

# M LOCAL BUSINESS MARKETING

*The Marketing Guide for Local Businesses*

June 2015

**An Introduction  
to Paid Online  
Advertising**

**What Can an  
SEO Agency Do  
for You?**

**7 Steps**  
for Using Video  
Marketing to  
Promote Your  
Business

Local Business SEO -  
Getting Citations for Prime  
Search Ranking Position

**Infographic:**  
Colors As  
Marketing Tools

**Instagram for  
Business? 7 Secrets  
You Ought to Know**

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Welcome!

We thank you for taking the time to read our magazine. We hope you find it full of interesting articles, and more importantly, that you are able to immediately apply some of our tips, and that they help your business.

Our key article in this issue explains how local business owners can leverage online marketing, also known as pay-per-click (PPC) advertising. When done properly, PPC can be a cost effective way to drive new customers to your website.

You will also find additional articles regarding video, SEO and Instagram. As always, you'll find new versions of our popular Marketing Calendar and Infographic.

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 like the magazine, 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.

If you have any comments about this issue or would like us to help you with your marketing please do not hesitate to contact us.

Regards,  
David Akers  
President / CEO  
LMS Solutions, Inc.

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# Marketing Calendar

Plan your marketing messages around these upcoming holidays and proclamations.

## June

Aquarium Month  
Gay Pride Month  
National Adopt a Cat Month  
National Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Month  
National Candy Month  
National Camping Month  
National Dairy Month  
National Great Outdoors Month

June 14 - Flag Day 2015 (USA)  
June 18 - Waterloo Day (UK)  
June 21 - Father's Day  
June 21 - Summer Solstice  
June 24 - St. John's Day

1st - International Children's Day  
1st - National Heimlich Maneuver Day  
1st - National Go Barefoot Day  
1st - National Say Something Nice Day  
2nd - National Rocky Road Day  
2nd - National Leave The Office Early Day

3rd - National Running Day  
4th - Hug Your Cat Day  
5th - National Doughnut Day  
5th - World Environment Day  
6th - National Yo-Yo Day  
7th - National Cancer Survivor's Day  
8th - World Oceans Day  
8th - World Brain Tumor Day  
8th - National Best Friends Day  
9th - Donald Duck Day  
11th - National Corn on the Cob Day  
14th - World Blood Donor Day  
14th - National Bourbon Day  
15th - Nature Photography Day  
15th - Global Wind Day  
16th - National Fudge Day  
18th - Autistic Pride Day  
19th - National Flip Flop Day  
25th - National Handshake Day  
26th - National Chocolate Pudding Day  
26th - Take Your Dog to Work Day  
30th - National Meteor Watch Day

## July

National Blueberry Month  
National Anti-Boredom Month  
National Cell Phone Courtesy Month  
National Hot Dog Month  
National Ice Cream Month  
National Picnic Month

July 4 - Independence Day (U.S.)

1st - International Joke Day  
1st - Creative Ice Cream Flavors Day  
2nd - I Forgot Day  
3rd - Stay out of the Sun Day  
4th - National Country Music Day  
5th - Build A Scarecrow Day  
5th - Work-a-holics Day  
6th - National Fried Chicken Day  
7th - Chocolate Day  
8th - Video Games Day  
11th - Cheer up the Lonely Day

11th - Pet Photo Day  
13th - Barbershop Music Appreciation Day  
13th - Embrace Your Geekness Day  
14th - National Nude Day  
15th - Cow Appreciation Day  
18th - National Caviar Day  
19th - National Ice Cream Day  
20th - National Lollipop Day  
20th - Moon Day  
21st - National Junk Food Day  
21st - Racial Harmony Day  
23rd - National Hot Dog Day  
23rd - Vanilla Ice Cream Day  
24th - Amelia Earhart Day  
24th - National Drive-Thru Day  
24th - Cousins Day  
26th - Aunt and Uncle Day  
26th - Parent's Day  
28th - National Milk Chocolate Day  
29th - National Lasagna Day  
30th - National Cheesecake Day



# An Introduction to Paid Online Advertising

## 1 - Introduction and Benefits

In contrast to unpaid online marketing methods, such as search engine optimization, paid online advertising refers to any website traffic source that you have to pay for. In today's increasingly online marketplace, your website is basically analogous to a high-street storefront, and relevant website traffic serves as the lifeblood of your online endeavours. Without traffic, your online marketing efforts will fail utterly, and

you'll end up being left behind in an increasingly competitive business climate.

