

HOW TO CONQUER SOCIAL MEDIA

A GUIDE FOR
SMALL BUSINESSES



Mainstreethost
DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCY SINCE 1999



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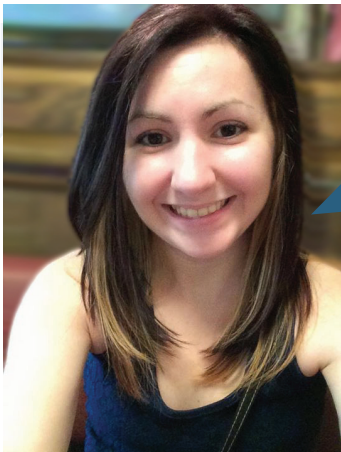
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INTRODUCTION

It seems like social media is an inescapable part of our society, and not just for people who use sites like Facebook and Twitter to connect with family, friends, and circles of peers.

Brands have also hitched a ride to the convoy of various social sites that are making words like “tweet,” “news feed,” and “pin” part of the vernacular of everyday individuals *and* the dialogue of marketers.

Major brands such as **Starbucks**, **General Motors**, and **Red Bull** can devote large budgets to their social media campaigns, sharing engaging photos and content and employing round-the-clock customer service reps to monitor social media conversations and complaints (**General Motors** spends around \$40 million on Facebook marketing alone).

However, a business doesn't need to have the budget or resources of a leading business-to-consumer juggernaut to conduct an effective social media marketing campaign. *Small businesses can engage and acquire customers through social media, too.*

IN FACT,
3 OUT OF 5 SMALL
BUSINESSES
HAVE GAINED **NEW CUSTOMERS FROM SOCIAL MEDIA.**

Yet, running a social media campaign can seem quite daunting because each network has a wealth of complexities.

Posting to sites like Facebook and Twitter without a well-developed strategy, merely hoping that something sticks, most likely won't even begin to scratch the surface of lead generation and customer engagement. And much of the social media marketing advice out there is shrouded in vague, unspecific buzz phrases: “engage fans!,” “post interesting content!,” etc.

This ebook is for those **small business owners who want to harness the power of social media** but don't have the time, money, or resources of big-budget brands. Its aim is to help make social media marketing a little less overwhelming and to replace those buzz phrases with specific, concrete guidelines.

The content in this ebook focuses on **Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Instagram**. The average social media user spends the most time on these networks, they have the most monthly visitors, and are most conducive for B2C social media marketing.



PART I

WHY DOES SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING MATTER?

PART I

WHY DOES SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING MATTER?

It's not surprising that the average consumer spends 37 minutes per day on social media:



Facebook has over 1.5 billion active users.



Pinterest reached 10 million monthly unique views faster than any standalone site in history.



Twitter has about 316 million active users.



Instagram has over 400 million active users.

These sites are contemporary culture staples. What better way to reach potential customers than to speak to them through a medium with which they're already familiar and frequently access?

Social media sites also directly influence consumers' purchasing behavior:

SOCIAL NETWORKS ARE THE
**2ND MOST POPULAR WAY THAT
PEOPLE RESEARCH BRANDS**
(JUST BEHIND SEARCH ENGINES).


CONSUMERS ARE
**71% MORE LIKELY TO MAKE A PURCHASE
BECAUSE OF SOCIAL MEDIA.**



FACEBOOK & TWITTER

People who follow brands on Facebook and Twitter are more likely to **consider, purchase from, and recommend their products and services to others.**

Recommendations are a major benefit of social media marketing because consumers trust recommendations from peers above all other forms of advertising (websites, TV ads, print ads, billboards, and emails). Peer recommendations also drive sales; people are more likely to buy something if a friend recommends it online. Sites like Facebook and Twitter give businesses a platform to tap into the power of word-of-mouth marketing.

77% SURVEYED BY HUBSPOT SAID THEY
OF B2C COMPANIES **ACQUIRED A CUSTOMER THROUGH FACEBOOK** 

33% THEY ACQUIRED A CUSTOMER
OF COMPANIES SAID **THROUGH TWITTER** 

PINTEREST

Pinterest has also proven to be effective from a marketing perspective:

29% OF PINTEREST USERS HAVE
**PURCHASED AN ITEM THAT
THEY'VE PINNED TO A BOARD.** 

Buyers referred from Pinterest are **10% more likely to buy something** than visitors referred from other social networks. These buyers also spend 10% more on average. People use the site to get information about products, find out about new merchandise, and seek advice and recommendations (again, here's the power of word-of-mouth marketing at work).



Instagram

Instagram is currently the fastest-growing social network, with a **9% increase in users from 2013 to 2014**. It is also where much of the millennial generation spends their time on social media, but don't let this fool you - Instagram isn't just for selfies! It's a valuable platform for brands to interact with their target audience, launch new products, host contests, and much more.

 **INSTAGRAM HAS THE
HIGHEST BRAND ENGAGEMENT
RATE AT 4.21%**
(ABOUT 15 TIMES HIGHER THAN ON FACEBOOK).

Consumers on Instagram follow brands to research products and services, keep up with the latest trends, and take advantage of exclusive offers. Over 90% of users are under 35 years old and spend an average of four hours per month on the network. That's a lot of potential face-time to an audience that's tech-savvy and looking to make educated purchase decisions.



PART II

WHAT DO PEOPLE WANT FROM BRANDS ON
VARIOUS SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS?

PART II

WHAT DO PEOPLE WANT FROM BRANDS ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

One of the first steps in conducting an effective social media marketing campaign is outlining goals. Before posting, tweeting, and pinning away, a small business needs to define specific goals for the initiative. Whether it's acquiring leads, raising brand awareness, conversing with existing customers, or sparking the interest of new followers, these aims are something a small business can revisit over and over again when assessing whether its marketing campaign is on the right path or needs tweaking.

