

*Because we care
about your business,
this introductory
guide to marketing
your eye care
business on social
media was put
together to help
promote and grow
your company right
now through simple
strategies at little or
no cost to you.*

CREATE A BLOG FOR YOUR EYE CARE BUSINESS

At this stage, it's fair to say that a web presence is critical to the success of your business. As you know, for the last 10 years or so we've seen a surge in both the number and popularity of social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn, making it much simpler to publish content online.

Whether you are running a small business or corporation, the numbers make it clear: Your customers are online. They are interacting in social channels with their friends, colleagues, and other brands in search of information, recommendations, and entertainment. If your business is not around to answer, a competitor will be.

The first action you should take is to look at what are you're trying to promote. What are your assets? Who are your target customers?

Guide to Using Social Media for Marketing

Using social media for marketing can enable a small business to further their reach to more customers. Your customers are interacting with brands through social media; therefore, having a strong social media presence on the web is the key to tap into their interest. If implemented correctly, marketing with social media can bring remarkable success to your business.

What is Social Media Marketing?

Social media marketing is a form of internet marketing that implements various social media networks in order to achieve marketing communication and branding goals. Social media marketing primarily covers activities involving social sharing of content, videos, and images for marketing purposes.

This introduction to social media marketing is designed to give small businesses on short budgets an alternative to hiring a social media marketing agency or paying for social media marketing services. It's a basic overview on how to use social media for marketing

Social Media and Marketing: Start With a Plan

Before you begin creating social media marketing campaigns, consider your business' goals. Starting a social media marketing campaign without a plan in mind is like wandering through a forest without a map—you'll only end up lost.

Create a social media marketing plan and brainstorm about your goals: what are you hoping to achieve through social media marketing? Who is your target audience? Where would your target audience hang out and how would they use social media?

What message do you want to send to your audience with social media marketing?

Developing Your Goals

Social media marketing can help with a number of goals, such as:

- Website traffic
- Conversions
- Brand awareness
- Creating a brand identity and positive brand association
- Communication and interaction with key audiences

Only by establishing your goals can you measure your social media ROI (Return On Investment).

Social Media Marketing Tips

Here are some social media marketing tips to keep you on the right track across all your social media campaigns.

- **Planning** – As discussed previously, building a social media marketing plan is essential. Consider **keyword research** and brainstorm content ideas that will interest your target audience.
- **Content is King** — Consistent with other areas of online marketing, content reigns king when it comes to social media marketing. Make sure you are offering valuable information that your ideal customers will find interesting. Create a variety of content by implementing images, videos, and infographics in addition to classic text-based content.
- **Consistent Brand Image** — Using social media for marketing enables your business to project your brand image across a variety of different social media platforms. While each platform has its own unique environment and voice, your business' core identity should stay consistent.
- **Blog** — Blogging is a great social media marketing tool that lets you share a wide array of information and content with readers. Your company blog can also serve as your social media marketing blog, in which you blog about your recent social media efforts, contests, and events.
- **Links** — While using social media for marketing relies primarily on your business sharing its own unique, original content to gain followers, fans, and devotees, it's also great to link to outside articles as well. If other sources provide great, valuable information you think your target audience will enjoy, don't be shy about linking to them. Linking to outside sources improves trust and reliability, and you may even get some links in return.
- **Track Competitors** — It's always important to keep an eye on competitors—they can provide valuable data for keyword research, where to get industry-related links, and other social media marketing insight. If your competitors are using a certain social media marketing technique that seems to be working for them, do the same thing, but do it better!
- **Measure Success with Analytics** —You can't determine the success of your social media marketing strategies without tracking data. Google Analytics can be used as a great social media marketing tool that will help you measure your triumphant social media marketing techniques, as well as determine which strategies are better off abandoned. Attach tracking tags to your social media marketing campaigns so that you can properly monitor them.

Know Your Platform

We've put together a brief overview on how to use social media for marketing according to each platform's unique environment. Various social media marketing sites will require different techniques, so develop a unique strategy tailored for each platform.

- **Facebook:** Facebook's casual, friendly environment requires an active social media marketing strategy that begins with creating a **Facebook Business Fan Page**. You will want to pay careful attention to layout, as the visual component is a key aspect of the Facebook experience. Social media marketing for business pages revolves around furthering your conversation with audiences by posting industry-related articles, images, videos, etc. Facebook is a place people go to relax and chat with friends, so keep your tone light and friendly.

- **Google+:** Google+ is the new Facebook competitor, and it promotes the same fun, casual atmosphere. On Google+ you can upload and share photos, videos, links, and view all your +1s. Also take advantage of Google+ circles, which allow you to segment your followers into smaller groups, enabling you to share information with some followers while barring others. For example, you might try creating a “super-fan” circle, and share special discounts and exclusive offers only with that group.
- **Pinterest:** Pinterest is the latest in social media marketing trends. Pinterest’s image-centered platform is ideal for retail, but anyone can benefit from using Pinterest for social media purposes. Pinterest allows small businesses to showcase their own product offerings while also developing their own brand’s personality with some unique pinboards.
- **Twitter:** Twitter is the social media marketing tool that lets you broadcast your updates across the web. Follow tweeters in your industry or related fields, and you should gain a steady stream of followers in return. Mix up your official-related tweets about specials, discounts, and news updates with some fun and quirky tweets interspersed. Be sure to retweet when a customer has something nice to say about you, and don’t forget to answer people’s questions when possible. Using Twitter as a social media marketing tool revolves around dialog and communication, so be sure to interact as much as possible
- **LinkedIn:** LinkedIn is one of the more professional social media marketing sites. LinkedIn Groups is a great venue for entering into a professional dialog with people in similar industries and provides a place to share content with like-minded individuals. Encourage customers or clients to give your business a recommendation on your LinkedIn profile. Recommendations make your business appear more credible and reliable for new customers. Also, browse the Questions section of LinkedIn; providing answers helps you get established and earns trust.
- **YouTube:** YouTube is the number one place for creating video content, which can be an incredibly powerful social media marketing tool. Many businesses try to create video content with the aim of having their video “go viral,” but in reality those chances are pretty slim. Instead, focus on creating useful, instructive “how-to” videos. These how-to videos also have the added benefit of ranking on the video search results of Google, so don’t under-estimate the power of video content!

Select a Social Media Manager

You should pick a social media manager, like SproutSocial.com and HootSuite.com, which allows you to manage all of your accounts on one site and schedule your messages to deploy so that you won’t have to sit over it all day.

For more information, contact our Marketing Department at marketing@bestimageoptical.com.