

A QUICK LOOK AT:
SOCIAL MEDIA FOR BUSINESS

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Starting a brand new social media presence for your business from scratch in 2017 is daunting. It'd be like you had never heard The Beatles, and suddenly you're supposed to deliver a keynote address discussing the evolution from *Please Please Me* to *Abbey Road*. Where would you even begin? There's so much to absorb and consider.

Even if you aren't starting from scratch, the world of social media changes so frequently and drastically that you might not think investing the time (and money) into updating your accounts is worth it. "Can't I just hire an intern to handle our Facebook page and call it a day?" Well sure, you could — but wouldn't you rather explore what is often the single most cost-effective strategy in a digital marketing campaign?

BUILD BRAND AWARENESS

At the ground level, social media is still one of the most effective tools you have to create awareness of your brand. Once a medium for mostly younger generations, social media is now largely embraced by all age groups. In fact, Facebook boasts nearly two billion users across the world.

Almost everyone has a Facebook or Twitter account, not to mention other accounts on newer platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, or Pinterest.

“ Like it or not, regardless of your industry or niche, people will look for your brand on social media. ”

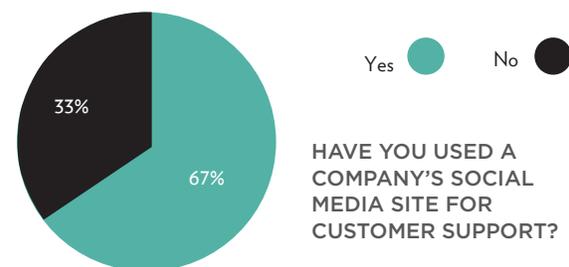
They're looking for your story; they're looking to learn more about your company and your products — don't you want to be the one leading that conversation?

Social media allows you to show your customers a side of your company that traditional advertising typically doesn't. Yes, you can be funny, but you can also give people a behind-the-scenes look at your business. For B2B industries in particular, where you don't necessarily have a flashy, consumer-facing product, this can be particularly powerful. Being able to show the human element of your business and create a connection beyond the traditional business-to-customer relationship can go a long way towards establishing brand trust and loyalty.

FOSTER CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Think about the last print ad you ran or billboard you placed: do you ever wonder how people reacted to it? Wouldn't you like to know what was going through their mind as they saw it, or what questions they had for you? Well, with social media, you don't have to wonder. Creating a space for an open, 1:1 dialogue is unique to social media, and it's one of the most powerful aspects of the medium.

Sure, you can get that level of intimacy through a phone call or an email, but those conversations (which could answer questions that many of your customers have) are not built for public consumption. Furthermore, social media is becoming the new standard for customer service.



A survey by JD Power & Associates found that 67% of all online users have consulted a company's social media channels for support.

The beauty of social media is that it allows you to create conversations in real-time: posting a piece of content and then receiving feedback almost instantaneously. You're speaking directly to your audience, and their responses are unfiltered by distance, time, or technological restraints.

Consumers have also become used to the fact that they can speak directly to their favorite brands, which means you're missing out on these opportunities if you're not establishing a foothold in social media.

According to Sprout Social, 75% of users they surveyed follow brands they are looking to potentially buy from. 75 percent!

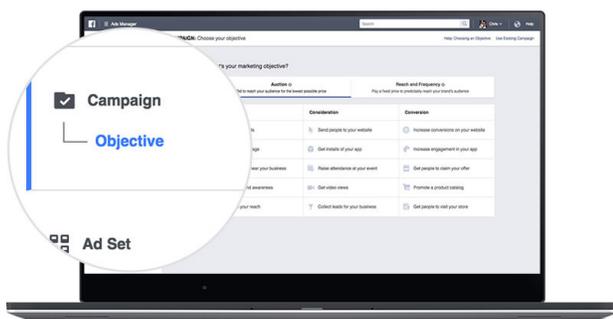
GENERATE TARGETED BUSINESS LEADS

Ok, so let's say you've got yourself established with a solid audience of followers, feeding them great content and fostering engagement — now what? Expanding your social media efforts beyond just the awareness and engagement stages is crucial to proving the effectiveness and ROI (“return on investment”) of your program. Using social media to generate new business and customer leads will allow you to do that more effectively, especially if your sales and marketing teams already know the monetary value of new leads.

