

LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

The Marketing Guide for Local Business Owners

December 2015

5 KPIs

Every Online Business
Owner Should Be
Tracking

Making Facebook
Work Harder for
Your Bottom Line

*Is Your Business
Using Social Media
Properly?*

*How to Use
Instagram
to Increase
Your
Business*

How Retargeted
Advertising Can Help
Grow Your Small
Business



**5 Steps to Get
Your First 1,000
Subscribers**

Infographic:
Social Media
Image Guide

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Welcome!

As we prepare to flip the calendar into 2016, we take time to reflect on the changes and trends we experienced in 2015, and look forward to the challenges and opportunities the new year brings.

We hope you find this month's issue full of interesting articles and tips that you can apply immediately to help you grow your business.

In this month's issue, you'll find a good variety of articles covering many topics that are important to business owners. We hope you enjoy the articles on Facebook, KPIs, Re-Targeting, and other topics.

If you're not already receiving this magazine regularly, we suggest you add your email to our subscriber list. We have some exciting articles already in the works for the upcoming issues. Don't miss out!

If you find the magazine helpful, and know other local business owners that could benefit from receiving our magazine each month, please do us (and them) a favor by forwarding a copy to them.

As always, we welcome any comments or questions you might have, as well as the opportunity to explain how we've been able to help businesses just like yours.

To A Fantastic 2016!

David Akers
President / CEO
LMS Solutions, Inc.

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A Little About Us

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LMS Solutions was developed to give businesses of all sizes the ability to leverage the same cutting-edge marketing platforms that the Fortune 500 organizations use, at extremely affordable rates.

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Marketing Calendar

Plan your marketing messages around these upcoming holidays and proclamations.

December

World ALDS Month
National Write A Business Plan Month
National Tie Month
Tomato and Winter Squash Month
Universal Human Rights Month
Worldwide Food Service Safety Month

December 6th-14th - Hanukkah
Dec 25 - Christmas
December 26th-January 1st - Kwanzaa

1st - World AIDS Day
1st - National Day of Giving
2nd - National Mutt Day
3rd - International Day of Persons With Disabilities
4th - National Cookie Day
5th - International Volunteer Day
7th - National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
7th - Internatinoal Civil Aviation Day

10th - Human Rights Day
12th - Gingerbread House Day
15th - Bill of Rights Day
16th - Chocolate Covered Anything Day
17th - National Re-gifting Day
17th - Wright Brothers Day
18th - National Ugly Christmas Sweater Day
18th - Answer The Phone Like Buddy The Elf Day
18th - Free Shipping Day
21st - Crossword Puzzle Day
21st - Humbug Day
22nd - Winter Solstice
23rd - Festivus
26th - National Whiner's Day
27th - Fruitcake Day
28th - National Chocolate Candy Day
30th - Bacon Day
31st - Make Up Your Mind Day
31st - New Year's Eve

January

Cervical Health Awareness Month
Eye Care Month
Family Fit Lifestyle Month
Financial Wellness Month
Get Organized Month
International Brain Teaser Month
March of Dimes Birth Defects Prevention Month
National Glaucoma Awareness Month
National Staying Healthy Month
National Volunteer Blood Donor Month
Thyroid Disease Awareness Month
Walk Your Pet Month

January 1 - New Year's Day
January 18 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day

1st - Polar Bear Plunge Day
1st - World Day of Peace
2nd - Science Fiction Day
4th - Spaghetti Day
9th - National Take the Stairs Day
14th - Dress Up Your Pet Day
15th - Humanitarian Day
17th - Ben Franklin's Birthday
18th - Winnie the Pooh Day
19th - Popcorn Day
20th - Inauguration Day
21st - National Hugging Day
23rd - Pie Day
24th - Compliment Day
24th - Peanut Butter Day
26th - Spouse's Day
27th - Chocolate Cake Day
28th - Have Fun at Work Day
29th - National Puzzle Day
31st - Backward Day



Is Your Business Using Social Media Properly?

