your ads

There are a few things you're going to want to keep in mind as you craft text content for Twitter:

- Clear
- Concise
- And compelling

H*ll, we could even call it the 3 C's of Twitter text. But that's pretty much it. Twitter is an impact-first platform, so the more you can say in fewer words, the further your message will carry. Oh, and make sure you do it in less than 280 characters or else Twitter is actually going to cut you off (you should aim for less than 140 characters).

This same logic should go into your CTAs as well. There should be no confusion surrounding the action that you are trying to solicit.

For enhanced Twitter CTAs, consider the following:

- Match language and style to your ad objective. If video views is your primary CTA, then don't try to also redirect traffic to your site with a shortened link.
- Experiment with CTA styles (shortened links, embedded links, Twitter page views, etc).
- Make it direct. Soft sells and obscure offers don't work on Twitter. Clearly explain the offering in text, and then state the CTA directly.

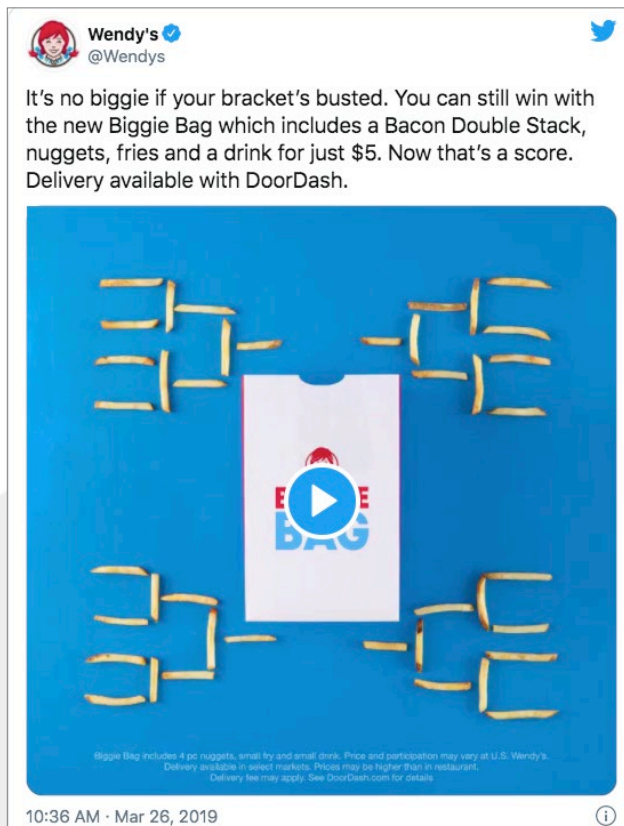
7. Create visual content

When words aren't exactly the emphasis, visuals become even more important. First of all, you're going to want to be sure that you're adhering to Twitter's creative ad specs (which can be found here).

Some tips for greater visual impact on Twitter include:

- Quality first. There's no room for mis-sized or low quality pictures and videos on Twitter.
- Make sure your imagery is eye-catching so that users actually stop scrolling through their feed.
- Leave some ambiguity so that the user takes the time to read the post and digest the CTA.
- Get creative surrounding events. Being that Twitter is highly frequented as a news outlet, event-based strategies can be highly effective.

Check out this March Madness related ad by Wendy's:



Source: Twitter @Wendys

8. Monitor performance and optimize

Here are the best optimizations you can make with the help of your Twitter Analytics dashboard:

- Kill the worst performers. If campaigns are under-performing as compared to expectations and other campaign variations, then they should be tweaked or replaced with new challengers.
- Consider increasing your bid on campaigns that are performing well and may reach a larger audience with a larger bid.
- Replace creatives on long running ads to minimize wearout.
- Try injecting stats or data points into the text of lower performance ad variants.
- Consider separating mobile and desktop targeting and run different ads to each. Mobile users are more receptive to shorter, more engaging copy/visuals, whereas desktop users might be more responsive to more in-depth ad content.

Find additional insights from Twitter [here](#).