Paid and unpaid methods of advertising are both important, but they generally work independently of each other. Although unpaid methods such as business blogging, search engine optimization and community building through social media all remain essential elements of online marketing success, paid advertising presents a number of benefits to businesses whose budgets are



sufficient enough. Following are some of the key benefits of paid advertising:

- Most paid advertising platforms are highly flexible, allowing you to set a daily budget that best suits the size and turnover of your business. Being a very versatile solution, paid advertising can grow seamlessly with your business.
- Thanks to contextual ads and various other options, paid advertising allows you to increase your reach immeasurably, making it particularly valuable for startups and companies that have yet to establish a major online presence.
- Contextual advertising allows you to target ads to the right kind of people. Having your ads targeted towards a specific audience means that you don't waste money on showing them to those who are less likely to be interested.
- Since you can set your own daily budget and choose from many different platforms, paid online advertising tends to be much more cost-effective than traditional methods. Ultimately, you pay for results.
- Although every marketer has heard of Google AdWords and Facebook Ads among others, there are actually many more options available. This guide discusses the most important paid advertising models and platforms.
- Thanks to the vast amount of data generated, tracking performance of paid advertising campaigns is much easier than it is with traditional methods, and most platforms provide a range of performance-tracking tools.
- Organic search engine marketing, social media marketing and content marketing, though essential, take time to deliver results. By contrast, a well-executed paid advertising strategy will bring in results almost immediately.

The image is a vertical advertisement for ZipRecruiter. At the top, the ZipRecruiter logo is displayed. Below it, a large green banner features the text "50+" in a very large, white, sans-serif font, followed by "job boards with one post" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. Below the banner, a collage of various job board logos is shown, including MyNewJobSearch, flexjobs, ZipRecruiter, TopUSAJobs, twitter, adzuna, jooble, Google+, geebo, jobg8, The Ladders, latpro, JobsRadar, careerJET, jobrapido, JOBDIAGNOSIS.COM, recruit-net, PUREJOBS, trovit, MONSTER, DirectEmployers, jobinventory, JustJobs, SimplyHired, JobHati, diversityJobs, and TipT. A prominent orange button with the text "Post Free Now" and a right-pointing arrow is overlaid on the collage.

The following chapters of this guide discuss the most important areas of paid online advertising as well as the platforms and methods you can use to generate traffic to your website or fulfill other marketing goals. However, before you start spending money on any kind of advertising, it is essential that you set your goals and define your target audience so that you can measure your success and target your advertising to the right people.

## 2 - Display Advertising

Display advertising, usually placed contextually, displays relevant advertisements to the people who are most likely to be interested in them, and this works because the ads displayed are chosen based on the content of the page. Although there are many contextual advertising networks, the Google Ads Display Network is the largest, reaching the vast majority of Internet users all over the world. One of the reasons for its popularity is that advertisers can choose from various formats to customize their ads and meet their budget requirements.

Given that the total coverage of Google's Display network is over 90% of all Internet users in the English-speaking world, the reason for choosing it should be obvious. The publisher's

component to the advertising platform, Google AdSense, allows website owners to earn money from clicks on these advertisements as well, making it one of the easiest and most popular ways to monetise or support a website. You'll find advertisements powered by this platform all over the Internet.