But first, it's important to set a goal (or a series of goals) that you'd like to accomplish with your social media lead generation efforts. Whether you're looking to grow your mailing list or increase sign-ups for your upcoming webinar, you'll want to make sure you know what “success” looks like.

Regardless of what goal or conversion you're looking to drive, social media can be an effective engine of activity.

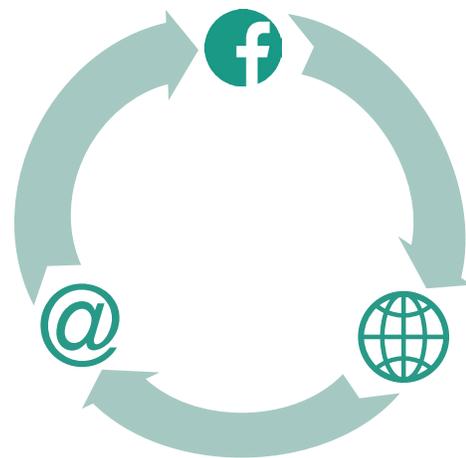
Ad platforms on sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter have become increasingly more sophisticated over the past few years, allowing you to target users to an incredibly precise level. Using geographic, demographic, behavioral, and other targeting parameters, you're able to make sure that the right people are seeing your message every time.



You can build your campaign targeting using your existing social media audiences or you can even build new audiences from external factors like website traffic or an existing mailing list. This allows you to separate out your “cold” leads (i.e. new Likes to your Facebook page) from your “warmer” leads (people who have joined your mailing list or webinar) and tailor your messaging accordingly.

“ Once your targeting is in place, your social media program can become even more integral to your overall marketing ecosystem. ”

Picture this: Your Facebook page drives traffic to your website, which then captures the visitor's email address, who you then email about your upcoming webinar which you're streaming live on Facebook. That's a pretty virtuous cycle, right?



ADAPT AND MEASURE

Marketers have fallen in love with social media because unlike a lot of traditional marketing and advertising tactics, you can both see immediate results and change course on a dime. The magic of “A/B testing” allows you to split-test messaging between various audiences and factors, letting you figure out where your message will resonate more effectively.

And as you might expect, social media creates a never-ending stream of data and analytics to engage with. From the top-level analytics like new followers, comments, and shares to more granular ones like engagement rate, cost-per-conversion, and organic versus paid reach, social media is a virtual playground for the data lovers in your company.

Thanks to this treasure trove of analytics, proving the ROI for your social media spend is often easy to do. For example, if you spent \$500 in March on your social media program and generated 100 conversions worth \$25 apiece, your program will have created an ROI of 400%!

Even if you’re not ready to push for conversions through your social media program yet, you can still generate a highly-targeted audience of users for a very small investment.

See below, for example, a recent Facebook Likes campaign we ran that generated 1,228 Facebook Likes for close to \$700, which breaks out to a cost-per-Like of only \$.56.

For such a niche audience, we were very encouraged by this level of growth in a short period. When this campaign ended, our client had 1,200+ new followers to absorb content, engage with the brand, and spread the word to their own social media networks.



Social media does not exist in a vacuum. It’s not a passing trend to be half-heartedly indulged or worse, ignored. Given the right strategy and tactics, it can and should become an integrated, cost-effective lead and awareness-generating tool. With a substantially smaller budget than you might spend on something like a traditional media campaign, social media can drive audience growth and brand loyalty, all the while generating targeted leads and valuable audience analytics.

ABOUT BOUVIER KELLY: Back in 1974, our agency was founded to do two things; help our clients succeed at any and every level; and have a little fun in this crazy, mixed-up world called advertising. Over the years, we’ve developed a really simple modus operandi: Data + Gut. Every decision we make is influenced by this mindset, a combination of analysis and intuition. Sometimes we lean a little more heavily on facts and studies; sometimes we rely on instinct and emotion to show us the way. But one thing’s for sure: you can’t have one without the other. It’s that balance which keeps our work grounded and our ambitions limitless. It also informs the way we strive to assemble talented, resourceful, and open-minded individuals who aren’t afraid to challenge and inspire one another for the good of both the agency and our clients.