1.9 Influencer Marketing

People trust people. This has always been true in sales and marketing, and it's increasingly so in the modern B2B marketing space. However, when most people think of influencer marketing, they imagine that local celeb that's doing not-so-subtle promotion for a local clothing store on his or her instagram page. This is classic B2C, but influencer marketing is actually more effective in the B2B space.

According to Biz Journals, 91 percent of B2B purchases in the United States are influenced by word of mouth.

A consumer might take a chance on that \$30 tee, but that \$3,000 software subscription for their business is a different story. That's why the B2B referral isn't going anywhere and influencer marketing is one of the fastest ways to create that engagement.

Here are a couple examples of effective B2B influencer marketing campaigns.

1. Microsoft and National Geographic partner with female adventure photographers to advocate for women in STEM



Source: Shane Barker

2. American Express' Amex Ambassador Campaign



Source: Grin

Pros:

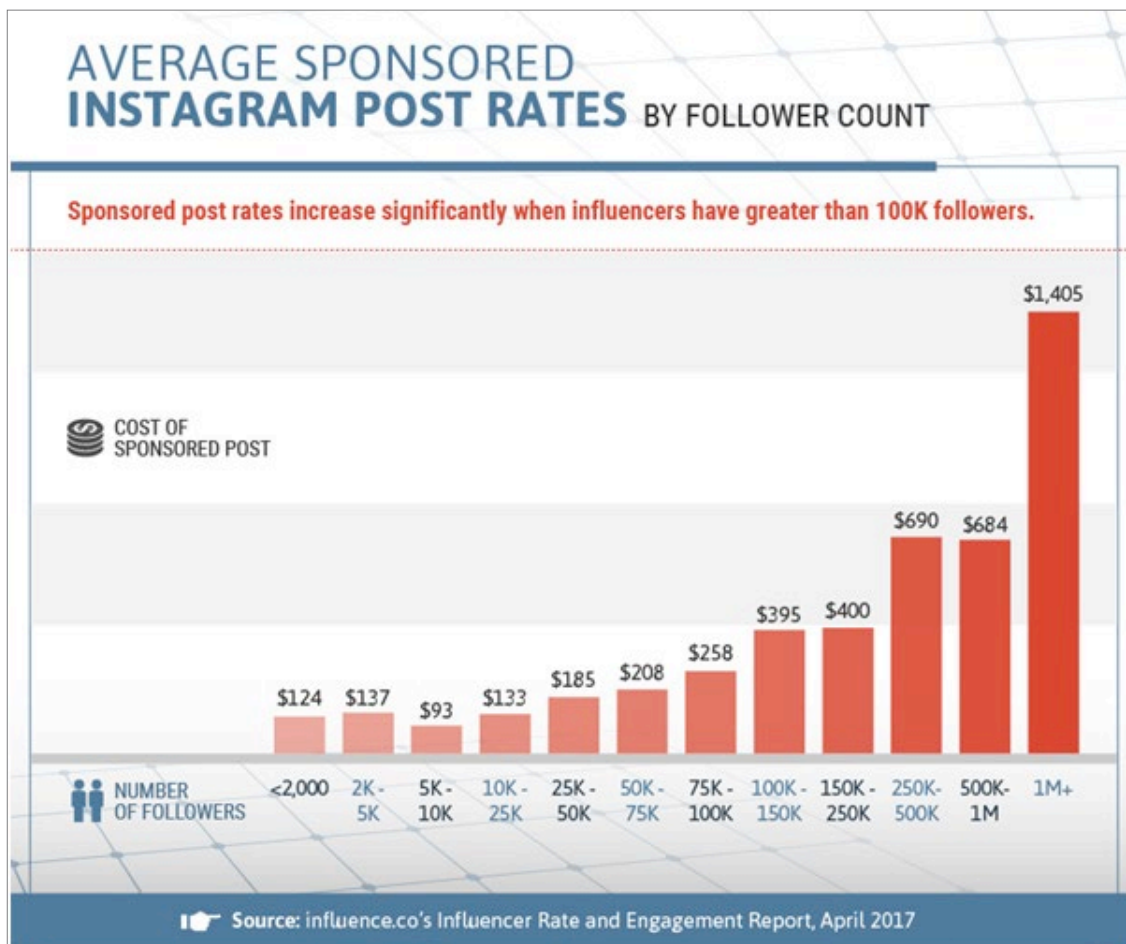
- 1. Earned newsfeed space.** Unlike traditional paid ads that are sometimes seen as pollution in the newsfeed, influencer recommendations appear organically and promote better goodwill for your brand.
- 2. Personal brand loyalties.** Consumers tend to develop stronger relationships with personal brands than with business brands. A byproduct of this is an increased likelihood of consumers to consider product or brand recommendations stemming from a person, rather than a brand or a branded ad.
- 3. Reach otherwise difficult customers and markets.** Some markets are particularly resistant to conventional advertising tactics, or might be difficult to reach through conventional means, but influencer strategies offer a more organic approach to acquiring that reach through blog, social, or otherwise.
- 4. High cost/benefit ratio.** According to a study by Tomoson, businesses are earning \$6.50 for every dollar spent on influencer marketing, and the top 13 percent are making over \$20.
- 5. Influencer marketing + Instagram = seriously high impact.** There's a reason that both of the influencer marketing examples I drew upon were sourced from Instagram. Firstly, 59 percent of influencers prefer Insta. Secondly, engagement rates on Insta average 7.2 percent as compared to 1.4 percent on the likes of Twitter. And lastly, because Instagram users actually don't mind sponsored content.