When business owners start getting involved in social media platforms, they tend to see a lot of people complaining about a lot of things. While it is understandable that a business owner does not want to get involved in online arguments about politics and religion, that business owner still needs to utilize social media to help his business grow. After all, social media platforms reach millions of people every day and it would be a bad business decision to ignore those millions of potential customers.

Social Media Demographics

You are wasting your time on social media if you are not

researching the demographics of each platform. For example, Facebook tends to appeal to an older audience, while Twitter is dominated by younger users. Business owners need to drop the myth that all social media platforms are the same and start looking at the details if they want to get results.

There are plenty of demographic profiles available online for the various social media platforms, and you should be using those profiles to determine which platforms you will utilize. If you are trying to reach a target audience that is 18 to 25 years old, then using Facebook is a waste of your time. Take the time to understand social media

demographics before you implement any social media strategy.

Social Media Business Rules

If you spend months building up a Facebook following of thousands of people for your business' Facebook page, then you could be disappointed when you find out that only a small percentage of those followers actually see the posts you create. Facebook is always looking for ways to monetize its service, and businesses now have to pay to get exposure for each Facebook post they publish.

If Facebook fits your target audience demographic and gets your messages

seen by the right people, then investing in Facebook advertising and boosting your posts is a good idea. But if Facebook is not the best way to reach your audience, then paying money to gain exposure on Facebook is a waste.

It is important to become familiar with the rules of a social media platform before you start investing money and time into using it to promote your business. Twitter may limit every post to only 140 characters, but you can reach targeted audiences with links to your promotional landing pages to get better results. Once you understand the way a social media platform works, then you can start to

benefit from the audience that platform reaches.

Social Media Page Layout

People have a certain expectation when it comes to the layout of a business' social media page. When traffic goes to your social media page, it expects to see an organized presentation of your marketing message and information about your company. A good way to bring in more social media traffic is to not disappoint people, so invest in a professional-looking page layout.

The days of extravagant social media pages, such as what Myspace used to offer, appear

to be gone. That means businesses have to figure out how to do more with less when it comes to developing a professional social media presence. The key is to hire a professional who understands how to develop a good social media page layout and then keep updating your social media information each day.

Businesses that ignore social media are missing out on the opportunity to reach millions of prospective new customers. The key to getting success from your social media programs is to know which platforms are talking to your target audience, and then develop effective ways to reach that audience by staying within the guidelines of the social media website.

Are You Playing Hide-N-Seek With Your Potential Customers?

