

Seven Tips To Shore Up Your Summer Social Media Marketing Strategy

Memorial Day Weekend is just around the corner for many of us here on the Jersey Shore. Time for some fun, sun, and waves. You might be ready to ditch the tie for a tank-top, the pantsuit for a sundress, or kick off your shoes and dig your toes into the sand. But your business can't afford to take a summer vacation from its digital and online marketing.

If you can hold on for just a little bit longer, I've put together seven tips to shore up your social media marketing strategy just in time for the start of the Summer season.

Conduct an audit of your current social media posts and re-evaluate your content strategy

Do an audit of your current social media channels and determine which platforms currently deliver the most traffic to your site by checking out the sources view of your Google Analytics dashboard (You are using Google Analytics, right?)

Define your top channels. After listing the top 3-5 channels that are driving traffic, review the Insights panels to see which posts or pieces of content have delivered the highest levels of engagement for you.

Make a detailed record of the topic, the day, and the time at which you published those high value posts. You can use this information to set benchmarks and guidelines for future postings.

Hash out your #hashtags. Develop branded hashtags that you'll use across all channels that accept them. Encouraging your followers to use your branded hashtags are also great for developing and curating *user-generated content*.

Cross check with your highest ranking long-tail keywords and relate them to your SEO strategy.

Establish your objectives and goals

Now that you know what's been happening, you can use this information to create new objectives, establish new benchmark goals, and set posting guidelines.

The NY Times did a study on the [Psychology of Sharing](#) that established 5 primary motivations in the sharing of content. Keep these factors in mind when you're creating new pieces of content that you intend to share on social media:

- **To bring valuable and entertaining content to one another.** A significant 94% of respondents carefully consider how the information they share will be of use to other people
- **To define themselves to others.** 68% of respondents said they share to give others a better sense of who they are and what they care about.
- **To grow and nourish our relationships.** 78% of respondents said they share information online because it enables them to stay connected to people they may not otherwise stay in touch with
- **For self-fulfilment.** 69% said they share information because it allows them to feel more involved in the world.

- **To get the word out about causes they care about.** 84% of respondents share because it is a good way to support causes or issues they care about.
(Source: <http://tripleseo.com/why-do-people-share/>)

Create a calendar and content creation/posting schedule

One of the primary benefits of creating a social media content calendar is that it can help to reduce the productivity drop off during the Summer. When the weather is warm and sunny, it's easy to get lost browsing your friends' vacation pics and beach selfies rather than cranking out business tweets or posts to your latest whitepaper.

By using a social media content calendar that details which platform, day, time of day, and the content that is to be posted, you can diminish some of the productivity levels that can also drop off as workers try to cover for vacationing colleagues.

I suggest uploading it as a Google Doc that can be viewed by everyone on your team to share the responsibility amongst everyone in maintaining the posting schedule during the Summer haze.

Use the benchmark data from your social media content audit to start filling in the calendar.

Based on your business objectives, add variety to your posts and mix it up a bit. You don't want to just re-hash what you've done before. Familiarity breeds contempt and I'd say that's exponentially true when it comes to social media.

You can avoid social staleness by establishing a formula that defines what share of your profile is allocated to different types of posts. For example:

- *50% of your content will drive back to the blog*
- *20% of your content will be curated from other sources*
- *20% of your content will be HR and culture*
- *10% of your content will user-generated content*

Update your images and graphics for the summer

We all judge books by their covers. With so much competition for our time and attention, we have to make quick decisions about where we're going to spend our time and attention. And if a company hasn't invested the time or the resources in their professional image, assumptions can be made that they won't do the same for their customer or their products.

Use FREE tools like [Canva](#) or [Pablo by Buffer](#), to easily create natively-sized, engaging images that are bright, playful and fun. Think of it as adding 'curb appeal' to your social media marketing strategy.

Embrace the power of Video.

With more social media channels embracing video, YouTube is no longer the only platform in town. In fact, [Facebook video is now bigger than YouTube for brands](#). And with the ability to embed Facebook video on your website, I don't see an end in sight for that trend.

You might be thinking that you need to invest in high-end video and camera equipment, but the fact of the matter is that you can get away with using your smartphone to quickly create video content. The video of the crashing waves on the [homepage of my website](#) was recorded using my iPhone.

Smartphones are great for capturing spontaneous, in-the-moment, micro-content, as opposed to long-form, evergreen content. Evergreen content, content that can remain relevant regardless of passing time or culture shifts, should be professionally produced.

Run a Summer-themed Contest or Giveaway

People love to win and contests on social media are a great way to tap into that desire of ours. 21% of Facebook users will like a brand's page in order to receive a free giveaway. That's great for a temporary boost in engagement, but one way to improve the longevity of a contest is through the branded hashtags and user-generated content that I mentioned before.

By getting your followers to submit content for a chance to win a prize or promotional discount, you're engaging with your audience and building up a library of content that can be curated and used later on.

Be human. Tell a story.

It's very easy to look at all of the data, the insights, the numbers, and speak of our customers and prospects in a very clinical manner; in terms of shares and clicks. Never forget that on the other side of all that data are people; people just like you. So don't be afraid to humanize your platforms and show the softer side of your business.

Take some behind-the-scenes (#bts) photos of you and your staff having fun and connecting with each other. Allow your staff to take pride and ownership with employee-generated content by employing themes like #summerfriday or #deskselfie. Giving your customers a peek into who you are can help you win their hearts AND their business. People want to do business with people they like and feel a sense of community with.

Don't be afraid to inspire as well as educate. It's OK to share inspirational quotes on Instagram (#instaquote) alongside quick interesting facts about your business or stats about your industry (which I've officially dubbed #infogram).

Use your website/blog/newsletter to communicate, inform, and present yourself as a subject matter expert. But use your social media channels to reflect your values and develop a deeper connection with your audience.

Next steps

1. Download and complete this [social media content audit](#) from Hootsuite
2. Download this [social media content calendar](#) from HubSpot
3. Leave a comment and feel free to share any additional tips for shoring up a Summer social media marketing strategy.