

Social Media Marketing

1 Course Welcome

1.1 Welcome to the Social Media Marketing Course

The Social Media Marketing course is comprised of seven topics. We recommend you complete the Course Introduction and Topic 1: Basic Marketing Concepts Review, before proceeding to other topics.

2 Course Introduction

2.1 Course Introduction

Welcome to the SBA Learning Center's online training course, Social Media Marketing. This course is for all entrepreneurs who want to integrate social media into existing marketing campaigns.

This training is a product of the agency's Office of Entrepreneurship Education.

2.2 Course Logistics

The Social Media Marketing course is self-paced training that takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. It provides:

- Overview of social media tools and strategies.
- Index of topics for quick reference.
- Action plan to help you apply what you have learned.
- Printed Certificate of Completion from SBA.

You may need additional time to review any resource materials and the action plan suggested at the end of the course.

2.3 Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to recognize the value of effectively integrating social media into your day-to-day marketing strategies.

2.4 History of Marketing

This graphic shows the evolution of marketing, starting before the 1400's through the present time.

- **Pre-1400's:** Before Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press in the 1400's, most businesses probably used word-of-mouth to market their products and services.
- **1400's- 1900's:** After 1400, print media dominated the world, well into the 1900's.
- **1920's:** In the 1920's, radio added another communication option for marketing products and services.
- **1940's:** Advances in technology led to the addition of television in the 1940's, providing advertising opportunities through commercials.
- **1950's:** In the 1950's, telemarketing took hold and became an effective marketing avenue for those who could afford advertising production costs and air time.

- **1990's:** In the 1990's, development of the world wide web took the marketing industry to a whole new level; it costs significantly less than traditional marketing means with outreach to massive audiences.

2.5 *History of Marketing (Cont.)*

Think about this technology evolution: Did the emergence of a new technology displace the preceding one? Did print, radio, and television go out of style?

Of course not! Magazines are still printed, radio ads still air, television commercials continue to influence our spending habits, and telemarketers still call us.

Today, entrepreneurs also have the internet and related social media platforms at their fingertips... this is just another way of conducting and advertising business.

2.6 *Course Introduction Summary*

In this Course Introduction, you received information about the purpose, logistics, and overarching objective of the Social Media Marketing course.

In addition, you reviewed a brief history of marketing, spanning from the pre-1400's through current times.

3 *Topic 1: Basic Marketing Concepts Review*

3.1 *Topic 1 Objective*

By the end of this topic, you should be able to recall basic marketing concepts. To meet the objective, this topic will cover:

- Definition of marketing
- Market research process (Segmentation, Target Markets, Positioning (STP), and Stakeholder Analysis)
- Market research strategies
- Marketing plans

3.2 *What is Marketing?*

Marketing is “The process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives.” - American Marketing Association

The key word in this definition is “satisfy.” Your product and/or service should provide a solution to an unfulfilled need in the market place. Additionally, your product and/or service should address your customers’ problems or ‘pain points.’

3.3 *Market Research Process*

To determine what customers need and want to buy, you will first need to conduct market research. Market research does not have to be costly, nor does it have to be a complex process.

An easy way to remember the key steps of market research process is the “STP and Stakeholder Analysis” model.

- **Segmentation:** Segmentation is the separation of customers into categories to determine what segment is best for what your business does. You can separate by demographics such as gender, age, income, education levels, location, beliefs, spending habits, and so on.
- **Target Market Identification:** Identify exactly who your product is geared for and whether your product/service actually fits a definable segment or segments of the market. You may find you can target different segments with different products, or one product may have a primary target market and a secondary target market. Note: If you discover that your product/service does not fit a definable segment of the market, you might need to reevaluate your product or service to determine whether it can be tailored to match a specific target market.
- **Positioning:** Decide how to position your business, using the principle of effective messaging: Say the right things about your product to the right people in a way they understand. A best practice is to draft a ‘segmentation profile’ for your ideal customer, to include name, age, occupation, likes, dislikes, etc. This personalizes your target market and helps you create effective messaging. Later in this course, you will learn more about using social media to communicate effectively.

Later in this course, you’ll learn about using social media to communicate effectively.

- **Stakeholder Analysis:** Anyone affected by what your business does and the health of your business is a stakeholder. Because you cannot satisfy the diverse needs of all stakeholders, it is important to identify which stakeholders are the most important to you, your values, and the health of your business. Keep these prioritized stakeholders in mind when making day-to-day and long-term strategic decisions.

3.4 Market Research Strategies

These strategies will assist you in understanding your target market:

- Use internet search engines
- Review local maps of your area
- Contact economic development agencies
- Review U.S. Census and Labor Department data
- Learn from your competitors

Conducting market research is critical to your business success!

3.5 Marketing Plan 4P’s

Once you’ve done your market research and have identified your target market, you need to design your marketing plan.

A marketing plan is:

- Typically included within your overall business plan

- Serves as a blueprint of strategies to help you win—and keep—customers
- Designed around the *4P's of Marketing*

3.6 Marketing Plan Components

As you design your marketing plan, ensure you include the following components:

- Identify target markets
- Describe products/services
- Outline pricing strategy
- Determine product distribution plans
- Develop promotion strategy
- Review competition
- Identify your business's competitive advantage
- Prepare marketing budget

3.7 Basic Concepts of Marketing Resources

For further review of basic marketing concepts with real-world examples and helpful tips, visit the SBA Learning Center to access [Marketing 101: A Guide to Winning Customers](#).