**If they can't find you...
They will find your
competition**

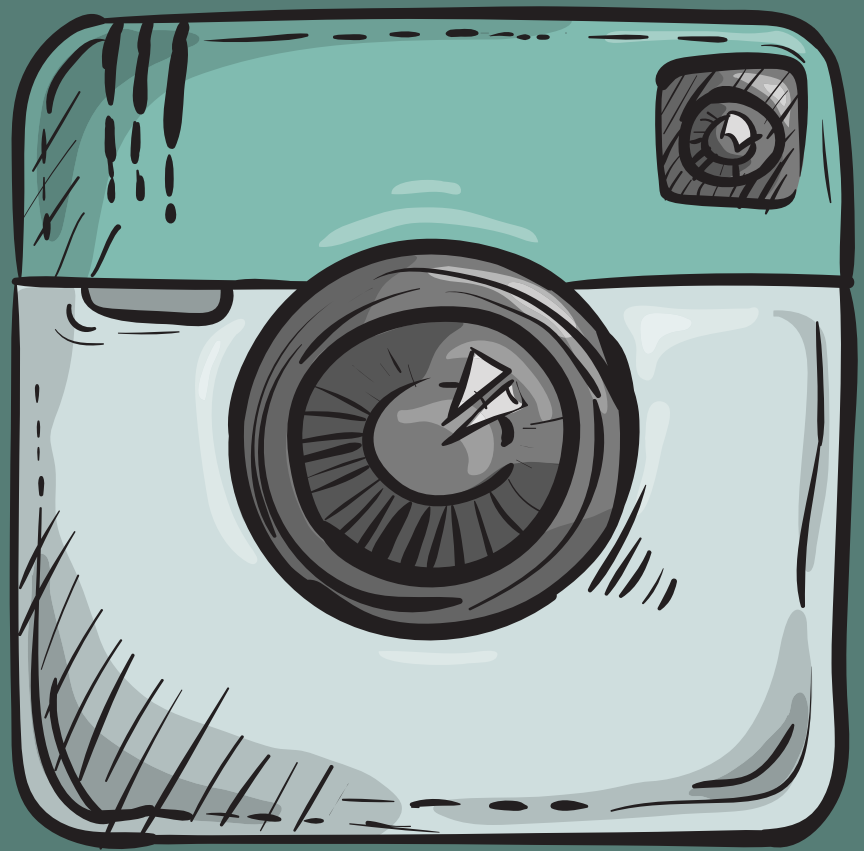


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How to Use Instagram to Increase Your Business



If you haven't jumped on the Instagram bandwagon yet for your business, that may not be a good thing. New social media outlets come out almost weekly, and they all claim to be the next big thing.

Instagram has been around for a few years now, and with over 300 million users, it has proved its staying power. If you don't have an Instagram presence yet, or you have created an account and haven't capitalized on it, now is as good a time as ever.

Do Your Homework

Just like with any new marketing strategy, you need to do some research first to find out how others have successfully used the same platform and how you can adapt it to your business.

The first thing you need to decide is what your goal for this particular outlet is and how can you reach that objective with Instagram. Do you want to generate direct sales or just generate traffic back to your website? In order

to determine how to best use Instagram, you first need clearly defined goals in mind.

Create an Account

This may sound simple, but some thought needs to be put into it. You will be able to upload a profile picture, create a name for the account and provide a description for your account. These should all tie into your overall marketing strategy and fit the theme and look of your website and other marketing material.

This is the first impression potential clients will see, so create a profile that lets customers know who you are and, more importantly, make them want to click further.

Link All Your Accounts

Any and all social media outlets you create for your business should be linked. Some sites are better at this than others, but always make it easy and desirable for clients to click through from one site to another, all the while staying with your company.

Don't just post the same images in multiple places, decide where you want the client to end up and share that location from the other sites.

Take advantage of any site that allows you to put direct links to your other social

platforms, and your primary web page should have links to all of them. Put links in the footer of all of your emails and other correspondence. This linking and back-linking is what search engines thrive on and will build credibility and high rankings.

Think About What You Post

You can post pictures on any social media site, but images are what Instagram is all about, so make sure the images there are your best, high-quality images that convey a clear and consistent message to your clients. But don't just post a picture and move on.

Use interesting and fun descriptions to keep your audience engaged. A good strategy is to ask a question as part of your post to increase replies. Replies mean higher rankings in search engines.

Always Use Hashtags

But don't overdo it. Search engines love hashtags, and there should be at least one in every post. Two or three is even better as long as they are relevant. More than that, and they become annoying to the audience and look spammy.

Hashtags should be used to draw the right audience to your image and then the description should engage them and keep them there, or better yet, send them on to your website. Attracting people with irrelevant hashtags will cause them to block or ignore you.

Instagram looks like it is here to stay. So create some visual appeal and draw more clients to your site and business by utilizing this fast growing social media site.

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5 Steps to Get Your First 1,000 Subscribers

It's a common refrain in the online marketing business that "the money is in the list." Having a large email list of engaged buyers is one of the keys to growing a business. So how do you build such a list when you are just starting out? There are five steps you can take toward getting your first 1,000 subscribers.

What is email marketing?