Another important element of social media marketing is knowing how to appeal to consumers. Social media is expanding at an incredible rate, and users have built strong social networks by using them frequently.

They also have certain expectations from brands when it comes to social media. Consumers follow brands for specific reasons, and in order to use social media to its maximum potential, brands need to keep these reasons in mind. They need to connect with users, meet them on their level, and stay in touch with their unique needs and desires.

WHY PEOPLE FOLLOW BRANDS ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

1. They want special offers/deals
2. They are current customers
3. The brand posts interesting or entertaining content
4. Their friends are fans of the brand
5. They want access to service, support, or product news



The number one reason people follow brands is to receive special deals.

Here are two examples of small businesses that keep this in mind:



Jim's Steakout, "Home of the Best Steak Hoagy" in Buffalo, NY, loves dishing out gift cards through Facebook promotions and contests.



Sweet Jenny's, an ice cream shop also located in Buffalo, NY, gives away some of their sweet treats to Facebook fans that "like" or "share" their posts.

When it comes to offering exclusive deals for Facebook users, research shows that using the phrase "\$X off" generates twice the engagement of "X% off." Don't make consumers do the math; keep the offer simple and straightforward and tell them exactly how much money they'll save.

POSTING TIP:

People also follow brands to read interesting/entertaining content. The overwhelming majority of people interact with brands on social media sites by reading the posts that appear in their news feeds. Thus, content is key. A small business can post, tweet, and pin constantly, but if it's not posting compelling content that reaches people, its efforts will be all for naught. Exactly what type of content is most effective for each network?



FACEBOOK: CONTENT & TIMING

Facebook is a must when it comes to social media marketing campaigns because it has some of the greatest impact on purchasing behavior. It's also the site that's most useful for establishing, promoting, and protecting a B2C company.

CONTENT:

When it comes to Facebook, photos receive the most likes, comments, and shares, followed by status updates, videos, and links. According to Facebook:



POSTS THAT INCLUDE A **PHOTO ALBUM** GENERATE ABOUT **180% MORE ENGAGEMENT**



POSTS WITH **PICTURES** GENERATE **120% MORE ENGAGEMENT.**



POSTS WITH **VIDEOS** GENERATE ABOUT **100% MORE ENGAGEMENT.**

Very short posts (less than 30 characters) and very long posts (over 600 characters) tend to receive more likes, and long posts generally receive a greater number of shares. Fill-in-the-blanks and posts that ask questions also generate more engagement. When it comes to questions, it's best to use the words "where," "when," and "should," and avoid the word "why."

TIMING:

The **best time of day to post on Facebook is 1pm-4pm**, when most users are checking their news feeds on their lunch break and towards the end of the typical work day, and the worst time is from 8pm-8am. Posts published on the weekends generate even more engagement. Social media scientist Dan Zarrella chalks this up to a phenomenon called contra-competitive timing: social media chatter slows down on the weekends, so brands that talk when everyone else is silent receive more attention.

There is one caveat to this information. Timing varies to some degree for each individual business, depending on the age and location (among other things) of its target demographic. The best way for a business to determine its ideal posting times is to experiment; post at different times, see which posts garner the most responses, and see who responds.

When it comes to posting frequency, small businesses also want to post regularly enough so that fans see their posts, but not so often that they clutter fans' news feeds (one of the main reasons people "unlike" Facebook business pages is because a business posts too often).



**THE GENERAL RULES OF THUMB FOR POSTING ON FACEBOOK ARE:
APPROX. 10 POSTS PER WEEK & NO MORE THAN 2 PER DAY.**



■ TWITTER: CONTENT & TIMING

CONTENT:

According to Dan Zarrella, to maximize the likelihood of retweets on Twitter, about **60-80% of your tweets should contain links**. Ten percent of tweets should be replies.

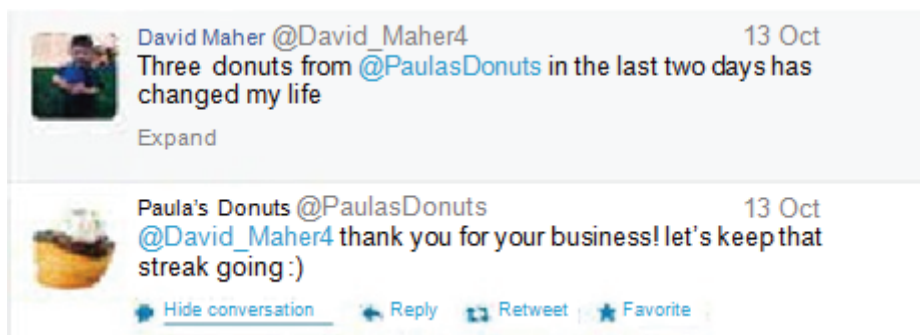
And because we can't talk about Twitter without mentioning hashtags, using them in tweets can generate increased engagement, but only up to a certain point. Tweets with one or two hashtags receive 21% higher engagement than those with three or more.

A small business certainly wants to tweet links to drive traffic to its site, but there's also something to be said for a business that converses with customers through Twitter. **Coca-Cola** recently laid out its new social media strategy in a YouTube video entitled "Content 2020" and said this:

“ LET'S NOT JUST LISTEN;
LET'S CONVERSE. ”

A brand that can talk to its audience through social media is a personable, responsive, and attentive one that is in touch with its consumers and interested in their opinions. Whether it's responding to followers, answering questions, or simply retweeting kind words, a business that can talk with individuals makes them seem less like an intangible, indefinable commercial entity, and more like an approachable, "human" one.