Display advertising comes in a variety of different formats, and Google Ads lets you choose from the following:

- Text ads: The most basic format, Google allows you to run the same text ads in both the search engine results (see chapter on paid search) and on external websites. A text ad consists of a headline followed by up to two lines of text and a Web address. The headline also serves as a link.
- Image ads: Static images

provide a great deal more flexibility, since they allow you to choose from a range of layouts, images and background colours. Image ads also appear in the sidebar of the Google search results page, and in this case, they are based on the search queries themselves.

- Video ads: As one of Google's subsidiaries as well as the third most visited website in the world, YouTube is covered by Google's advertising network, and as a result, video ads have become extremely popular in recent years.
- Rich media ads: Some ads contain interactive elements, animations or other features that set them apart from the more standardized formats mentioned above. A rich media ad may also come in the form of a carousel



displaying  
products.

multiple

Google's payment model is fairly straightforward, and it works much like most other online advertising companies: you only pay when someone clicks on one of your advertisements, thus being directed to your landing page. The cost per click varies depending on the targeted keywords and the type of advertisement. As with all such advertising programs, you can set a daily, weekly or monthly budget.

Although the most common type of ad targeting with the Google Display Network is contextual targeting, options for placing the ads on specific websites covered by the network are also available.

### 3 - Paid Search

Paid search advertising presents the opportunity to

boost your website's visibility in the search results when people search for relevant queries. In Google, the world's most popular search engine, these advertisements appear in the form of sponsored listings at the top of the search results. They are clearly labelled as advertisements to differentiate them from the organic results beneath them. All of the major search engines provide a paid search platform.

The two largest paid search platforms are Google AdWords and Bing Ads, with the latter also serving ads on Yahoo. Paid search is a form of contextual advertising using the pay-per-click model, whereby advertisers only pay when someone clicks on their ads and consequently reaches their landing page. It is important to note at this point that these sponsored listings should not be seen as an alternative to organic search engine marketing, since the organic

results of the first page actually get far more clicks than the more visible paid ads do.

As with any form of online marketing, it is critical that you target your efforts to the right people through a thorough understanding of your customer personas. Paid search traffic works very differently to organic traffic, and if someone clicks on a sponsored listing, then they're likely intending to buy something rather than focus primarily on informational content, such as that which tends to appear in the organic search results.

Another form of paid search is that which specifically caters towards shopping. Those looking to buy a specific type of product online can click on the 'Shopping' tab above the results to view relevant products, and if you are an online retailer, it can be very useful to have your inventory listed in Google's shopping search engine.



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If, like most businesses, you plan to use Google AdWords for your display advertising campaign, you can create text ads that will also appear as sponsored listings in the search results. However, ads displaying visual content will only appear on external websites which have the publishers' component AdSense installed.

#### **4 - Paid Social**

It is often said that social media marketing (SMM) is the new SEO, and given the enormous popularity and ubiquity of services like Facebook and Twitter, there is certainly some

truth in this. Paid social media advertising refers to paid advertising platforms provided by the major social networks, and it comes in a variety of forms. You can use it to drive traffic directly to your website, raise brand awareness, promote your social media profiles or even promote individual posts. Since this form of advertising revolves around the more social elements of the Web, it provides a number of targeting features, and it can complement your unpaid SMM strategies.

The most important paid social advertising platform is that provided by Facebook, and since the social media giant

recently updated its newsfeed algorithm to decrease the reach of unpaid promotional posts on company pages, it is even more important than ever. It is also among the most sophisticated social advertising platforms, since it provides a number of options and categories for each ad campaign. When setting up your Facebook advertising campaign, you'll be walked through the process and be asked to choose a campaign based on your goals. The advertising options available to you, as well as the costs involved, depend on what you want to achieve. Facebook allows you to create campaigns based on the following goals:

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- Increase traffic to your website
- Increase your website's conversion rate
- Increase exposure for your posts
- Promote your Facebook page
- Promote an app
- Increase engagement with an app
- Raise awareness of an event
- Promote a special offer
- Promote video content on Facebook

Once you have specified your goal, you'll be able to choose where you want to place your ads before providing the material for the ads themselves.