Email marketing is the process of building and maintaining a list of existing and potential customers, and marketing your products directly to them. The names on the list are those of people who have opted in to receive your communications, so it's not considered spam. The fact that they voluntarily provide

their email address makes them a prime target to sell to, hence the inherent value in maintaining a list.

How do you build your list?

There are several crucial steps to take, especially if you want to build your list to 1,000 or more subscribers. While it does take some time to build your list, setting the proper foundation in place will ensure you maximize your potential as quickly as possible.

1. Create engaging content

If you do nothing else, ensure that you have informative and engaging content on your website. Whether your products are of a

physical or digital nature, creating informative content does two things.

First, it establishes you as an authority in your niche. The more information a potential client can glean from the information you present, the more they will see you as an authority and be likely to purchase your product.

Secondly, engaging the reader adequately can frequently result in the reader sharing your content via social media, which is vital for name recognition. Similarly, webmasters may choose to link to your product, which is an important part of an effective search engine optimization (SEO) campaign. The backlinks will mark your content as trusted content in the eyes of the search engines and improve your site's rankings. Google's Trust Factor metric uses perceived authority as a way of calculating how high your site should rank.

In any case, creating engaging content will not only keep your potential customers engaged, they will be more likely to share it and sign up for your email newsletter.

2. Invest in an autoresponder

Having the proper app to handle all aspects of your email list is crucial. The top three are Aweber (aweber.com), GetResponse (getresponse.com), and MailChimp (mailchimp.com). While there's a cost associated with their use, it's well worth it.

These apps integrate seamlessly with most web content management systems such as Wordpress, and make it easy to add a "subscribe now" box to your site. They also offer a host of features such as double opt-in and advanced statistics, so you can safely send spam-free emails while monitoring every aspect of your campaign.

Perhaps more importantly, these paid services have a higher delivery rate than the free alternatives. Free email services, by their nature,

are more likely to be used by spammers, and as a result, emails sent from these providers are at risk of being routed to the junk mail folders of most email clients.

To ensure you reap the maximum potential of your email list, make sure you invest in one of the top three mailing list managers.

3. Create an incentive

Once you've created excellent content for your site, the next step is to entice the reader to submit their email address to be added to your list. You can do this by giving them something in exchange for their email address.

The giveaway will be something related to their niche that answers specific questions the reader may have. It should be something with an inherent value, as the reader needs to view it as something desirable in order to give up their personal information.

Some email marketers spend months creating their giveaways. The investment of time is rewarded by the number of subscribers their websites draw. And while you don't need to spend nearly that amount of time creating your freebie, it's vitally important to make it something that your potential customers will care about.

In addition, it's an opportunity to create a presell, something that will leave the reader wanting more and will dovetail into a particular product you are selling. Making your giveaway a presell will inform, educate and engage the reader, while whetting their appetite for your products or services.

4. Engage your list

It's not enough to simply blast out emails to your customers; you need to provide them with value. Consider it a privilege that your subscribers choose to remain on your list. The best way to keep them there is to provide

them with information they will gladly use. The key here is to take a balanced approach between selling and educating.

Spend a couple of hours a week writing daily or frequent emails that will keep your customers interested. Follow a formula of "fifths," meaning that for every five emails offering nothing but information, send one with a special offer for your services or products. This way, the reader will feel they are receiving valuable tips, and won't mind the occasional "hard sell" email. Conversely, if you do nothing but try to sell to them, they won't be interested in receiving your messages; not only will your subscriber list not grow, it will shrink.

5. Use social media

Finally, a great way to grow your email list is to share your content on social media.

Start and maintain a Facebook page for your business, and offer incentives via a link to your site. Twitter is another excellent way to gain subscribers, as you can tweet out relevant links with the appropriate hashtag. Finally, make a habit of posting all your articles on Redditt. You'll find your website hits will grow and your subscriber list will increase accordingly.