3.8 Scenario 1: Nascent Entrepreneur Mike Ortega

Meet Mike Ortega, a nascent entrepreneur. For years, Mike and his business partner have dreamed of opening a small trophy store near a moderate-size sports complex in the area. Mike plans to quit his full time job in about one year to actively pursue this venture.

The sports complex serves as a venue for numerous athletic events. Mike knows the majority of patrons are youth athletic teams and play-off competitors of various sports. He has not yet conducted market research but knows that's next on his to-do list.

As you progress through this course, Mike will need your assistance with making decisions that will help him get his business up and running.

3.9 Think About It

Let's see how you apply what you've learned in this topic.

Mike is ready to conduct marketing research to learn more about the patrons of the sports complex. What advice can you give Mike regarding the correct order of steps in the marketing research process?

- a. Stakeholder Analysis, Positioning, Target Market Identification, Segmentation
- b. Positioning, Target Market Identification, Segmentation, Stakeholder Analysis
- c. Target Market Identification, Segmentation, Stakeholder Analysis, Positioning
- d. Segmentation, Target Market Identification, Positioning, Stakeholder Analysis

The correct answer is d. Segmentation, Target Market Identification, Positioning, Stakeholder Analysis

All other options are incorrect because they do not reflect the correct order of the steps of the market research process.

3.10 Think About It

Assume Mike has conducted thorough market research and is ready to develop his marketing plan. What should he keep in mind as he drafts the plan? Select all that apply.

- a. It should serve as a blueprint of strategies to win—and keep—customers.
- b. It should be a stand-alone document developed external to the business plan.
- c. It should be designed around the *4P's of Marketing*.
- d. All of the above.

The correct answers are:

- a. It should serve as a blueprint of strategies to win—and keep—customers.
- c. It should be designed around the *4P's of Marketing*.

Option b. It should be a stand-alone document developed external to the business plan is incorrect because the marketing plan is typically included within the overall business plan.

3.11 Topic 1 Summary

In this topic, you reviewed basic marketing concepts to include the definition of marketing; steps for conducting market research (using the STP and Stakeholder Analysis model); and market research strategies.

You also reviewed marketing plan fundamentals, to include the *4P's of Marketing* and marketing plan components.

4 Topic 2: The Power of Social Media

4.1 Topic 2 Objective

By the end of this topic, you should be able to list the benefits of using social media platforms to market your business. To meet the objective, this topic will cover:

- Definition of social media
- Benefits of using social media Balancing use of social media platforms
- Social media jargon

4.2 What is Social Media?

“Forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, messages and other content.” - Merriam-Webster

Social media marketing refers to all content—images, videos, eBooks, infographics, blogs, etc.—specifically formatted for social media platform environments.

You will learn more about social media platforms later in this course.

4.3 Benefits of Using Social Media

Social media is an effective form of marketing for a variety of reasons.

Here are the top ten reasons why using social media to market your product or services simply makes good business sense:

- **Reach:** Boosts your business reach to both those who know about you and those who don't.
- **Connect:** Fosters instant and direct communication with your customers and the public, in general.
- **Creative:** Engages your target market in a variety of ways – text, images, audio, an/or video.
- **Display:** Provides platform to extend creative promotional offers to boost overall presence.
- **Ease:** Is fairly simple to set up and manage your business' profile.
- **Current:** Signals that your business is modern and up to speed with current marketing methods.
- **Recruit:** Allows you to publicize hiring opportunities.
- **Loyalty:** Cultivates loyalty among target markets.
- **Analysis:** Enables you to measure the effectiveness of your social media marketing efforts.
- **Inexpensive:** Can be very inexpensive and sometimes free, depending on the selected social media platform and how you want to use it to market your business.

4.4 Balancing Use of Social Media

Social media marketing does not have to replace traditional marketing methods. Social media platforms can be easily integrated into your current strategies.

By analyzing results of your target market research, you can determine what channels your target customers are using to talk to their peers and our competitors. Very likely, this is a combination of online and offline strategies.

4.5 Balancing Use of Social Media (Cont.)

Balancing social media use includes juggling the time required to manage the selected social media platforms with other aspects of growing your business.

When you establish an online presence, you create a living, breathing thing. Though often less of a financial burden than traditional marketing methods, you must allocate time, on a consistent basis, to update content and respond to site visitors.

Remember, a Facebook page that hasn't been used in six months compromises the integrity of your business and marketing effectiveness.

4.6 Social Media Jargon

You may be wondering about some of the terms associated with social media, in general.

It's important to be familiar with social media jargon, if you plan to use social media to grow your business success.

