

Guide to Social Media Marketing

Social media is a pervasive part of both private lives and modern industry. Worldwide there are approximately 4.2 billion users across dozens of social media platforms. With this scale of active userbase, it's no wonder that businesses have increasingly turned to social media for marketing purposes. Compared with traditional modes of marketing, regional and, if desired, global audiences can be targeted and reached with relatively little effort. Built-in analytics allow for easy statistical analyses, and the sheer nature of social media have reshaped the way businesses communicate with their consumers. Facebook and Instagram, for example, have pretty strong built-in data insights, but there are also external programs you can use for a more in-depth analysis of your target audience, performance stats, etc.

The following guide will take you through the basics of social media marketing and the steps your SME can take to implement a successful strategy. The guide is structured into two phases: planning and implementation. The planning phase will help you answer questions about your goals and motivations, identify your audience, and structure your marketing strategy. The section on implementation will guide you through managing your posts and platforms. As you work through each section of the guide, learning about new aspects of social media marketing and how it can be implemented in your organization, you can revisit and revise in order to build a comprehensive strategy.

Planning Phase

Before you start posting and interacting with your target audience, you should know why you want to use social media for marketing purposes. To get started, answer the following lead questions for your SME:

Why do I want to engage with social media? What specific goals do I want to achieve?

Consider this: Does it make sense to invest in social media in addition to/instead of traditional media (print, tv, radio, etc.)?

Now that you've set goals for your SME, it's time to prepare your organization. Like any marketing campaign, this too will require financial and staff resources. The following section will help you set budget expectations.

Budget

There are many facets to establishing the budget for social media marketing. Current trends show that companies are allocating about 13% of their marketing budget for social media. Check all the items you think you might need and how much you can budget for each aspect. Enter your total calculated budget at the end. Consider which tools you already have at your disposal to save budget.

1. Research: _____ €

Tip: It's important to do thorough research! What do different social media platforms do? Which technology do I need? What is my competition doing? Where is my audience? When budgeting for research, consider if you have staff available or these tasks will be done by a social media manager. How many hours for research are allotted at what rate?

2. Content

Tip: Content is king on social media platforms! The quality of your content is ultimately going to be a deciding factor on whether your target group engages with your company. Budget accordingly.

Pictures and Graphics: _____ €
Video: _____ €
Talent: _____ €
Production: _____ €
Copywrite: _____ €
Translation: _____ €
Total: _____ €

3. Software & Tools

Tip: Carefully consider which tools are necessary for your organization to meet their goals. Do you need a solution for simple photo editing? Video editing? Maybe AR? What about content management and marketing?

SEO: _____ €
Adobe: _____ €

Photoshop/InDesign: _____ €
Hosting Site: _____ €
Social Media Management Platform: _____ €
Automated Systems: _____ €
Analytics: _____ €
Advertising: _____ €
Total: _____ €

4. People

Tip: Effective social media marketing requires time and attention to detail. Consider how many staff members you want to dedicate to perfecting your online presence and if this person is already a member of your team or a new hire. Do they require training?

Partnerships: _____ €
Staff _____ hours/ week → _____ €
Training _____ €
Total: _____ €

Now, add up the totals from the previous four categories for an approximate social media marketing budget:

Total Budget: _____ €

Is the budget higher or lower than expected? Which aspects are you still unsure of that may require more research? Do some categories need to be adjusted in order to meet your budget expectations?

Target groups

Now that you have an approximate budget for your social media marketing strategy, it's time to determine and analyze your target audience.

Tip: Specify your target group in terms of personas! Who are they? How old are they? Gender, occupation, education? Having this information will help you make decisions about platforms and content further down the line.

Checklist:

- Determine target group in terms of demographic:
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Occupation
 - Education
- Determine target group in terms of psychographics:
 - Lifestyle
 - Core values
 - Behaviors
- Determine target group's preferred mediums and platforms
- Determine how competitors are communicating with target group
- Determine which type of content resonates with target group
 - Scour "explorer" pages on platforms
 - Identify trends/ trending hashtags
 - Use integrated analytics to see post insights

Platforms

After you have a deeper understanding of your target audience and how to reach them, it's time to decide which platforms you should be using. Fill in the table on the following page and then answer the questions to determine which social media platform fits your organization's goals and philosophy.

Tip: Do not create a profile on every available platform! Invest time into two or three that will help you reach your targets. Consider which platform your target group already spends time on, and focus your efforts there.

Checklist:

- Create Profile (s)
- Complete Profile (s)
 - All brand collateral including: logos, submarks, banners, and brand imagery
 - Information about organization
 - Follow other businesses
 - Follow similar brands and competitors

Platform	Format / Content structure	Special Features	User structure	Ad structure	Integrated statistics
Facebook					
Instagram					
Twitter					
LinkedIn					
Youtube					
TikTok					
Snapchat					
Other					

Which platform(s) seem(s) to fit your organization's philosophy best?

What questions do I still have about the platform(s)?

Content

The key to your successful marketing strategy is creating engaging and shareable content. The following will help you structure the content already at your disposal and identify knowledge/content gaps.

Tip: Effective content is all about storytelling! Don't just sell a product, sell your brand! More than just a logo, your brand is defined by the values and the experience you can provide.

Checklist:

- Gather new and existing content for a content bank
 - Your content bank contains everything you already have/will store all future content regarding your brand: photos, videos, messages, etc.
- Itemize aspects of your brand
- Create organizational system for content bank
- Specify brand and find brand voice (examples of a brand voice could be helpful, experienced, playful, knowledgeable, etc.)
- Design brand
- Employ online content creation/management tools

Now that your content is secure and structured, it's time to start considering how and where to launch your marketing campaigns. The following table will help you collect and structure ideas.

Title of campaign	Keywords	Call to action	Form (Media)	Meta Description	Platform
Campaign					
Campaign					
Campaign					
Campaign					

Implementation Phase

Now that you have a basic grasp on social media marketing, it's time to implement your strategy.

Checklist:

- Finalize content and campaign
- Create posting calendar
- Promote channels

Monitoring

Your work is not done just by posting. It's important to keep an eye on your profiles and update them as needed. The following monitoring checklist will help keep your team engaged with your profiles.

Daily Checklist:

- Check all profiles on different platforms
- Check and reply to all comments, messages, and mentions
- Check all profiles on different platforms
- Follow back followers
- Answer queries on forums
- Post engaging content that elicits a response (i.e. "which do you prefer: this or that" or "help us choose which product to release next"). People love sharing their opinions. Give them that opportunity.

Weekly Checklist:

- Check profile stats
- Brainstorming session
- Update ads
- Engage with influencers

Monthly Checklist:

- Perform stats analysis on all profiles
- Have monthly check-in with staff
- Decide on monthly goals
- Plan new campaign and create calendar
- Attend a virtual event or session