

17 Ways to Attract a Targeted, Engaged Audience

It's no secret that your audience is already on social media – and so are your competitors. That means if you're not fully maximizing your use of social media in your marketing campaigns, then you're likely leaving a lot of money on the table.

So, with that in mind, here are 17 tips for attracting and engaging your social media audience...

1. Consider These Top Social Media Platforms

When you think of social media, you may have one or two sites immediately come to mind. However, there are actually several popular platforms for you to consider. These platforms include:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- YouTube
- Google+
- LinkedIn
- Tumblr
- Reddit
- Medium

And that's not all...

2. Check for Niche Platforms

In addition to the top social media platforms named above, your market may also have niche social media platforms. For example, Dogster and Catster are well-known social media platforms for pet lovers.

How do you find these platforms? Search Google for your market keywords (such as “dog training”) alongside words like:

- Social media
- Group
- Community
- Forum
- Network

Before you join, check out this next tip...

3. Choose Your Platforms Carefully

One big mistake many marketers make is to join all the platforms they can find. Problem is, you spread yourself too thin. And in some cases, it may be a complete waste of time to have a presence on a certain platform if your audience isn't on that platform.

Here's what to do instead...

First, do your research on the top platforms to find out if your unique audience is already on the platform.

Secondly, check if the platform is a good fit for your goals, business model, and the type of content you intend to post. For example, if you're not going to post a lot of videos, then YouTube isn't a good fit.

Finally, use the previous two steps to pick the top two or three platforms. Then put all your effort into having a big presence on these platforms (rather than spreading yourself too thin).

Here's the next tip...

4. Make Use of Social Media Tools

Some platforms (like Facebook) have some tools built in, such as tools that let you schedule your content for later and tools that let you get some insight into your audience. That's a start. However, it's a good idea to also

get a third-party tool such as HootSuite.com, which can help you with everything from scheduling, to posting across multiple platforms at once, to tracking your campaigns.

5. 4 Proven Ways to Use Facebook

How many ways are you using Facebook to grow your business? See if you're overlooking any of these ideas...

- Set up a Facebook business Page. This should be your first step when you start using Facebook.
- Start a Facebook Group. The idea here is to create a community for people to gather and discuss niche topics.
- Schedule a Facebook Ad. You can boost your Page posts, or create an entirely new ad to send traffic to your website.
- Start commenting in niche Groups and Pages. This helps build brand recognition and helps you start building relationships with other marketers in your niche.

Next...

6. 2 Best Practices for Using Twitter

If Twitter is the platform of your choice, then follow these two best practices...

Tweet Often, But Don't Flood Visitors

Yes, you need to tweet regularly to engage followers, but posting every 10 minutes is likely to overwhelm them. (The exception is if you're live-tweeting an event, where it's expected that you'll tweet regularly.)

Join the Conversation

If your niche is talking about something, then use appropriate hashtags and/or reply to individuals to join the conversation. Be sure to offer a fresh viewpoint, which will help you stand out.

7. The Social Media Mini-Checklist

You've picked a platform and you're ready to get set up. Use this mini checklist:

- Upload professional profile and cover photos. Be sure these photos look good and reflect your brand.
- Fill out your profile. Don't make it all about you. Instead, turn the spotlight on your audience and what you can do for them.
- Link to your website. Give visitors a good reason to click through.
- Link from your website. For example, put social media badges on your blog.
- Consider your goals. What is your purpose in posting on social media? Your goals are going to dictate what you post and how often.
- Create a publishing plan. Here's where you decide the sort of content you'll post and when you'll post it.
- Invite your current audience to join you on social media. Blog about your new page, send a newsletter letting subscribers know about it, etc.
- Start posting. Be sure to post often, and make it a two-way interaction (it is social media, after all, so be social).

Next...

8. 3 Ways to Engage Your Social Media Audience

You'll get the most benefits from social media if you're able to engage your audience. Follow these tips...

Post In-Demand Content

Do your market research to see what sort of content your audience wants. For example, what sort of content are they buying? What sort of content are they showing a lot of interest in on blogs and other social media pages? Figure out the best topics, then create your own fresh take on them.

Encourage Readers to Interact

Whenever you post something, give your readers a reason to like, comment and share your content. For example, you might post about a somewhat controversial topic, and then end with, "What do you think?"

Interact With Followers

While you want your followers to interact with your content, it's equally important that you interact with them. This means sharing their good content, liking their comments, and replying to the most thoughtful comments. In other words, show readers there is a human on the other side of your social media pages.

9. 20 Kinds of Content to Post on Social Media

The idea here is to post a variety of content to keep your readers engaged and to determine what sort of content they respond to best. Here are ideas for you to use:

- Articles.
- Tutorials.
- Lists (tips lists, resource lists, gear lists, round ups of popular posts, etc.).
- Videos.
- Audios.