Twitter also provides a range of paid advertising options, including a goal-based strategy like that of Facebook (although at the time of writing, this was in beta). Twitter's main advertising options include the following:

- Promoted Tweets allow you to pay to increase the reach of a particular Tweet (post). These Tweets will be labelled as promoted, though they work in exactly the same way as any other Tweet in that people may still share them, reply to them or add them to their favorites.
- Promoted Trends allows advertisers to promote particular trends in the Trending Topics list on the website, although the content will occasionally appear on users' pages as well. Again, Promoted Trends work just like any other trending topic, and they are marked as such.
- Promoted Accounts are useful for boosting the growth of your follower base, since they temporarily increase the exposure of your Twitter page. Particularly useful for businesses just starting out with paid advertising on the network, they help to make your brand's presence on Twitter more discoverable.

LinkedIn, with some 350 million users, is another

major social network that also offers paid advertising opportunities. However, unlike the other major networks, LinkedIn is specifically geared towards establishing professional connections, making it the go-to social media marketing resource for companies in B2B industries. It provides the opportunity to share content with a specific audience by way of its Premium Display Ads, or you can pay to increase the exposure of particular updates or use an internal email marketing strategy by way of the Sponsored InMail platform.

## 5 - Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate marketing has been through a rough ride in recent years, and out of all of the forms of paid Internet marketing, this one has seen the most change since its inception in 1994. Although affiliate marketing earned a poor name due to its often close association with spammy advertising tactics and poor-quality, mass-produced affiliate websites and content, it is gradually starting to give itself a new image as consumer habits change and the search engines become ever more demanding of higher quality content.

Affiliate marketers earn money by advertising other people's products and services. A form of revenue sharing, affiliate marketing presents the opportunity to pay for advertising only once you have actually achieved a sale, making it a relatively risk-free form of paid advertising. However, the reality is a bit more complex, not least because there are many affiliate networks to choose from, many of which still peddle copious amounts of junk thus giving reputable companies that use them a bad name.

Commissions vary enormously, depending largely on the nature of the product and the affiliate network used. Unsurprisingly, a direct affiliate relationship, which doesn't go through one of the major networks, typically means

paying significantly lower commissions on sales. Sometimes, advertisers even pay a 100% commission for a low-end, low-priced product simply to raise awareness for more expensive related products and services. Larger retailers often work with hundreds of affiliates in order to reach a wider audience.

The obvious advantage of affiliate marketing for retailers is that there's minimal risk involved, since you don't have to pay any money up front, and this is also the case with most of the major affiliate networks such as CJ by Conservant, ClickBank, Rakuten LinkShare and Amazon Associates. Although most of the larger networks have a very broad focus, some of the smaller ones focus on specific niches, making it important to choose appropriate networks for marketing your particular product or service. For example, most of the more reputable, higher quality affiliate networks have a strict policy of not dealing in digital goods, such as eBooks, which tend to lead to a very low-quality inventory. Other affiliate networks, such as Groupon and Voucher Codes, allow retailers to target specific audiences and deliver special promotions, while platforms such as Nectar help to build a loyal customer base through rewards- and points-based programs.

A lot of retailers manage their own affiliate advertising programs due to the greater degree of freedom they have and the lower commissions involved. By cutting out the middleman, both retailers and advertisers win, but the process is significantly harder and generally better suited to larger companies. There is also a lot more work involved when it comes to finding and managing your affiliates directly, since you'll need to approach niche partners individually and constantly be on the lookout for new partners. You'll also need to negotiate commissions and payments which, in the case of an affiliate platform, is already taken care of for you.

## 6 - Remarketing

Remarketing is a growing trend in paid online advertising whereby businesses display ads to those who have previously visited their websites. The goal of a remarketing campaign is to target potential and existing customers by targeting those who have already had some interaction with your company online. With regards to the former, those who have previously viewed certain products on your website, yet might have forgotten about them, will be reminded by way of ads showcasing the products or services



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concerned. Existing customers may also be targeted, though more sophisticated remarketing platforms will not show ads featuring goods that the customer has previously purchased. Instead, they will show ads for related products that the customer might also be interested in. Amazon provides a perfect example of how remarketing should work.