Make it easy for your readers to share your content on social media by adding share buttons to your posts. This is easily done if you use a content management system such as Wordpress, as social media share plugins are freely available.

It's important to create unique, engaging and informative content, and to keep your readers interested while offering them an incentive to join your list. By following these steps, you'll quickly find yourself on your way to your first 1,000 email list subscribers.

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Making Facebook Work Harder for Your Bottom Line



The days when search engines were the only game in town for free website traffic are long gone. Social media is now reported to drive nearly a third of all referrals across the web, and if your business doesn't have its own Facebook page, then you're missing out on a valuable source of potential customers.

Of course, having a Facebook page by itself will do little to bring in the traffic. For it to be of most use, you need to get it in front of as many eyeballs as possible. One of the best ways of making your Facebook page work hard for you is to get a large number of "likes" from your visitors.

When a visitor likes your page, it is immediately posted onto their timeline, where it is visible to all their Facebook friends. It's clear to see the

potential viral impact of this. If even only a small percentage of these friends go on to like the page as well, it's posted on their timelines in turn, and the snowball effect can quickly build up.

Add to this the fact that a Facebook page with a high like count bestows a level of credibility and trustworthiness on a business. It's evident that increasing the number of likes your page receives can be of huge importance. But how can you go about achieving this?

The conventional wisdom is that a great page with compelling content will attract likes naturally. This is true, but as with anything in online marketing, it never hurts to give things a nudge in the right direction. Here are seven effective ways of

boosting your like count and enjoying your share of the free traffic that social media can send your way.

The Basics: Keep It Fresh, Engage with Your Visitors

It should go without saying that your Facebook page should be kept up to date and regularly refreshed with content of interest to your visitors.

No one is going to add their like to an abandoned wasteland. Also, ensure that any visitor who leaves a message receives a response. An ignored user is unlikely to become a fan of your organization; one who feels valued will be more prone to liking your page, and can also become a great advocate for your organization in other spheres.

Adopt Some Orphans

On a related note, a powerful way of finding new fans is to search out pages in your niche that appear to be withering on the vine. If you can find a page relevant to yours that has unanswered visitor posts, then step up to the plate and make a response, while gently encouraging a visit to your own page. That visitor will be predisposed to think well of your organization, and is more likely to engage and cast their vote in your favor. And of course, the best traffic of all is that poached from a competitor.

Set Up a 'Like Gate'

This is a fairly aggressive technique that can be overdone, so use it with care to avoid turning people off. It's possible to mark some content on your Facebook page as only accessible to those who've liked the page, so consider putting something of genuine interest behind this so-called "Like Gate" to encourage likes. The content could be anything -- a competition, a free video download, premium information -- as long as it provides a real reward in return for the like. If a visitor likes your page and then is underwhelmed at what's behind the gate, then this will obviously be counter-

productive.

Making Likes Easy

Without being too pushy or overbearing, gently remind your visitors to like your page. Don't rely on the standard Facebook text link which can easily be overlooked, but employ a more direct and visible appeal that will attract attention without subjecting the user to undue pressure.

Publicize Your 'Like' URL as Widely as Your Homepage

It's a venerable and trusted promotional technique to include your website address in every email you send or every social media message you post. Why not include your Facebook page's like address in those places too, especially if you send a lot of emails to customers? Every time you help a customer or answer their question, they will be more likely to respond to a Like request if it's made easy for them right there in their inbox.