Cons:

- 1. Delayed ROI.** Ideas take root much slower in the B2B space. Although influencer efforts may be reaching the right audience and conveying the right message, it will undoubtedly take time and message repetition to convince the right people to take the next step.
- 2. Attribution.** As suggested above, B2B purchases are much more intricate and involved than most B2C purchases, and directly attributing lead generation to influencer efforts can often prove difficult.
- 3. Identifying the right influencers.** If you are having a hard time reaching your audience in the first place, then it's unlikely that you are aware of influencers that they are engaging with. Fortunately, there are software solutions that can assist on this front. Platforms like CreatorIQ, Popular Pays, and Mavrick are a few of the industry leaders.

4. Identifying the right platform. Determining whether you should be pursuing a blog partnership, a social partnership, or otherwise can also be a difficult feat. However, some of the above listed platforms can also assist on that front.

5. Cost. Depending on whether you are using micro influencers, mega influencers, and the frequency with which you are launching sponsored content—costs can become rather high.



How to launch an influencer marketing campaign

1. Identify objective

The first step is always identifying what your goal for the influencer campaign will be.

Some possible B2B influencer campaign objectives include:

- Build or strengthen brand awareness
- Drive social engagement/interactions
- Improve TOFU conversions (newsletters, free trials, etc.)
- Collect customer insight/data (surveys, analytics, etc.)

2. Look for existing advocates

Once you've identified what you want out of your campaign, then you can begin working to identify the "who" of the equation. And quite often, the best place to start for this step is within your company's existing social circles.

The "who" must be:

- Someone with a sizeable social following on your desired platform (minimum 5,000)
- Someone who influences your customers. If you sell software to local business clientele, then you're going to want to target someone that has strong relationships with local businesses within a target community (ex. Sacramento)

Now, the larger your company, the easier it will be for you to find advocates within your existing social circles.

3. Contract negotiations

B2B influencer contracts should be negotiated for much longer terms than their B2C counterparts. According to Convince & Convert, you shouldn't expect attributable results from an influencer marketing campaign for up to six months. As a result, they recommend that you should negotiate influencer relationships that last one year at a time.

4. Content creation

Influencer marketing content takes a bit of a different form than that of many other paid and organic campaigns. Unlike your Facebook ads, the content is likely to be created by the influencer and then approved by you.

In order to facilitate this, you will have to provide the influencer with whatever materials they need to promote your offering.

Some key materials include:

- Custom URLs/promo codes
- Swag or other promotional materials
- Additional production materials if negotiated

5. Track performance

As mentioned above, custom URLs and promo codes should likely be used to enable attribution. You will then want to monitor site traffic and conversions stemming from the influencer and map that performance over the duration of your contract.



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