Remarketing works through the use of small text files known as cookies, which are saved onto the users' computers during browsing sessions. These text files contain information about users' browsing habits in order to deliver more relevant ads later on. The information collected allows retailers to build lists of customers and potential customers based on their behavior on the site. Retailers can build lists, taking

into account factors like the following, to further customize their remarketing efforts:

- Visitors who have not spent more than a minimum amount of time on their websites may not be suitable targets for a remarketing campaign.
- Visitors who have spent time viewing a specific product category.
- Visitors who have viewed a certain product multiple times that you may want to entice with a special offer.
- Visitors who didn't make a purchase, yet you hope to up- or cross-sell products to.

The beauty of remarketing is that it provides one of the most

effective methods for targeting in your paid advertising strategy. Best of all, it works in conjunction with many display advertising platforms as well as on some of the social networks. For example, Google AdWords provides remarketing codes for you to place on your website, while Facebook allows you to create a remarketing campaign through its Website Custom Audiences feature.

In conclusion, remarketing is an extremely powerful online advertising method for directly driving sales, developing your brand and building up a loyal customer base. After all, any business should understand that the customer journey doesn't end once a sale is made: there always remains the need to maintain a relationship with their customers.

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# 7 Steps for Using Video Marketing to Promote Your Business

According to YouTube, the number of hours of video watched by users is growing 50 percent each year. The major video sites receive billions of views each day, across categories and subjects of all kinds. Mobile video is growing, advertising revenue is increasing, and many small businesses are seizing the opportunities provided through video marketing. There are some people who think that video views are driven by young people and viral videos, but a Forbes study revealed that 75 percent of senior executives reported watching work-related videos via business websites on a weekly basis.

Many entrepreneurs can see this great potential in video marketing, but there is often a feeling that it is just too complicated and costly to pursue, and won't provide a good return on investment (ROI). While some videos can be expensive to produce, with no guarantee of reaching a wide consumer base, it is possible to make effective, targeted, low-cost productions. Produced and marketed in the right way,

your videos can bring in new customers long after they have been released.

## **Brainstorm Different Types of Video**

There are many types of videos you can create, largely dependent on your business and market. Certain industries lend themselves to light-hearted content, whereas business-to-business services might benefit from a more serious tone. You can also base your content around the medium, with short videos gaining traction on sites like Vine, Twitter, and Instagram, while longer videos might be more suitable for YouTube. If you create a slick, glossy video, a site like Vimeo can give more gravitas.

## **Create Riveting Content**

Due to the enormous amount of video content uploaded each day, you must create something compelling if you want somebody to press play. There will be instances in which a product demonstration or walkthrough video is necessary,

but your marketing videos will benefit from more creativity. Building a narrative is a way to keep people interested, whether you choose to do this with humor, a personal story, or an interesting lesson. Aim to showcase a wider context to your video, rather than just pitching to potential customers, so your business can develop an identity within the market.

## **Optimize Your Video**

Optimizing your videos will ensure the highest number of potential viewers can see them. Your title is one of the most important factors to consider, along with the thumbnail image associated with each video. The perfect title should be intriguing and contain industry-based keywords, but not mislead any viewers. The thumbnail image should stand out amongst lots of other images, but be relevant to the actual video. Include tags and a detailed description, including a link to your website, and you could make use of annotations linking to your site or other videos.

## Share on Social Media

With no promotion and a lot of competition, the average video will go unseen by most people. To ensure your video gets some initial views, share the link with your social media network. If you haven't been active on social media, set up accounts and start to contribute with people in your niche. Embedding videos around the web will increase your views, providing you with a more prominent position within YouTube and similar sites.