- **Profile:** This is the front page of your business social media presence. Make sure the first impression is clean and crisp. You'll learn more about designing your profile later in this course.
- **Like/Thumbs Up:** Sometimes also referred to as *reposts or favorites*, a Like/Thumbs Up indicates the viewer/customer found your content interesting and/or praiseworthy. This means that your fan has “engaged” with your content. Likes are usually good indicators that this type of content is working, so produce more in this style. Be careful not to repeat content; viewers like variety.
- **Follower/Fan:** A viewer is keeping an eye on your presence and content. The more followers you have, the more eyes you have on your page. While keeping track of follower count is one way to assess the size of your online footprint, engagement rate of that footprint is what really gets your content in front of new and potential fans.
- **Hashtag (#):** On social media platforms, you can add ‘hashtags’ to your content posts. These are represented by the hashtag character (#) followed by a word that describes that content. Hashtags act as a search function, allowing you to catalog your content into a “bucket of content” that shares the same hashtag. For example, if you have an ice cream sales business, you might enter “#dairyfantasy” at the end of the post. Hashtags tend to make your content reach a wider audience, as the post is more likely to show up in searches using the hashtag terms.
- **Feed/Newsfeed:** Each social media user has a ‘feed,’ where content from a variety of sources appears. Content can be from other social media users or from a company’s official social media profiles and posts. Because a lot of content appears on an individual’s feeds, people scroll through the feeds pretty quickly. Ensure your content is *snippy snappy* and eye-catching; include images, when possible. You’ll learn more about social media design later in this course.
- **Impression/Hit/Reach:** This indicates the number of screens on which your content actually shows up. Content that yields more impressions is usually better-designed content. Remember, reach is good and engagement is better. It’s important to track engagement rate over time to evaluate how well the content is performing. Not all social media platforms include this data, as this is slightly more sophisticated than other metrics. You’ll learn more about measuring social media marketing performance later in this course.

4.7 Think About It

Let’s see how you apply what you’ve learned in this topic.

Remember Mike and his trophy store? Mike’s business partner really wants to create a business presence on social media. Mike believes social media marketing is just a fad. What could you tell Mike about social media marketing to dispel his misconceptions? Select all that apply.

- a. Tends to be more expensive than traditional marketing methods.
- b. Should never be used to publicize hiring opportunities.
- c. Provides a platform to extend promotional offers to boost presence.
- d. Tends to be less expensive than traditional marketing methods.

The correct answers are:

- c. Provides a platform to extend creative promotional offers to boost overall presence
- d. Tends to be less expensive than traditional marketing methods.

Option a. Tends to be more expensive than traditional marketing methods is incorrect because social media tends to be less expensive than traditional marketing methods.

Option b. Should never be used to publicize hiring opportunities is incorrect because social media is actually a great avenue for advertising position openings.

4.8 Topic 2 Summary

In this topic, you were provided with a definition of social media and a list of the benefits of using social media.

You also considered the importance of balancing social media marketing with traditional marketing strategies.

Finally, you reviewed some terminology associated with social media platforms.

5 Topic 3 Social Media Platforms

5.1 Topic 3 Objective

By the end of this topic, you should be able to compare the various social media platforms. To meet the objective, this topic will cover:

- Relationship between social networks and social media marketing
- Various social media platforms

5.2 Relationship Between Social Networks and Social Media Marketing

According to eMarketer.com, 54.4% of the U.S. population regularly used social networks in 2015. It is predicted that by 2017, the global social network audience will total 2.55 billion.

A social network:

- Is a form of social media.
- Gathers large bodies of data, provided by social network users themselves.
- Creates advanced targeting options to help identify new potential customers.

This section explains four advanced targeting options. It's important to note that most of these are paid options; you will need to pay as you go.

- **Interest:** Type of targeting that reaches specific audiences by looking at their self-reported interests, activities, skills, pages or users they have engaged with, etc. Interest targeting is often related to keyword targeting, so some platforms will allow you to access both. Interest targeting is offered by Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn (under Skill), and Pinterest.
- **Behavioral/Connection:**

- Behavioral: Type of targeting that reaches audiences based on purchase behavior or intents and/or device usage.
 - Connection: Type of targeting that reaches audiences who have a specific kind of connection to your page, app, group, or event.
 - Both behavioral and connection targeting are offered by Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
- **Custom:** Type of targeting that reaches audiences by uploading a list of e-mail addresses, phone numbers, user IDs, or user names. This assumes you can match the uploaded data with real profiles. Custom targeting is offered by Facebook and Twitter.
 - **Lookalike:** Type of targeting that reaches audiences who are similar to an audience you care about; helps extend custom audiences to reach new, similar users. Lookalike targeting is offered by Facebook and LinkedIn.

5.3 Social Media Platforms

The platform(s) you choose will have a significant impact on your eventual outcomes. With so many options available, it's important to know the differences between the most common platforms.

The following provides a description of each social media platform.

- **Facebook:** Commands a bigger audience than all other platforms. 71% of adult users are on Facebook; 18 – 39 year olds are the most active, however, 65+ age group is the fastest growing. Females tend to be slightly more active than males. Advantages include:
 - Allows users to post information and updates, distribute a variety of multimedia content, and communicate with customers and the public, in general.
 - Ad creation tool is simple, due to a well-designed interface. Campaign types range from campaigns designed to attract more page 'likes' to those designed to funnel traffic to a landing page.
 - Using Facebook's audience targeting tools, you can selectively advertise only to demographics that make good business sense for you.
- **Pinterest:** Visual bookmarking tool that helps users post, discover, and save creative ideas. Pinterest is known as the Do It Yourself (DIY) network. It is also a great place for tourist-based businesses. Women predominately visit Pinterest; though it traditionally has drawn a younger demographic, rapid growth over the last three years is evident in 50+ age group. Pinterest is typically used by either the lowest or the highest subsets of incomes and some have college education. Here's how it works:
 - Users can surf the Pinterest platform and 'pin' (bookmark) content that is of interest to them.
 - When your business is linked to Pinterest, users can easily navigate back to your site by selecting the pin bookmark.
 - Those who want to share their ideas set up a profile. After they have been 'pinning' for a while, they create a snapshot of who they are and what they find interesting. This allows you to market selectively, based on pin profiles.