Take Photos for Tagging

If your sector holds real-life events which your visitors might attend, take your camera along, snap a few photos, and publish them on your page. When your visitors are tagged in the pictures, this will be shown to their

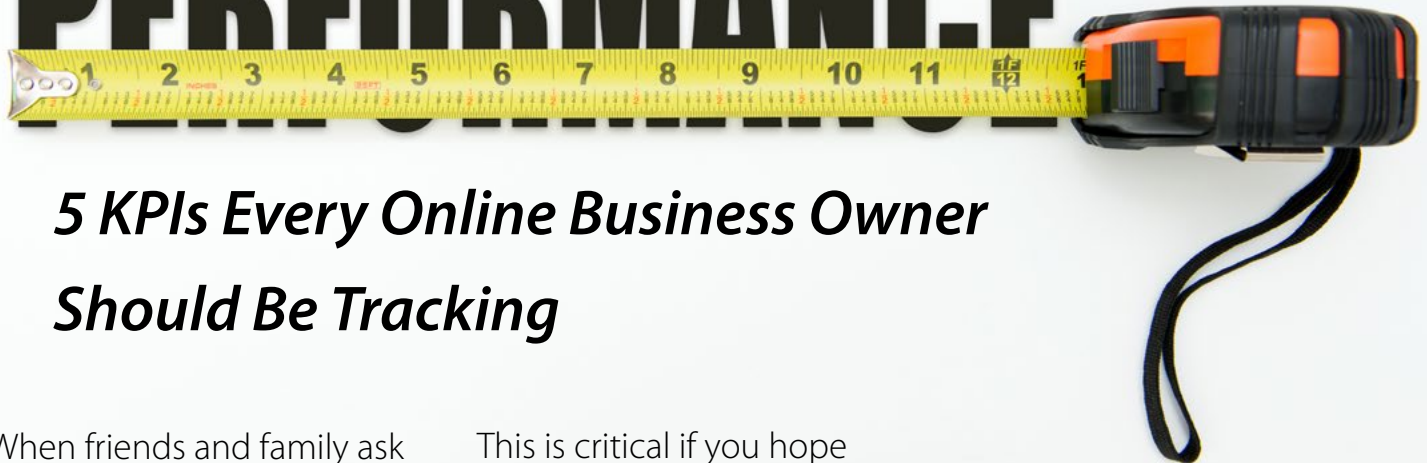
friends via their timelines and is another way of reaching out to a new audience with potentially viral effects.

Advertise to Kick Things Off

Finally, although free methods of obtaining likes and traffic are always preferable, sometimes the process needs to be given a kick-start through advertising, which of course means spending money. The idea here is to obtain extremely targeted visitors to your page who will respond to your efforts to induce a like, and not just to bombard your page with random traffic. Bearing this in mind, it's probably best to ignore those adverts for services promising your page a guaranteed number of likes. While this will boost your count, it will do nothing to start off the viral effects which should be your overall aim.

With Facebook driving so much of the web's traffic these days, it only makes sense to do what you can to divert some of it your way. This can be done without spending large amounts of money, as the aforementioned tips show. If you're still relying on search engines to generate customers for your online business, you owe it to yourself to take a closer look at what your Facebook page can do for you.

PERFORMANCE



5 KPIs Every Online Business Owner Should Be Tracking

When friends and family ask how your new business is progressing, you tell them it's great but have a tiny voice in the back of your head questioning your assertions. Unless you're tracking key performance indicators, you can't know for sure if your business is progressing as hoped. To ensure your online company is successful over the long-haul, it is imperative you track the following five KPIs:

- Knowing your year-over-year growth rate is essential if you want to run a profitable venture. Understanding not only your yearly sales, but your YoY growth percentage will help you determine whether your business is on the decline. If you also track your month-over-month growth percentage you can double-down on sales-building initiatives at the first sign of slowing sales.

- Savvy online business owners also track their cart abandonment rates.

This is critical if you hope to optimize your site for conversions. Knowing where customers are abandoning their purchases is crucial if you hope to fix the problem.

- Speaking of conversions, tracking your site's conversion rate is also vital for business health. Knowing which offerings aren't performing well can help you to cut waste from your site and increase your efforts to move your strong sellers. Conversion rate analysis can also help you to develop new products and services by understanding what resonates with your customer base.