## Respond to Comments

A well-crafted video is more likely to encourage viewers to share their thoughts. Look at any video with respectable viewing figures, and you will find comments and conversation taking place. Try to engage with people who have spent time discussing your content, even if it is only a brief message. This becomes harder as your video marketing reach grows, but in the early stages it is a good way to develop a core audience.

## Participate with Related Content

A quick way to get new viewers is to get a recommendation from people with a following, but this is unlikely to happen unprompted. Try to participate within the community, commenting on similar

videos and joining relevant groups. Most video sites offer a community element, so make use of pre-existing groups by adding value. Most video sites work in a similar fashion to other social media properties; the best results are enjoyed by people who think in terms of community.

## Study Your Analytics

As you start to progress with video marketing, your analytics account will become incredibly valuable. In any business, having a clear idea of your customer base is necessary, so the demographic and geographic information in your analytics accounts can help you to tailor your content. Also, learning where and how people found your videos can ensure you double your efforts with these particular traffic sources. Video statistics can give you information about your customers that you may not have previously known, allowing you to make adjustments within the rest of your business.

## Bonus Tip - Find Untapped Potential

Creating quality videos does come with a learning curve, but you can begin promoting your business before even reaching the content creation stage. If you search for popular videos within your niche, you should

start to find those without any obvious promotional elements. Many eager amateurs have created videos, but they are not actively involved in the business. For example, a dog owner might upload videos of their pet, receive consistent viewing figures, and leave their account dormant. If you owned a dog training business, this video could be extremely valuable to you.

Contact these video owners, ask them if they will add a link to your website, and offer to sponsor their video. Typically, only a small number of people will respond to you, but this will be enough to get your promotions rolling. You can instantly gain a stream of consistent viewers, and the cost will be minimal. This is a quick way to get started with video marketing before you progress to your own content creation.

Based on research from eMarketer, 51.9 percent of marketers cited video as having the highest ROI amongst content types. With so many business owners reaping the rewards of a successful video marketing strategy, ignoring this content type could prove to be damaging. While the world of video might initially be unfamiliar, when you start to see the benefits, it could easily become the driver of your marketing efforts.





insight can form the basis of your SEO plan, with a range of terms, both weak and strong in competition, being targeted over a particular schedule. Good research can also uncover some untapped potential, where certain high-volume keywords are not being targeted by other businesses.

## **Competitive Analysis**

From a huge market to a small niche, you can expect to find competition from a variety of websites. These can include other businesses, social media properties, bloggers, wiki sites, and plenty more. Competitive analysis allows you to see exactly how strong the competition will be, enabling you to make good assessments of the SEO work required.

## **On-Site and Off-Site Optimization**

On-site optimization is something you can directly control, but it can damage your site within the search engines. An over-optimized site, where keywords are used far too frequently, may face a Google penalty, whereas no optimization creates an uphill battle in trying to rank for any keywords.

Optimization, including title tags, descriptions, site structure, and keyword density, will determine how search engines

view your site as a whole, and also each page you create.

Off-site optimization often refers to building backlinks towards your site, but it can also involve creating interesting content which other people decide to repost or recommend. You won't be able to control every aspect of your off-site optimization, but there are plenty of things you can do, including social media activity, guest blogging, video marketing, press releases, and citations for local business.

## **Conversion Strategies**

SEO does not have to end when you are ranking in the search engines. When a searcher clicks on your link, a marketing funnel should be in place to achieve a particular action. Whether you are building a list, selling products, promoting a service, or monetizing through advertising, you want to increase your conversion rate. Successful strategies are based around tracking and testing, enabling you to find out what is the most effective way of gaining a conversion.

## **Video Marketing**

Video marketing is one of the biggest growth areas for an online business, and it can provide a high return on investment when used as part of an SEO campaign. There will be a certain proportion of

your audience who prefer to watch videos ahead of reading articles, so if you can get your video content featured in the search engines you access a part of your audience that was previously unavailable to you.