- **Twitter:** Close competitor to Facebook in terms of audience size; advertising options are more limited. 23% of American adult online users are on Twitter. Twitter is particularly popular with those under 50 and most are college-educated. Twitter has also seen an increase in the following demographic groups over the last 18 months: Men, white, 65 and older; household income of \$50,000 or more; college graduates; and urbanites. Most people spend time on Twitter because they are looking for real-time updates from those they consider the experts. Twitter offers:
 - User ability to post brief messages, photos, and videos, link to additional content, and communicate with customers and the public.
 - Handful of advertising options, such as the ‘Promoted Tweet’ option; this puts a tweet you choose at the top of a selected number of users’ new feeds.
 - Capability to help you identify your core demographics (criteria available to choose from are far more restricted than Facebook).
- **LinkedIn:** Presents a different audience than Facebook or Twitter, catering specifically to professionals. If you are a Business to Business (B2B) company or have a specific type of professional you’re targeting, LinkedIn offers:
 - ‘Sponsored Updates’ option is good for content that deserves increased visibility.
 - Easy interface allows you to set up a campaign in a few minutes.
 - Assistance with targeting your audience, searching for candidates based on industry, title, location, and even company size.
 - Capability to post hiring opportunities.
- **YouTube:** Owned by Google, YouTube offers several different advertising options, including both video ads and static advertising associated with videos. Important facts to consider:
 - You will not have as much control over your target audience.
 - Ads will cost a little more than they will with some other social platforms.
 - Platform has been shown to be effective in both raising brand awareness and sparking purchasing decisions. In fact, a recent study shows YouTube converts more users than any other major social media platform.
- **Instagram:** Online mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing, and social networking service that enables users to take pictures and videos, and share them either publicly or privately. Almost every demographic group is seeing an increase in the proportion of users. Approximately 26% of internet adult users use Instagram. Most notably is the growth (53%) in the 18-29 age group. Additionally, user growth is occurring in women, Hispanics, African Americans and those who live in urban or suburban environments. Because Instagram is a very visual network, it is great for restaurants, coffee shops, artists, etc.

The top four ways Instagram benefits your business:

- Allows window-shopping opportunities for your followers.

- Gives followers an exclusive ‘behind-the-scenes’ look at your products/services.
 - Provides exclusive material for your followers (offering discounts or special offers).
 - Makes your business more personable (share pictures of you, your employees, or special events).
- **Amazon:** Considered a ‘marketplace,’ Amazon provides access to a massive audience of customers; in the U.S. alone, Amazon has over 95 million monthly unique visitors. Advantages include:
 - Provides capability to sell your products directly on Amazon or reach Amazon customers through Amazon site display advertisements.
 - Enables you to provide essential information about your product/services menus, availability, cost, hours of operation, contact information, and order fulfillment.
 - Allows you read and respond to views posted by customers.
 - **Yelp:** Provides a free suite of tools to showcase your business. Yelp enables you to:
 - Create a free Yelp Business Page to upload photos, add a link to your website, and update important contact information.
 - Establish a Business Owner Account to respond to customer reviews.
 - Grow your business through Yelp Ads; an average of 142 million users visit Yelp every day. Yelp Ads is a great way to reach new customers. In fact, in a recent study, business owners that advertised with Yelp saw an average of \$23k increase in annual revenues.
 - **Tumblr:** Hosting nearly 65 million blogs with nearly 17 billion page views per month, Tumblr is a free micro-blogging platform that serves as a blog and social network. Users post and share images, video, audio or short pieces of writing. Note that Tumblr is only one example of a blog platform; there are many others out there. Most website builders host their own blog sites. Blogs are only as good as who sees your content; this is why they are a nice tool to drive content for social media networks. Advantages include:
 - Blogs are accessible directly via the web (for Facebook, content is available only to its users).
 - Content is indexed by web search engines to increase your search visibility.
 - Offers free and premium blog design; is one of the most mobile-friendly publishing platforms.
 - Allows integration of Tumblr posts into Facebook timeline.

5.4 Social Media Platforms (Cont.)

It is important to remember that new social media networks are popping up all the time, such as Periscope, Slack, etc.

As a business owner, you should stay abreast of how all media outlets are growing, changing, and how your target markets are using them.

5.5 Additional Social Media Resources

Other resources that support social media marketing include marketplaces, such as Amazon, Etsy, and eBay, and online directories, such as Yelp and TripAdvisor.

Keep in mind that it may be difficult for your product to be found in a marketplace; Amazon can be pricey marketing options for small business owners.

Select each social media resource to learn more.