- Monitoring customer cost of acquisition is crucial for profit-oriented business owners. If your customer acquisition cost is higher than their customer lifetime value, you might want to rethink your marketing strategy. Whether you're using targeted Facebook advertising or Google

AdWords, understanding the viability of your marketing spend is critical for long-term business sustainability.

- If you plan to build a long-lasting online business venture, you absolutely must track your return on investment on an ongoing basis. The basic rules of accounting demand that your revenues be higher than your expenses. This same theory applies to running a successful online business. If you're investing more in your company than you're getting out of it over an extended period of time, it might be time to reconsider whether you're in the right business. If you're not monitoring your ROI, how will you know when trends have changed or markets have gone in a different direction?

Having a firm grasp on your KPIs is vital if you hope to run a profitable venture. Failure to do so could lead to premature business failure.

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How Retargeted Advertising Can Help Grow Your Small Business



The ability to capture and track user behavior on the Internet and recent advances in mobile advertising have created some unique opportunities for marketing. One of the more recent developments in digital marketing is behavioral targeting, which has led to valuable strategies such as retargeting marketing campaigns.

Behavioral targeting, the brainchild of marketers in the late 1990s, was integrated into online advertising in the early 21st century. As a concept, behavioral targeting consists of collecting data from Web browsing sessions for the purpose of determining valuable opportunities to place relevant, targeted advertisements. Once the data is analyzed, advertising is then strategically placed in the browsers, landing pages, email

messages, social networks, etc.

With behavioral data sets, advertisers get an improved return on investment (ROI), which is vital for small business owners whose marketing budgets are but a fraction of those enjoyed by large corporations.

With the additional strategy of remarketing or retargeting, small business owners can recoup online advertising losses from abandoned shopping carts while also increasing their conversion rates.

Understanding Retargeted Advertising

Internet marketing and online advertising are very effective for branding purposes; however, when it comes to actual conversion rates, 2 to 9 percent is what

most small business owners can normally expect from simple ad placement or pay-per-click advertising. Major corporations with sizable advertising budgets can deal with such numbers as the volume makes the conversion rates acceptable. For small companies who have limited resources and advertising budgets devoted to converting prospects into paying customers, these conversion rates become less attractive.

Retargeted advertising runs on the premise that window shoppers turn into paying customers less than 5 percent of the time, a rate that is similar to that of an Internet banner ad. Behavioral targeting can improve this conversion rate slightly, but with retargeted advertising, the conversion rate can as much as double.

In essence, retargeting involves

the use of existing behavioral targeting tools for the purpose of reaching prospects a second time, providing them a chance to become paying customers. In a way, retargeting is similar to a brick-and-mortar business that sets up a special window display. If the store owner sees a lot of interested shoppers but not enough buyers, he or she might decide to take down the display quickly. By doing so, the store will miss out on those window shoppers who simply needed to take a second look before committing to purchase.

Like behavioral advertising, retargeting involves the use of cookies and JavaScript code that gets added to a website

or a landing page. This code is small and unobtrusive; it allows advertisers to follow window shoppers as they browse other websites. The tracking is done anonymously for the purpose of displaying an advertisement at a later time. The idea is to increase brand awareness and redirect the attention of shoppers back to their earlier search or an abandoned shopping cart.

Increasing the Effectiveness of Retargeting

With retargeted advertising, small business owners get a golden opportunity that can be capitalized on with creative advertising. Retargeted banner ads call attention

to the prospect's previous visit. Advanced retargeting options may include discount coupons and special offers to make the second visit seem more enticing. Retargeting is also effective for branding and small business owners, in particular, who want to grow their audience and exposure in just a few months.

Retargeting is an incredibly powerful marketing tool when correctly implemented. If small business owners follow these suggested practices for retargeting campaigns and combine them with a well-designed call-to-action, they can expect a significant boost in sales.