An example of a small business listening and conversing with one of its customers, thereby putting the words of Coca-Cola into practice, is Buffalo's own Paula's Donuts:



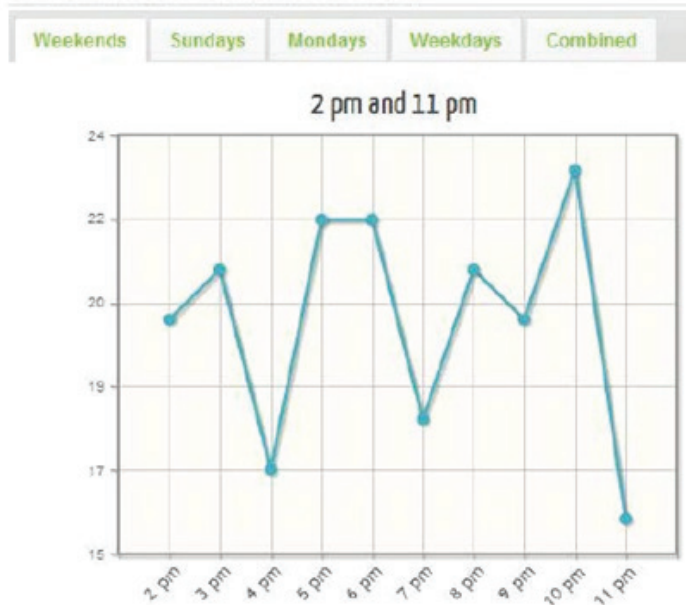
TIMING:

Again, timing depends on the social media habits of a business' customer base. There are several tools that help companies determine their ideal tweeting times. **Tweriod** looks at an individual's tweets and the tweets of followers to determine the time that will gain someone the most exposure on Twitter.

TweetWhen is another great tool.

On average, try to tweet five times per day, although again, this may change depending on your business' target audience.

Most followers are online between



■ PINTEREST: CONTENT & TIMING

CONTENT:

Because Pinterest is so visually oriented, it has a dynamic all its own. Thus, while any business can use Facebook and Twitter effectively, Pinterest is more suited to businesses that can harness the power of visual content. Beautiful, eye-catching, intriguing, humorous, and/or aesthetically pleasing images are Pinterest gold. Hence, the top categories on Pinterest:

HOME

STYLE/FASHION

INSPIRATION/EDUCATIONAL

ARTS & CRAFTS

FOOD

SEASONAL/HOLIDAYS



Any business in the fashion, culinary, photography, or home goods industries can do extremely well on the site because of their visually-based nature. Pinterest is a female-dominated platform, as 85% of users are women, and most users are between the ages of 15 and 40. This is a market that craves visual content and is often in a purchasing frame of mind when browsing their Pinterest feed.

85% OF PINTEREST USERS ARE WOMEN, & MOST ARE AGES 15-40.

That's not to say a business that doesn't sell clothes, food, or furniture can't do well. **General Electric** is extremely effective on the network, and an electrical company on Pinterest seems pretty counter-intuitive. **Mashable** is another company effectively using the network by incorporating infographics and pictures of tech gadgets. The important thing to remember is that Pinterest etiquette prohibits overt self-promotion. Of course, the aim of a Pinterest marketing effort is to drive traffic to a business' site; however, it's really more about curating and sharing content related to your vision than it is about selling.

BUSINESSES USE PINTEREST TO PROMOTE A LIFESTYLE, NOT TO PUSH PRODUCTS.

For example, a furniture store won't get very far solely pinning images of its own products. Instead, it should also feature complementary products from other brands like West Elm, Home and Gardens, or Real Simple. The same goes for a clothing company; images of the company's own clothes can do well, but its Pinterest account should consist of other pins, such as fashion icons, inspirational ensembles, designers, etc.

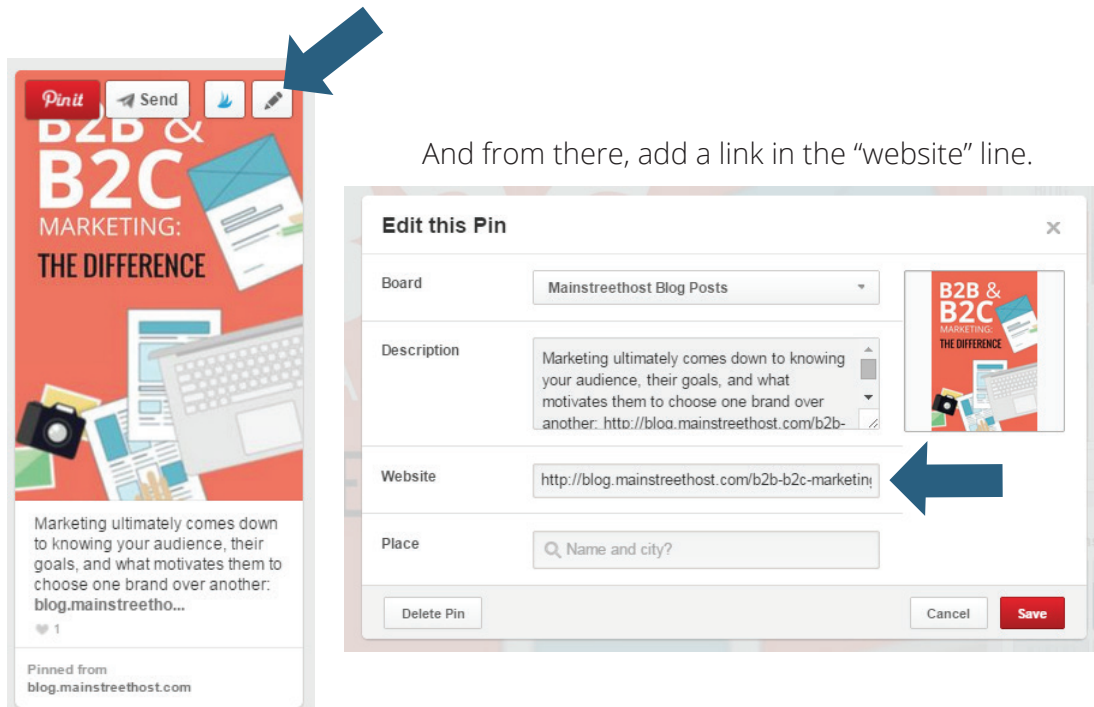
One thing companies engaged in Pinterest marketing want to keep in mind is the **"Pin it" button**. It is a social sharing button, like the Facebook "Like" or the Twitter "Tweet," and adding it to a website invites people to share content from that site on Pinterest.