- **Amazon:** Considered a ‘marketplace,’ Amazon provides access to a massive audience of customers; in the U.S. alone, Amazon has over 95 million monthly unique visitors. Advantages include:
 - Provides capability to sell your products directly on Amazon or reach Amazon customers through Amazon site display advertisements.
 - Enables you to provide essential information about your product/services menus, availability, cost, hours of operation, contact information, and order fulfillment.
 - Allows you to read and respond to views posted by customers.
- **Etsy:** Like Amazon, Etsy is a marketplace where people globally connect, both online and offline, to make, sell, and buy unique goods. Etsy users include:
 - Entrepreneurs who want to sell what they make or create.
 - Shoppers looking for things they can’t find elsewhere.
 - Manufacturers who partner with Etsy sellers to help them grow their business.
- **eBay:** eBay is an online place for buyers and sellers to come together and buy or sell almost anything. A seller lists an item on eBay; the seller chooses to accept only bids for the item (an auction-type listing) or to offer the Buy It Now option (buyer purchases at a fixed price).
 - For Buy It Now listing: The first buyer willing to pay the fixed price gets to purchase the item.
 - For online auction listing: A buyer either buys the item outright for fixed price purchases or places a bid on an item; the bidding remains open for a certain number of days and the buyer with the highest bid can purchase the item.
- **Yelp:** Yelp is a resource that falls in between an online directory and a social media network. It provides a free suite of tools to showcase your business. It provides a free suite of tools to showcase your business. Yelp enables you to:
 - Create a free Yelp Business Page to upload photos, add a link to your website, and update important contact information.
 - Establish a Business Owner Account to respond to customer reviews.
 - Grow your business through Yelp Ads; an average of 142 million users visit Yelp every day. Yelp Ads is a great way to reach new customers. In fact, in a recent

study, business owners that advertised with Yelp saw an average of \$23k increase in annual revenues.

- **TripAdvisor:** Like Yelp, TripAdvisor walks the line between an online directory and a social media network. TripAdvisor is the world’s largest travel site, enabling travelers to plan and book trips. TripAdvisor offers advice from millions of travelers and a wide variety of travel choices and planning features.
 - It is important to remember that TripAdvisor is ‘open sourced.’ This means once you (as a business owner) create an account, you have little to no control over what is posted in reviews. However, peer review sites such as TripAdvisor, are very important to the success of our tourist and food/beverage industries.

5.6 Scenario 2: In-Business Entrepreneur Lillian Jones

Now, meet Lillian Jones, an in-business entrepreneur. Lillian has owned a gourmet popcorn store for 18 months. Her store is located near a college campus where numerous restaurants and specialty snack shops line both sides of the campus entry way.

After the first nine months of revenue generated solely from walk-in customers, Lillian added online order capability. She’s not seeing the profit margin she wants. Her business mentor suggests marketing through social media platforms, but Lillian is wary of its sustainable value.

As you progress through this course, Lillian will need your assistance with making decisions that will help her improve her business profit margin.

5.7 Think About It

Let’s see how you apply what you’ve learned in this topic.

Lillian started researching social media marketing and found herself getting confused between social networks and social media. What explanation can you provide to Lillian?

- a. Social networks should only be used for personal connections with friends and family, not business.
- b. Social networks are forms of social media that can help identify new potential customers.
- c. Social networks are only effective when used for target audiences between 18 – 25 years of age.
- d. Social networks are only effective when used with target audiences over 25 years of age.

The correct answer is b. Social networks are forms of social media that can help identify new potential customers.

Option a. Social networks should only be used for personal connections with friend and family, not business is incorrect because, when used correctly, social networks can be powerful tools to market your business.

Both option c. Social networks are only effective when used for target audiences between 18 – 25 years of age and option d. Social networks are only effective when used with target audiences over 25 years of age are incorrect.

This is because social networks can be very effective platforms, when marketing efforts are customized for groups of all ages.

5.8 Think About It

Lillian is familiar with Facebook but favors YouTube because she responds personally to that type of media. Right now, she does not have the resources or know-how to create videos so she feels ‘stuck.’ Which response below would be helpful?

- a. Recommend Lillian start with Facebook and add YouTube as resources become available.
- b. Suggest Lillian hire a video producer to create high-quality videos.
- c. Advise Lillian to create cell phone videos herself to reduce costs.
- d. Tell Lillian YouTube is ineffective and she should not use it.

The correct answer is: a. Recommend Lillian start with Facebook and add YouTube as resources become available.

Option b. Suggest Lillian hire a video producer to create high-quality videos is incorrect because Lillian’s current marketing budget most likely cannot support the cost of a video producer.

Option c. Advise Lillian to create cell phone videos herself to reduce costs is incorrect because effective YouTube marketing relies on high-quality video footage and a measure of professionalism.

Option d. Tell Lillian YouTube is ineffective and she should not consider using it is incorrect because YouTube is a very effective social media platform, when used appropriately.

5.9 Topic 3 Summary

In this topic, you received information about the relationship between social networks and social media marketing.

You also explored the various social media platforms to include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, Pinterest, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

6 Topic 4: Design Best Practices

6.1 Topic 4 Objective

By the end of this topic, you should be able to list the elements that comprise an effective profile design. To meet the objective, this topic will cover:

- Design layout guidelines
- Design of content
- Design options

6.2 Design Layout Overview

Most social media platforms have similar design layouts. The specific ‘look’ of a layout is customized within the parameters of each platform.