## **Full Reports**

Keeping track of data is the best way to understand what is producing SEO results. While many people don't like studying spreadsheets, being able to monitor where you are ranking, the traffic you are getting, and what is producing revenue can allow you to focus on achieving the right outcomes. SEO can take time, so tracking progress over an extended time period is an essential aspect.

It is possible for a business owner to do all of the above, but each part requires a level of skill, experience, and patience. SEO is a difficult skill to master, particularly if you want to achieve consistent results, and an SEO agency is the best way to get this consistency.

Regardless of the market, top search rankings can transform a business, bringing in a whole new audience that was previously impossible to reach. If you want results that last, SEO is no longer a part-time activity, but instead requires the capability and experience of a quality SEO agency.





## Local Business SEO - Getting Citations for Prime Search Ranking Position

There are a whole host of factors that go into ranking a website, but for local SEO the appearance of citations plays a major part. Citations are simply mentions of your business across the web, whether this includes the full name, address, and phone number, or just your brand name. The citation might link back to your site, or just be a mention without a backlink. With much of local SEO relying on relevance and geography, having mentions from authoritative sites in your community can engender trust in your business.

### **Aggregators**

Sifting through local business listings and search platforms can be time-consuming, but a data aggregator has already done this work for you. In most cases, this type of service will charge a fee, but it can be a simple way to get your business listed across various platforms. Services such as Express Update, Yelp, and Neustar Localeze take your business information and submit it to search engines, local business directories, car navigation systems, and other relevant places. Submitting through an aggregator can

help your business in the search engines, while also allowing people to find you through other local sources.

### **Social Media Properties**

The link between effective SEO and social media is hard to ignore, but it is not just about having a social media presence. Your social media profiles usually provide an area to include your full business details. The major sites, including LinkedIn, Google +, Facebook, and Tumblr, all allow you to post your personal biography details. If you become active on

these sites, your profile page will usually grow in authority, creating a powerful backlink. Many social media sites include groups or pages dedicated to local business, and this can also offer you the chance to add your business.

### **Track Your Competition**

A quick way to uncover a host of citation opportunities is to see what your competitors are doing. To do this, choose the highest ranking competitors, track their links, and add your own business to these locations. The more time-consuming option, which is also free, is to search in Google for variations of your competitors name, address, and phone number, using quotations marks to create a specific phrase search. You will need to search through a number of listings to get some results, but the process is simple to complete. To speed up results, use a paid service like Majestic SEO, Moz, or SEMrush, in order to generate a list of backlinks with detailed analytics.

### **Target Bloggers**

In almost every location and regional area, various bloggers will be actively creating content. While a more general blog is unlikely to add your citation, niche or geographically related blogs may be happy to include you. If a blog has

a resource page, you could discuss adding your site if you can show you provide value. If this is not possible, sending out a press release can provide a reason for writing about your business, with references to your business name included.

### **Host an Event**

This might not be possible for every type of business, but hosting an event is a good way to generate a number of citations. Hosting the event from your business location will require sites to include your address details, whether they include a backlink or not, so you benefit from a number of local, relevant citations. If your facilities allow it, you could host a small gathering for business leaders, a charity event, or a discount sale. To generate your citations, along with some great promotion, contact local blogs, online newspapers, event listing sites, and local social media groups.

Citations are only one part of a strong local SEO campaign, but they are arguably the most important. A collection of citations can improve your trust level from the search engine's perspective, allowing you to get ranked for a variety of related keywords. In most cases, citations are easy to achieve, and allow you to spend more time developing your business.

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# *Instagram for Business? 7 Secrets You Ought to Know*



Is Instagram part of your business' overall marketing strategy? Are you sharing images on a regular basis to engage with current and potential customers? Good news; there are an increasing number of Instagram tools available that can help you accelerate the impact of your visual marketing efforts. Discovering new resources for Instagram can help you to maximize the potential of your visual media strategy. In the same way that you wouldn't create print ads or content marketing posts without a plan, these handy resources can help you approach your social/visual marketing efforts with a game plan. Dig into the following

seven tools to see which ones will help you to make the most of your brand's Instagram outreach efforts.