(PINTEREST OFFERS STEP-BY-STEP DIRECTIONS ON ITS SITE ON **HOW TO INSTALL THE PIN IT BUTTON.**)



The ultimate goal of Pinterest marketing is to drive traffic to a specific web page through links. However, if a business uploads a pin of one of its own products, a link is not automatically attached; you have to do this manually. To add a link to a pin, click “Edit” and copy and paste the URL into the link field, as demonstrated below.



TIMING:

When it comes to sharing on Pinterest, the **best times to pin are from 2pm-4pm and 8pm-1am**, and the worst time is from 5pm-7pm. These times seem pretty logical, as users may look to unwind at the end of the day and are typically running errands or cooking dinner during the early evening.

Pinterest users also spend about 14 minutes per visit, which adds up to a lot of face-time over the course of the day. This is a great indicator of the impact that visual content has on social media and engagement. The beauty of Pinterest is that there’s no set number of times you should post per day.

It is a platform to really educate your followers, so users are happy to take the time to read quality content if it is pertinent and valuable to them. As long as you pin a variety of educational and entertaining content, your followers are unlikely to get bored or annoyed by the volume of posts you share.



■ INSTAGRAM: CONTENT & TIMING

CONTENT:

Like Pinterest, Instagram is a visually-based social network where users can share pictures with a short caption. It is also the fastest-growing platform today. Facebook acquired Instagram in April of 2012, and that has certainly helped skyrocket the site to over 400 million active users and over 40 billion photos shared. This is likely due to the fact that any Instagram photos can also be shared on Facebook and Twitter, where there is a strong user presence throughout the day. It is a site popular among millennials, as 90% of users are under age 35. Millennials will soon have the greatest purchasing power of all generations, so it's important that brands get their attention and keep it for years to come.

The visual aspect of Instagram allows for more engagement than some of the other networks can provide, and statistics show that an image on Instagram has 15 times the engagement of a Facebook post. The types of images that provide the best engagement for brands focus on customers, employees, or contests. Emphasizing special discounts, popular trends, and the employees that make your company successful provides a personal connection to users and makes you more relatable.

The beauty of visually-based networks like Instagram is the ability to be more transparent, from your production process to your corporate office and retail stores. Customers can get a sneak peek into what goes on behind the scenes to get their favorite products on store shelves.

TIMING:

The ideal times to post on Instagram are very similar to Pinterest since they attract a similar user base and both emphasize visual content. It is best to post on Instagram from 2pm-3pm and 9pm-8am, but unlike Pinterest **there's really no bad time to share images**. Between the Facebook-Instagram partnership and the nature of content shared, you can likely post at any time and see a response from your followers. To maximize user engagement, pay attention to what times of day you see the most "Likes" and comments, and schedule posts accordingly.

Another difference from Pinterest is that you should try to post no more than 2-3 times per day on Instagram. The types of images tend to be less complex than Pinterest (fewer infographics, tutorials, etc.), and users are generally looking for more amusing, casual content. Bombarding followers with too many images could potentially turn them off to your brand.



PART III

EXAMPLES OF BUSINESSES THAT
MANAGE SOLID FACEBOOK, TWITTER,
PINTEREST, & INSTAGRAM CAMPAIGNS

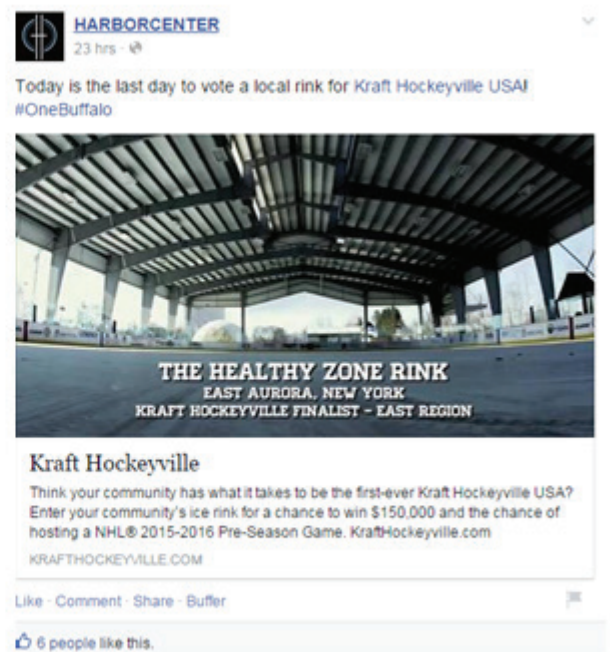


PART III

EXAMPLES OF BUSINESSES THAT RUN SOLID FACEBOOK, TWITTER, PINTEREST, AND INSTAGRAM CAMPAIGNS

Oftentimes, the most effective way to learn something is by example. The following businesses use social media to its fullest potential by posting regularly, engaging fans, and all the while creating brand awareness. In homage to my meteorologically maligned hometown of Buffalo, NY, all of the following businesses are from the Queen City. These examples prove that marketers don't need the budget of Starbucks or Pepsi in order to run solid campaigns; businesses can post, tweet, and pin effectively too.