In general, layouts consist of these elements:

1. ‘Profile’ picture (company logo)
2. Cover shot/photo (displays products/services or featured social media campaigns)
3. Call to action
4. Business Classification (can choose more than one)

6.3 Design Layout Guidelines

Effective profile designs don’t happen by accident, rather, they have several elements in common.

The Social Media Page Design Layout Checklist is a job aid that you can download for future use. It will guide you in designing powerful social media pages that create curiosity—and generate excitement—about your business offerings.

To download the Social Media Page Design Layout Checklist, select the graphic to the right or select the Resources tab on this page.

6.4 General Rule on Design Content

As the checklist on the previous screen indicated, images rule! Remember, the brain processes images much faster than text; viewers are less likely to engage in your page if the content is excessive and bulky.

Take the ‘**Snippy Snappy Content**’ test: Can you get your main message across in ten seconds or less of reading time?

6.5 Design Options

Designing a social media page is not difficult; it does take time, creative thought, and a measure of advertising know-how. You have two options for successful design:

- Do It Yourself (DIY): The internet provides an abundance of resources to guide you.
- Start and Collaborate (SAC): Draft the initial concept yourself; then, work with a professional to refine your design.

6.6 Design Options (Cont.)

Regardless of the option you choose, remember that you, and anyone you collaborate with, must accurately capture your business’ branding, services/products, and personality. And yes, your business has its own personality!

Select each option to learn more about design product options.

Note: SBA does not endorse any particular resource; these are just samples of resources that can provide guidance as you begin the social media page design process.

- **Do It Yourself (DIY):** There are numerous online resources that can guide you as you begin to create your business’s social media presence. Use search terms/keyword phrases, such as “free social media design tips,” social media page guidelines,” and “tutorials on designing social media pages.”

This search will take you to some of the resources listed below.

- **Start and Collaborate (SAC):** After you begin the initial draft of your business’s social media profile, you may find you could use a partner to help you along the way. Small Business Administration District Offices, Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), Women’s Business Centers, and SCORE are **free** government or government/grant-funded resources available to you.

In addition, you can tap into online resources for additional guidance. Use search terms/keyword phrases, such as “free social media design tips,” social media page guidelines,” “tutorials on designing social media pages.” This search will take you to some of the same resources you would use for a DIY design. These resources will help you get started with your initial draft of a social media page.

99designs.com

Canva.com

Mashable.com

SocialMediaExaminer.com

Socialbrite.org

Select the ‘Resources’ link at the top right of the course to view additional online resources.

6.7 *Think About It*

Now, let’s see how you apply what you’ve learned from this topic.

You’ve convinced Lillian that social media marketing can increase her sales! She wants to design social media pages for Facebook and Instagram on her own and collaborate with a SBA partner later. What design tips can you offer? Select all that apply.

- a. Remind Lillian to use more text than images.
- b. Remind Lillian to use more images than text.
- c. Emphasize a consistent ‘look and feel’ across platforms.
- d. Ensure each platform has a ‘distinct’ look and feel.

The correct answers are:

- b. Remind Lillian to use more images than text
- c. Emphasize a consistent ‘look and feel’ across platforms.

Option a. Remind Lillian to use more text than images is incorrect because effectively designed social media pages use more images than text.

Option d. Ensure each platform has a ‘distinct’ look and feel is incorrect because effectively designed social media pages maintain visual consistency across all platforms.

6.8 Think About It

Lillian has completed the draft of her social media design pages. She's ready to collaborate face-to-face with a partner but forgot what resources are available. She's also worried because her marketing budget is still limited. What advice can you give her? Select all that apply.

- a. Contact her SBA District Office
- b. Hire a professional to polish her draft
- c. Contact the local Women's Business Center
- d. Contact her local Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The correct answers are:

- a. Contact her SBA District Office
- c. Contact the local Women's Business Center
- d. Contact her local Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

Option b. Hire a professional to polish her draft is incorrect because Lillian should use the many free resources available to her, especially since her marketing budget is limited.

6.9 Topic 4 Summary

In this topic, you received information about effective profile design, to include design layout guidelines, and design content.

You also explored various design options.

7 Topic 5: Unified Social Media Presence

7.1 Topic 5 Objective

By the end of this topic, you should be able to describe the impact of creating a unified social media presence. To meet the objective, this topic will cover:

- Definition of a unified social media presence
- How to create a unified social media presence

7.2 What is a Unified Social Media Presence?

A unified social media presence is exactly what the name implies... creating and sending the same message about your business' offerings across all marketing activities, to include social media platforms.

While different marketing methods can be used to reach segmented audiences, your message should remain consistently the same.

7.3 Ways to Create a Unified Social Media Presence

Ensure that social media pages depict the same 'look and feel' across different social media platforms.

Also, because your business website is the backbone to your marketing plan, be sure you cross-reference social media avenues on your website and business cards, as well as across social media platforms (e.g. "Follow us on Twitter").

This helps maximize the exposure of each of your social media marketing channels.

7.4 *Think About It*

Now, let's see how you apply what you've learned in this topic.

Remember Lillian Jones? She enjoys collaborating with the design professional but doesn't like the fact that her Facebook and Twitter pages look so similar. What guidance can you provide?