## **Picdeck**

Picdeck lets you view your Instagram feed Tweetdeck-style. Add multiple columns to sort your feed according to hashtags, users, or filters of your own choosing. (Can you say competitor tracking?) ([picdeck.co](http://picdeck.co))

## **Instapan**

Instapan lets you offer full panoramic images to your brand's social media followers.

No tiny thumbnails attempting to show your business' warehouse or tradeshow booth. This nifty app lets your Instagram followers pan from side-to-side to see the full impact of your panoramic shots. ([getinstapan.com](http://getinstapan.com))

## **Activity Walls**

Activity Walls lets you show off full walls of your Instagram (and Twitter) feeds. Choose your hashtag, pick the colours for your wall, and your customized Instagram feed is ready for showing off to conference attendees or tradeshow visitors. ([activitywalls.com](http://activitywalls.com))



## Like2Buy

Like2Buy helps business owners turn their Instagram images into purchase-ready links. Showcase your products or highlight your services and let your social media followers purchase from you directly from your Instagram feed. Winning concept, right?

(curalate.com/solutions/Like2Buy)

## Totems

Totems offers Instagram analytics. Discover everything from the success of your hashtag campaigns to your competitor's usage and audience engagement.

(totems.co/analytics)

## Insto

Insto provides a handy link-insertion tool for brands on Instagram. Automatically add product links to the images you share or convert your hashtags into clickable links leading to your product/service pages.

(insto.link)

## Latergramme

Latergramme helps you manage your Instagram account. Plan which images you want to share with your followers and schedule those posts to go live on specific dates. Add images to your business feed on Instagram from your smartphone or from your desktop computer. You

can view your Latergramme dashboard to see at a glance your entire week's worth of planned posts.

(latergram.me)

As an ever-increasing number of businesses realize the potential reach of Instagram, it is more important than ever you maximize your time on this powerful visual media platform. Will any of the above-listed business tools for Instagram help you make the most of your visual marketing time?



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# News You Should Know

## Animated GIFs Coming To Your Facebook Feed

Facebook confirmed that it will now support animated GIFs in the Facebook News Feed. It may take time for everyone to see the added functionality, as the update is still rolling out. The move represents a significant change in direction for Facebook, which has historically made a conscious decision to avoid supporting GIFs, claiming that doing so would make its News Feed "too chaotic."

Instead of allowing GIFs, Facebook's focus to date has been on video. A spokesperson for Facebook shared, "We're rolling out support for animated GIFs in News Feed. This is so you can share more fun, expressive things with your friends on Facebook."

To try the new feature, Facebook users can paste a link to a GIF hosted on an external website like Giphy, Imgur, Tumblr, or elsewhere, into their status update box and then publish. The GIF will be animated inline after you post. You can't currently upload GIFs directly, however, and see the same results.

## 2015 Social Media Marketing Report Released

Industry leader Social Media Examiner recently released the detailed results of its seventh annual social media study. More than 3,700 marketers provided feedback, revealing where they focus their social media activities. The industry report also provides information on which social tactics are most effective, and how content plays a vital role with social media marketing.

Topics discussed include how B2B social media marketing varies from B2C businesses, what social platforms marketers will focus on in the future, and how larger businesses use social media differently from smaller businesses.

The 52-page report is free to download until June 12th, 2015 at <http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/SocialMediaMarketingIndustryReport2015.pdf>

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## BLUE

Demonstrates trust, dependability, and security.



## PINK

Demonstrates romance and feminism.



## ORANGE

Demonstrates confidence, aggressiveness, and cheerfulness.



## GREEN

Demonstrates wealth, growth, peace, and health.



## YELLOW

Demonstrates optimism, youth, and warmth.



## RED

Demonstrates excitement, boldness, energy, and urgency.



## PURPLE

Demonstrates creativity, wisdom, and imagination.



## BLACK

Demonstrates power and authority.



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