FACEBOOK: EXAMPLE 1



HARBORCENTER is one of downtown Buffalo's newest developments, bringing the city's love of sports to a whole new level. The venue boasts two NHL-size ice rinks for several local hockey teams and public skating, (716) Food and Sport restaurant, a Marriott hotel, Tim Hortons Café and Bake Shop, and several retail stores. It's truly a one-of-a-kind complex that has brought new life to the city.



This passion for sports and for the city of Buffalo is very evident on their Facebook page and across social media. They feature pictures from hockey games and championships, promote upcoming events, and shed light on charitable events that the venue hosts or participates in.

A popular hashtag among Buffalo's sports teams is #OneBuffalo, to show the unity between the teams and their loyal fans. Their Facebook page is a sports fan's dream, and their love for Buffalo is unmistakable.

FACEBOOK: EXAMPLE 2

The Buffalo ice cream shop **Sweet Jenny's** is one small business that truly taps into the visual power of Facebook. Their Facebook page is filled with pictures of delicious-looking sweets the shop makes.

Sweet Jenny's also updates Facebook fans on the latest products in the store, special events, and local culinary happenings.

The Sweet Jenny's Facebook page is highly active and constantly filled with intriguing, visually appealing content. Additionally, they frequently run contests, offering users the chance to win free sundaes and pints of ice cream. They also make a habit of replying to questions and comments posted on their wall, which makes the business stand out from the social media crowd in a very positive way, as over two-thirds of questions posted by consumers go ignored.

Whether it's thanking a customer for kind words or answering specific questions, they always craft a prompt and helpful response.

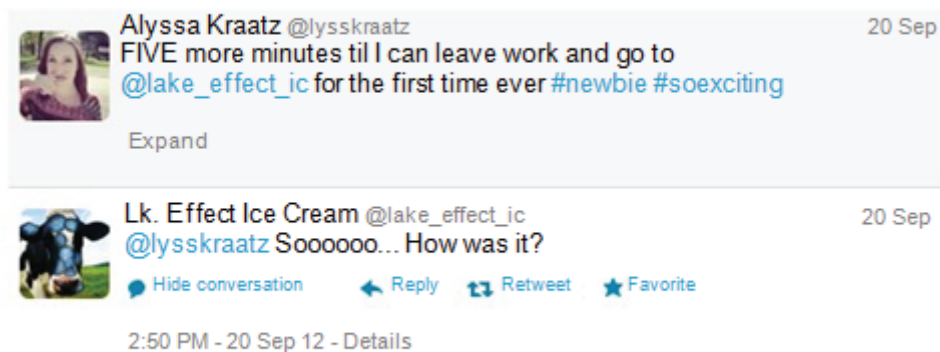


TWITTER: EXAMPLE 1

Lake Effect Ice Cream, a small ice cream store in the Buffalo suburb of Lockport, uses Twitter to broadcast store news, as well as inform followers of the latest and greatest ice cream flavors and specials. They also feature pictures of their customers and the store to provide a more personal, connected feel.



The store stays highly engaged with fans: retweeting them, replying to them, and engaging in witty banter:



By conversing with followers, Lake Effect Ice Cream shows that it's connected to and grateful for its consumer base. This fan-brand interaction makes the store seem very congenial and amiable, and the humor that appears in tweets and pictures gives the store an extremely approachable feel. It's evident that they're not just selling a product, but they're selling an experience, and that is what keeps loyal customers coming back time and time again.

And like the HARBORCENTER Facebook page, the Lake Effect Ice Cream Twitter account shows love for the local Buffalo community, further enhancing that friendly, personable vibe.



■ TWITTER: EXAMPLE 2

The Roaming Buffalo, a mobile food truck that travels throughout the Western New York area, is another example of a small business with a strong Twitter presence. It's highly active on Twitter, tweeting multiple times per day, which is key to succeeding on such a fast-paced network. The food truck uses Twitter primarily to inform followers of its current location.



PART III: EXAMPLES OF BUSINESSES THAT RUN SOLID FACEBOOK, TWITTER, PINTEREST, & INSTAGRAM CAMPAIGNS



Roaming Buffalo @RoamingBuffalo1

20 Sep

Parked right in front of M&T Bank on Main & Delevan 1130-2 (@The Roaming Buffalo Food Truck w/ 2 others) 4sq.com/SToWrP

[View photo](#)

A food truck is a type of business that can benefit tremendously from Twitter because the site thrives on a stream of brief, informative posts. Thus, a food truck, which frequently updates people on its whereabouts, is the perfect business for Twitter (and The Roaming Buffalo actually uses Twitter in conjunction with [Foursquare](#), an app that allows people to “check in” at various locations). Its Twitter account serves as a reliable, easily accessible resource for all those hungry Buffalonians who are curious as to where the food truck is located.

But The Roaming Buffalo doesn't stop at these frequent, location-based updates; it also gives followers behind-the-scenes glimpses at the truck's latest culinary undertakings.