- a. Explain that this best practice creates a unified social media presence.
- b. Recommend she hire another design professional who supports her vision.
- c. Suggest she change one of the design pages on her own to create variety.
- d. None of the above.

The correct answer is a. Explain that this best practice creates a unified social media practice.

Both option b. Recommend she hire another design professional who supports her vision and option c. Suggest she change one of the design pages on her own to create variety are incorrect. This is because social media design pages need to look similar across platforms to create a unified social media presence.

7.5 *Topic 5 Summary*

In this topic, you received information about the impact of creating a unified social media presence.

You began with a definition of a unified social media presence and then explored ways to create a unified social media presence.

8 *Topic 6: Responding to Reviews and Comments*

8.1 *Topic 6 Objective*

By the end of this topic, you should be able to describe the importance of responding to online reviews and comments. To meet the objective, this topic will cover:

- The importance of responding to online reviews and comments
- General guidelines for responding to online reviews and comments
- Responding to positive reviews and comments

8.2 *The Importance of Responding to Online Reviews and Comments*

The vast number of voices involved, and the varied nature of comments, complaints, and negative feedback, make damage control much more difficult for today's businesses.

It is important to consistently review customer comments so you can:

- Stay abreast of your online marketplace presence and reputation.
- Know what you're doing right.
- Take action to improve products or services, when warranted.

Remember, not all feedback is negative. Customer comments that express delight with your business shed light on what you are absolutely doing right! Later in this section, we'll discuss the importance of responding to positive reviews and comments.

8.3 General Guidelines for Managing Online Reviews

Now, let's explore ways to collect and respond to customer feedback posted on social media platforms.

- **Listen Carefully:** The first step in online review management is knowing what's being said about your business. To do this, you'll need to identify and monitor keywords and hashtags related to your brand, products, employees, and competitors so you can monitor conversations that are occurring on social media sites.

You can use Tagboard, Hashtagify.me, SocialMention and TweetBinder; these are just a few of several tools that allow you to search various social media sites for words related to your business. You can even set up alerts to notify you when your brand is mentioned.

- **Respond Quickly:** It is not always necessary to respond; sometimes, just knowing what customers think is enough to guide your customer-based decisions. When a response is prudent and necessary (e.g., if your business is being slandered), you should respond quickly. Negative comments, if unaddressed, can spread like a virus on social media. Quick response is the best way to minimize damage and provide an alternate point of view.
- **Respond Professionally:** Generally speaking, a professional response does not mean defending your business against attacks or criticism. It does mean you should:
 - Thank the customer for the feedback
 - Share what you can do to resolve or remediate the issue in the future
 - Take the complaint offline, if possible and necessary
- **Think Twice Before Deleting:** Delete comments only if they are offensive or in very poor taste. Otherwise, deleting negative comments can be perceived as covering up an issue or admitting guilt. According to research by CRM software company RightNow, 1 out of every 3 consumers who receive a retailer response to an online complaint end up reposting a positive review and 34% end up deleting their initial negative review.

8.4 Responding to Positive Reviews and Comments

In an effort to monitor and address negative online feedback, there may be a tendency to overlook good things your customers are saying about your business!

Responding immediately and professionally to positive feedback is equally important. Taking the time to address positive reviews and comments will:

- Convey that you are actively monitoring your social media platform(s).
- Demonstrate that you value the review/comment writer's opinions.
- Let you know what you are doing right and should continue doing!

8.5 Scenario 3: Start-Up Entrepreneur Mike Ortega

It's time to check back in with Mike. Some time has passed and he and his business partner conducted market research, created a business plan, executed marketing strategies, and finally opened Mike's dream trophy store.

Business is booming! The majority of orders come from the sports complex, just as Mike predicted. Thanks to his business partner's foresight, online customers provide a secondary revenue stream; the store has a unified presence across several social media platforms.

Despite his success, Mike has mild concern about some social media comments he's been reading. Let's see what you can do to assist.

8.6 Think About It

Now, let's see how you apply what you've learned in this topic.

Mike is worried about some feedback on Facebook regarding delays in order fulfillment. One comment led to several others, all related to 'slow turnaround time.' Mike's business partner isn't worried, as the business is doing well. What advice can you give Mike? Select all that apply.

- a. Advise Mike there is no need to do anything at this time since business is great.
- b. Advise Mike to respond to each comment by defending his order fulfillment process.
- c. Advise Mike to determine what is causing order delays and fix the issue.
- d. Advise Mike to respond to the comments professionally and offer a solution.

The correct answers are:

- c. Advise Mike to determine what is causing order delays and fix the issue.
- d. Advise Mike to respond to the comments professionally and offer a solution.

Option a. Advise Mike there is no need to do anything at this time since business is great is incorrect because negative feedback provides an opportunity to correct a possible problem.

Option b. Advise Mike to respond to each comment by defending his order fulfillment process is incorrect because defending your business does not address the existing problem with order fulfillment.

8.7 Topic 6 Summary

In this topic, you received information about guidelines for managing online reviews.

You began with a definition of online review management and explored why online review management is important.

You also reviewed general guidelines for managing online reviews.