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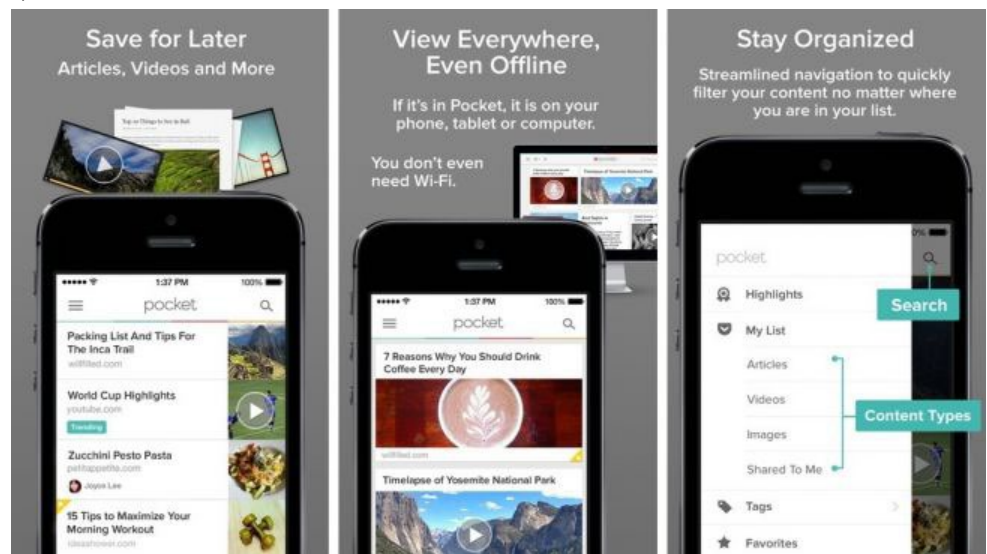
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Even now, as we approach 2016, there are still times and places where we can't get an internet connection, but this doesn't have to mean you can't read websites, however, thanks to the excellent Pocket app. It allows you to save articles, news stories, blog posts, videos and much more, letting you read and watch them offline.

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SOCIAL MEDIA

IMAGE SIZES GUIDE

Header Photo

Recommended size: 1500 x 500
Max. file size of 10MB.
File can be JPG, GIF or PNG



Profile Photo

Recommended size: 400 x 400
Max. file size of 10KB.
File can be JPG, GIF or PNG

Tweeted Image

Size: min. 440 x 220
Max. file size of 5MB for photos and 3MB for GIFs.

Cover photo

Size: 851 x 315
Use RGB JPG file less than 100kb



Profile photo

Size: upload 180 x 180
App / Tab thumbnail size: 111 x 74

Shared Image

Recommended size: 1200 x 1200 (displays 470 x 470)

Cover Image

Photo size: 1080 by 608
Select photo that showcases
your business, product
or service



Profile photo

Size: 250 x 250 (Will be converted to circle)

Shared Image

Size: 497 x 373
Shows in home stream at 497 x 279 (height is scaled)

Channel Art

Size: 2560 x 1440

Profile Photo

Size: 100 x 100



Video thumbnail: 1280 x 720

Channel icon: 800 x 800

Video Guidelines

- Videos must maintain a 16:9 aspect ratio
- To qualify as full HD, your dimensions must be at least 1280 x 720 pixels

Company Page Banner Image

Size: 646 x 220
Max. 2MB. PNG, JPG or GIF



Background Photo

Size: 1000 x 425

Status update OR blog post image size:
698 x 400

Logo

Size: 400 x 400 square
Max. 4MB. File can be PNG, JPG or GIF

Profile Image

Size: 165 x 165
Appears at 165x165 on home
page, 32x32 on all other pages



Board Display

Size: 222 x 150
Large thumbnail displays at 222x150,
smaller thumbnails display at 55x55

Pins

Size: 236 width (height is scaled)

***Is Your Marketing
Missing
Something?***

***We Might Be The
Missing Piece!***



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