Roaming Buffalo @RoamingBuffalo1

10 Sep

Delivery of the best crumbled blue cheese. You know what this means? [#chickenwingsouptime](#) [#Buffalo](#) pic.twitter.com/zhbM1o2l

[Hide photo](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#)



Roaming Buffalo @RoamingBuffalo1

10 Sep

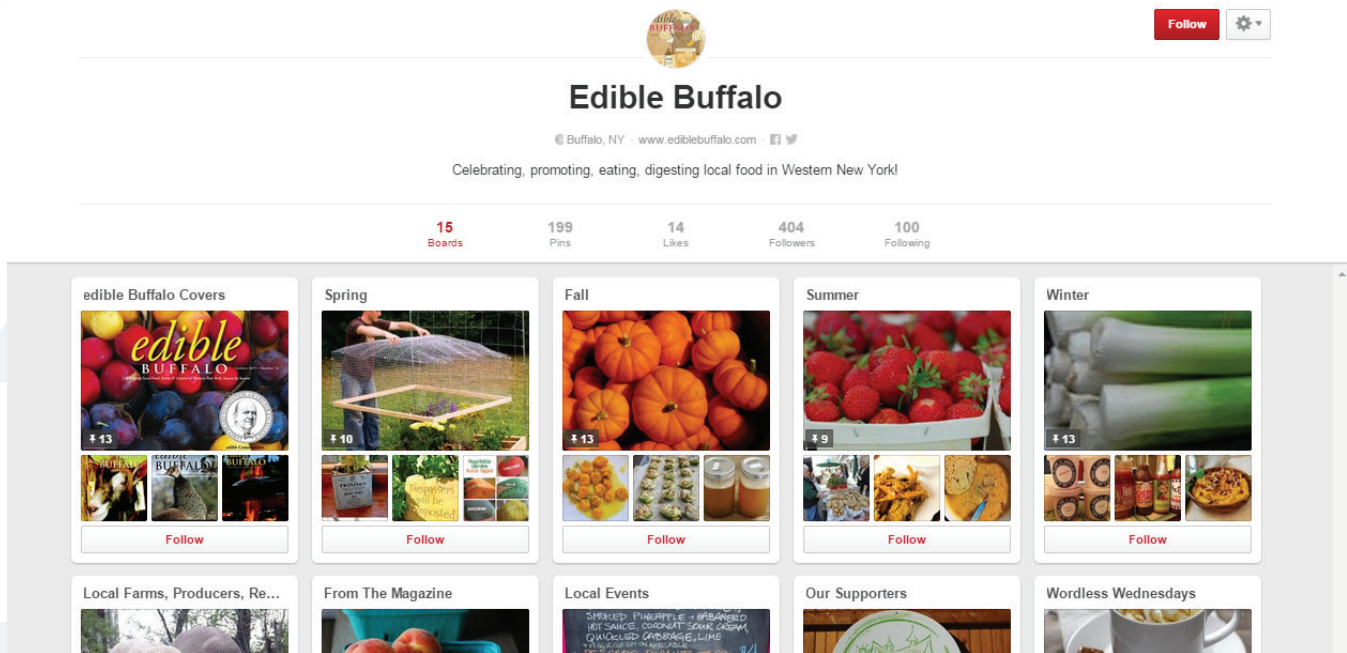
Today we are testing out a new menu item. Cheddar and BACON JAM stuffed burgers! Not on the menu just ask for the BJ special!

[Expand](#)

The food truck also makes a habit of replying to followers and quickly answering any questions people have.



PINTEREST: EXAMPLE 1



Edible Buffalo, a Western New York food magazine, has a Pinterest account that's both stunning from a visual perspective and effective from a marketing perspective. It boasts 15 boards and 199 pins, and their boards include a variety of categories: Edible Buffalo covers, Edible Buffalo recipes (many of these pins link back to the blog), seasonal boards, local businesses and farmers, and Wordless Wednesdays (which includes beautiful, eye-catching photos of food), to name a few.

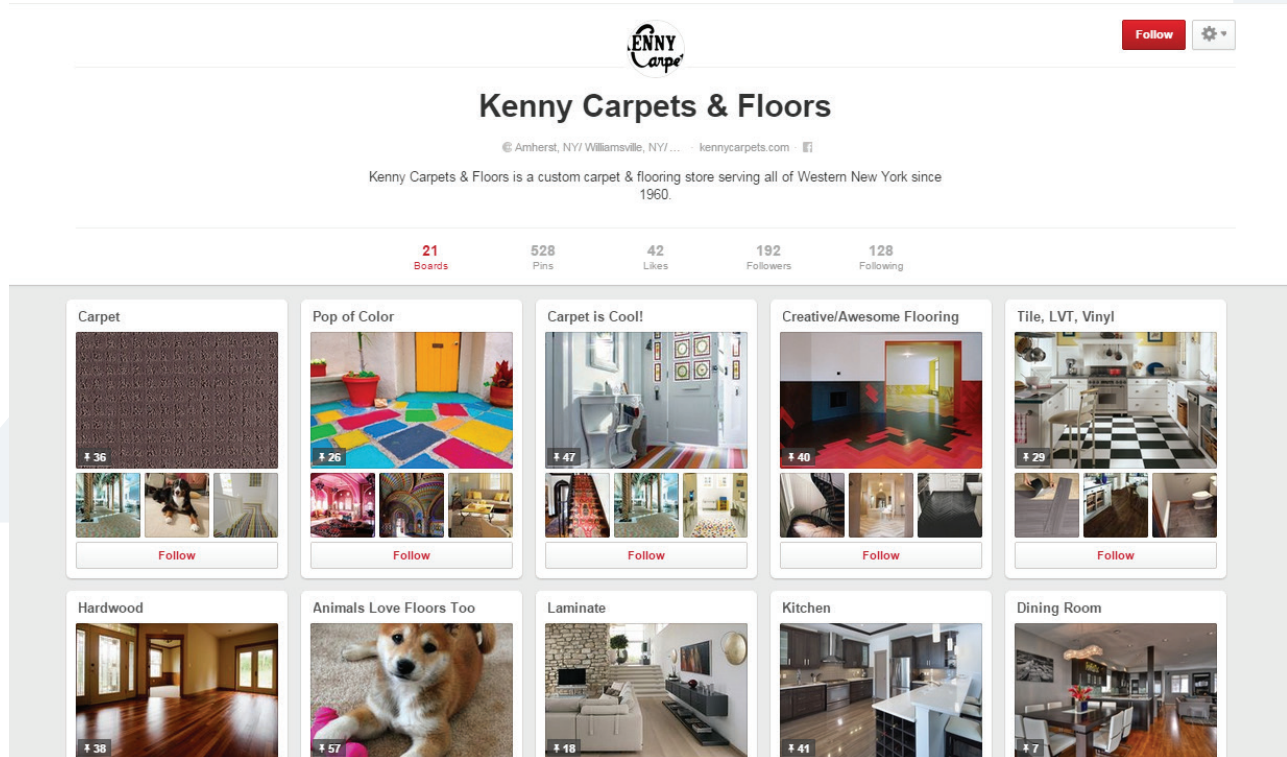
Edible Buffalo uses Pinterest to raise brand awareness and drive traffic to its blog, but it also uses Pinterest as a curation tool by pinning from other websites and users. In the process, it accumulates gorgeous photos of food and anything and everything culinary related. This is a prime example of how marketing works on Pinterest. Edible Buffalo uses the site to market itself, of course, but also to show its values and mission: its commitment to local businesses and high-quality cookery.