- Webinar replays.
- Memes.
- Infographics.
- Charts.
- Comics.
- Excerpts from products.
- Product reviews/comparisons.
- Case studies.
- Checklists.
- Cheat sheets.
- Worksheets.
- Templates.
- Swipe files.
- Planners.
- Direct-response ads.

Next...

10. Grow Your Audience With Hashtags

One way to grow your audience is to identify trending topics and their associated hashtags, and then join the conversation using the same hashtags.

In order to find and monitor these hashtags, you'll want to use a tool. The exact tool you use depends on the social media platform. For example, if you're on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram, then you can uncover popular hashtags using a tool like <https://socialert.net/>.

11. Utilize Facebook Tabs

Your Facebook Page already includes some common tabs, such as "About" and "Photos." You can make the most of your Facebook Page by creating custom tabs. For example, you might create a tab advertising "free resources," and then put an opt-in page on the other side of the tab.

To learn more about creating custom tabs, go to: <https://developers.facebook.com/docs/pages/tabs/>.

12. Post Frequently

It's difficult to build relationships (and brand recognition) if you don't stay in front of your audience on a regular basis. That's why you'll want to post frequently to help build that top-of-mind awareness.

How frequently? Check other popular social media pages in your niche to get a feel for how often they post. Some may post multiple times per day. You should aim to engage your audience at least two or three times per week, though daily posts are usually better. (Note: you can schedule these posts ahead of time.)

13. Think Beyond Customers

Social media isn't just for building relationships with your prospects and customers. It's also a great way to meet and build relationships with affiliates and joint venture partners.

For example, if a potential partner has a group on Facebook, you can join it and become a thoughtful contributor. Once you've built some name recognition with the potential partner, you can then start talking to him or her privately via direct message. Continue this, and you'll build relationships that you can later turn into profitable ventures.

TIP: Don't push a joint venture the first time you get in direct contact with a potential partner. Instead, build relationships first without expectation, and later you can propose a mutually beneficially venture.

Next...

14. Test Paid Social Media Advertising

Once you know which platforms your audience frequents, then you'll want test some of the paid advertising offered on these platforms. Be sure to focus in on a narrow audience with targeted ads.

For example, you can post an ad on a sub-Reddit on Reddit that caters to your specific audience. Or you can use Facebook's ad platform to select the narrow demographics, interests and behaviors of your specific audience.

Note: you may have heard that Twitter advertising is relatively expensive. For the most part that's true. However, it's not very expensive to promote a tweet, so you'll want to try that route first.

15. Interlink Your Platforms

To help grow your audience and expand your reach into your market, cross-link all your platforms. This includes linking each of your social media profiles together (where possible), linking to your blog from your social media pages, and linking back to social media pages from your blog.

NOTE: You can use a social media plugin to create links and badges on your blog, which makes it easier for people to share, like and comment on your blog content via social media.

16. Track Your Results

If you're not tracking your results, then you're just guessing about what your audience likes. It's much better to start tracking your campaigns. Once you discover the type of content your audience responds to the best, then you can start publishing more of what they love.

TIP: There are several tools available to help you track your content. HootSuite.com is a popular "all in one" tool that includes analytics.

What sorts of things should you test? Here are five ideas:

- Test long versus short content.
- Test text-based content versus image-based content.
- Test other media, such as videos.
- Test the best time of the day to publish content.
- Test the best day to publish promotional content.

And finally...

17. 3 Social Media Mistakes to Avoid

If you're just getting started with social media, then you want to make sure you're not making any of the following three common mistakes:

Neglecting to Complete Your Profile

Your profile is an important piece of your account, as it gives you chance to let people know who you are and what you can do for them. To that end, be sure to create a profile that's built on your branding, and one that focuses on how you can help your audience.

Engaging in a Monologue

A lot of online marketing consists of a "monologue," meaning you push out content (like a newsletter) and your audience consumes it. Social media is different because it involves the give and take of a dialogue. If you're not interacting with your fans on a personal level on your social media site, then you can expect to see lower response rates and engagement rates when you publish content.

TIP: Don't have time to engage on this level yourself? You can hire people to handle your social media for you.

Next...

Buying Followers

While you can certainly purchase paid advertising to build your networks, one thing you'll want to avoid is any company that offers to sell followers/fans to you. These "fans" are often bots or totally untargeted people. While they build your fan numbers, they do absolutely nothing to build your business.

Now let's wrap things up...

Conclusion

Social media is a great platform for attracting a targeted audience, building relationships with them, and promoting your lead pages and offers. Just be sure to follow the 17 tips and insights you just learned in order to get the best results!



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