9 Topic 7: Performance of Social Media Campaigns

9.1 Topic 7 Objective

By the end of this topic, you should be able to describe key concepts for measuring performance of a social media campaign. To meet the objective, this topic will cover:

- Understanding web analytics
- Determining rate of reach
- Determining rate of engagement
- Setting realistic goals

9.2 *Understanding Web Analytics*

Most social media platforms have a section for web analytics—data about performance of your social media presence and profile. Web analytics:

- Collect data for you (impressions, engagement, followers, top posts, etc.).
- Make it easier to measure the effectiveness of your social media marketing efforts.
- Provide information to communicate to stakeholders (such as investors) regarding your business performance.

9.3 *Understanding Web Analytics (Cont.)*

In addition to providing concrete measurement of your business' performance, web analytics typically provides demographic details about who views or interacts with your social media profile(s), such as:

- Gender
- Age range
- Geographic location

If web analytic results reveal that you aren't reaching your target audience, you can:

- Adjust your social media marketing strategy accordingly
- Offer/advertise something new that targets the audiences you **are** reaching.

9.4 *Determining Rate of Reach*

You'll need to first determine market size, then review web analytic results.

Rate of reach is determined by a simple calculation: The number of people you have been reaching divided by the relevant market size.

9.5 *Determining Rate of Reach (Cont.)*

- Determine target market size: Use data and common sense. For example, if your target audience is females in the state of Florida, use the state's total population figure (data) and divide it by two (the 2014 census bureau data indicates the nation is approximately 50% male and 50% female).
- Determine rate of reach: Divide the number of people you have been reaching (based on web analytic results) by your target market size.

9.6 *Determining Rate of Engagement*

Determining your rate of reach is good, but knowing your rate of engagement is an even better barometer for measuring social media content performance.

The formula for determining rate of engagement is likes + comments+ shares divided by reach/impressions.

9.7 Determining Rate of Engagement (Cont.)

Some online tools you can use to help determine rate of engagement include:

- Google Analytics (website)
- Facebook Insights (Facebook)
- Twitter Analytics (Twitter)
- Websta (Instagram)

9.8 Setting Realistic Goals

It's useful to set a realistic goal for market reach and engagement rates. For example, though average engagement rates should be compared to other businesses in the industry, a typical rule of thumb is: If you average 1% engagement for a Facebook page that has under 10,000 fans, your content is doing pretty well.

Monitor your progress towards goals. If you're not on track, consider enhancing or revising social media marketing efforts.

9.9 Scenario 4: In-Business Entrepreneur Lillian Jones

It's time to check in a final time with Lillian Jones. Some time has passed and despite her initial doubts, Lillian is now an avid believer in social media marketing. Why? Her sales have nearly doubled in the past year, largely due to a unified presence across several social media platforms.

The additional revenue allowed Lillian to expand her product line to include door-to-door delivery of 'special occasion' popcorn concoctions.

She's considering opening another store and plans to approach her investors about backing this new venture.

Let's see how you can help Lillian move forward with her expansion goals.

9.10 Think About It

Now, let's see how you apply what you've learned from this topic.

Lillian's investors seem interested in discussing another store but want concrete proof of her current rate of reach. Lillian has been working with her business mentor to pull together a report. How should Lillian calculate her current rate of reach?

- a. Divide the total annual sales figure by the rate of reach.
- b. Divide the rate of reach by the total annual sales figure.
- c. Divide the number of people she is reaching by the relevant market size.
- d. Divide the relevant market size by the number of people she is reaching.

The correct answer is c. Divide the number of people she is reaching by the relevant market size.

All other options are incorrect because they do not reflect the formula for calculating rate of reach.

9.11 Topic 7 Summary

In this topic, you received information about key concepts for measuring the performance of social media campaigns.

First, you looked at the purpose of web analytics. You examined the formulas for calculating rates of reach and engagement using web analytics results. You also were reminded about the importance of setting realistic rate of reach and engagement goals.

9.12 Course Summary

Congratulations! You have completed the Social Media Marketing course.

This course provided information about the value of effectively integrating social media into marketing strategies. Topics presented in this course included:

- Basic Marketing Concepts Review
- The Power of Social Media
- Social Media Platforms
- Winning Profile Designs
- Unified Social Media Presence
- Online Reviews
- Performance of Social Media Campaigns

9.13 Action Plan for Success

It has been said that “Knowledge is power.” In reality, knowledge is only potential power. Without application or action, knowledge is just information.

The Social Media Marketing Action Plan is a job aid that you can download for future use. It will guide you as you develop your social media marketing campaign.

To download the Social Media Marketing Action Plan, select the graphic to the right or select the Resources tab on this page.

See you—and your business— on the web!

9.14 A.C.T. NOW

The **A**rticle, **C**ourse, and **T**ool below are related to the course you just completed. They are provided to help you take action on your path to entrepreneurial success. You can also get in-person assistance for all of your business needs through a local resource center. And, if you liked the course, please help spread the word by sharing it with your friends!

Read an SBA Article.

SBA’s guest blogger, smallbiztrends, offers 6 tips for a Great Social Media Marketing Campaign.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

Take Another Course.

Marketing 101: A guide to Winning Customers is a practical program with real-world examples and tips. Good marketing is valuable in all aspects of business ownership, including selling.

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Try a Tool.

SizeUp will help you manage and grow your business by benchmarking it against competitors, mapping your customers, competitors, and suppliers, and locating the best places to advertise.

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SBA has a broad network of skilled counselors and business development specialists.

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