PINTEREST: EXAMPLE 2

Like Edible Buffalo, **Kenny Carpets & Floors** also uses Pinterest to curate beautiful images that relate to its industry.



PART III: EXAMPLES OF BUSINESSES THAT RUN SOLID FACEBOOK, TWITTER, PINTEREST, & INSTAGRAM CAMPAIGNS



Its Pinterest page has 21 boards and 528 pins, and it features boards devoted to beautiful kitchens and dining rooms, creative floors, and colorful décor. These serve as inspiration for people looking for carpet or flooring for their home by featuring the latest and greatest interior design trends. Because Kenny Carpets collects images from various websites and adds its own commentary to its pins, it establishes itself as a knowledgeable business in the industry.

Kenny Carpets even finds a way to capitalize on the proclivity and obsession Pinterest users have for animals with the humorous and adorable board “Animals Love Floors Too.”

INSTAGRAM: EXAMPLE 1

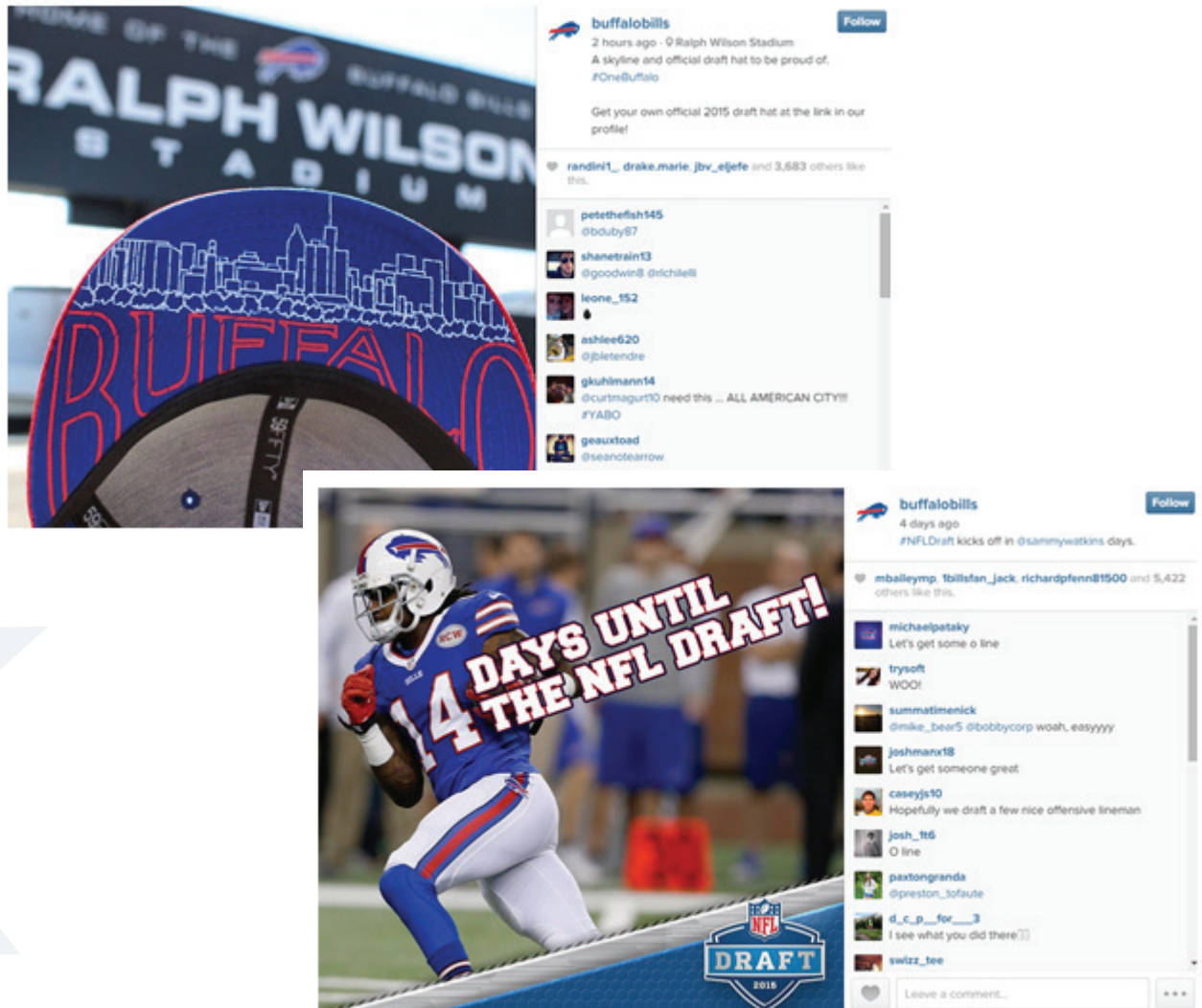
The **Buffalo Bills** are a great example of a company that successfully utilizes Instagram by sharing a variety of visual content that not only educates fans on upcoming games or events, but is also entertaining.

What I think is most effective about the Bills’ page is that they give followers real insight into the lives of the players that they look up to and respect. They share pictures from workouts, of players with their families, and highlights from memorable games. You realize that these athletes that you hold to such a high regard are just people like you and me, and it makes you want to support them that much more.



PART III: EXAMPLES OF BUSINESSES THAT RUN SOLID FACEBOOK, TWITTER, PINTEREST, & INSTAGRAM CAMPAIGNS

Their Instagram account doesn't focus on selling tickets or merchandise, but rather focuses on the importance of the team to the city of Buffalo and the exciting times that are ahead.



INSTAGRAM: EXAMPLE 2

The [Hydraulic Hearth Instagram](#) page is a foodie's dream. They post pictures of mouth-watering menu items and cocktails, and what's probably most impressive is their presentation! Their Instagram account is exactly how restaurants and bars succeed on the network. While they are promoting their restaurant and trying to encourage patrons to stop by through these delectable images, they don't have to come out and say just that. They let their pictures do the talking, which is the whole purpose of visually-based platforms like Instagram and Pinterest.



PART III: EXAMPLES OF BUSINESSES THAT RUN SOLID FACEBOOK, TWITTER, PINTEREST, & INSTAGRAM CAMPAIGNS

Their profile portrays an image of a modern, trendy restaurant and that's exactly what they are. When people follow businesses like this on Instagram, they're looking for art-worthy concoctions that ultimately help them make that Friday night "Where should we go out?" decision. Restauranteurs, take note of Hydraulic Hearth because their Instagram account is a model of how to do social media visuals right.



PART IV

MEASURING SOCIAL MEDIA ROI



PART IV MEASURING SOCIAL MEDIA ROI

With the amount of time and resources social media marketing requires, one question immediately comes to the mind of small business owners:

IS IT WORTH THE INVESTMENT?

Many so-called social media experts have weighed in on measuring social media return on investment, and they all agree on one thing: it's a difficult task, but ROI *can* be measured.

There are numerous approaches to tackling social media ROI (and you'll find a list of additional readings at the end of this ebook to get you started). We'll focus on some simpler methods here, but before we delve into those, consider this personal anecdote that we believe testifies to the complexity of measuring social media success.

Last February, a Buffalo bakery posted on Facebook about a special Valentine's Day brunch. They concurrently advertised the brunch in a weekend section of The Buffalo News. We saw the post on Facebook before the newspaper advertisement, and it was this Facebook post that prompted us to call and make a reservation. The bakery had no way of knowing how we learned about the event (the Facebook post or the newspaper advertisement) unless they asked. The effectiveness of their social media marketing paid off, **but the bakery didn't know that.**

Using a Facebook or Twitter-specific coupon is one way to keep track of sales that are a result of your social media efforts; posting offers on Facebook and Twitter with the phrase "mention this post/tweet and receive \$X off!" is a very simple tracking measure.



Roaming Buffalo @RoamingBuffalo110 Oct
Rainy day at @RoswellPark good news is we are right up front.
Better news, free drink with any purchase and mention of this post!
@BNMC

 from Buffalo, NY

Social media can also offer a return on investment in other ways. Because it offers businesses instant access to current and potential customers, you can use it to poll customers to get their opinions, insights, and recommendations: a restaurant asking people what they'd like to see on the menu, a coffee shop polling people on their favorite seasonal drink, etc.



CONCLUSION

FURTHER READING & ABOUT US



WHEN ASKED IF AN **ONLINE EXPERIENCE** HAS INFLUENCED **WHETHER OR NOT THEY BOUGHT A PRODUCT OR SERVICE** FROM A BRAND, **97% OF PEOPLE SAID YES.**

Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Instagram can seem quite infinite in their complexities, but hopefully this ebook has shed light on some of the best practices of social media marketing. With people using social media to research, discover, and recommend products, small businesses can effectively tap into the power of this type of marketing and offer users a positive online experience, making that 97% work in their favor.

SOURCES

ARTICLES:

HOW TO INTEGRATE HOOTSUITE WITH GOOGLE ANALYTICS

HOW TO DEFINE A STRATEGIC PLAN

3 STEPS TO MEASURING YOUR COMPANY'S SOCIAL MEDIA ROI

4 SOCIAL MEDIA GOALS EVERY BUSINESS SHOULD MEASURE

WEBSITES:

MINDJUMPERS

HUBSPOT

TECHCRUNCH

MASHABLE

DAN ZARRELLA

GET SATISFACTION

BUDDY MEDIA

SOCIAL MEDIA TODAY

MARKETING TECH

DIGITAL INFORMATION WORLD

EMARKETER

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

FAST COMPANY

JEFF HURT BLOG

COMPENDIUM

ABOUT MAINSTREETHOST

From SEO and web development to complete inbound marketing solutions, Mainstreethost offers everything you need to have a successful online presence. Through our proven marketing strategies, you'll turn strangers into visitors, visitors into leads, leads into customers, and customers into advocates of your brand.

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