

# Using Paid Social To Boost Your Marketing



**Social media platforms** provide brands with a means to have an increased reach from local customers to a global audience, allowing for flexible strategies and achieving KPIs. There are many brands that currently have an active social media presence; however, unless you are paying for advertising or sponsored content you have limited reach and marketing advantage. Unpaid social media is fine for brands that only want to offer a medium for users to browse posts and submit enquires & complaints, but not for driving high volumes of visitors to your website.

The first & main reason to consider **paid social advertising** is to expand your brand awareness further and quicker than traditional means across a set target audience to ensure customer engagement is high. Paid media allows brands to track ads' and user engagement in real time – providing **vital** data that allows firms to make split decisions on how to run campaigns and manage posts. Having access to such insight allows brands to work smarter and not necessarily harder. The information allows for continual optimisation, especially if posts are highly engaging, a brand could continually advance it and promote the idea.

# How to target the exact demographic that is right for your business

**Millennials are the largest influencer on social media** and account for the largest buyer market with an average annual spend over £100 billion per year; the next largest segment is made up by the over 30s who account for just over £50 billion spend a year [Hootsuite]. In order for brands to take advantage of the over three-billion social media users' spend, there are a few points to consider, such as understanding the market, knowing when to go live, why potential customers use social media and what their interests are & how to take advantage of them.

On average **people spend two hours every day on social media**, therefore it is important for a brand to identify and understand their target market & what & why they use the platforms on a daily basis. The below shows the overall social media channels split of online users [Hootsuite,2018].

**Facebook – 82% of users**

**Twitter – 37% of users**

**Instagram – 53% of users**

**Pinterest – 34% of users**

Most social media users will, on average, **use more than one social media platform** throughout the day; therefore, there is scope to achieve a larger return when using paid media across multiple platforms. However, before you start advertising across these multiple platforms it is important to understand why users use them. IDG Research Group's tech survey [2017] identified the main uses of social media is to catch up on news, travel related searches & food related ideas. The same research found that half of all millennials relied on video sharing sites, whereas 52% relied on retailer websites.

In today's fast paced society, **it is a challenge to achieve high user-engagement & browsing time** as users tend not to waste time on irrelevant content and would rather flick through applications (apps) until they find content that appeals to them. If ads & content are unattractive such as block text or the same font and colour, they will not read it. Millennials have grown up with an unlimited supply of information at their fingertips; therefore, to grab their attention, ads have to be brief, well-written with eye catching graphics which have been optimised for mobile.

More and more online users are growing up surrounded by technology, where they expect all brands no matter the sector to have a social media presence. They expect brands to answer their questions quickly and in a manner that appeals to them. **Our advice is to take a multi-channel approach as users tend not to expend much energy searching for your business across multiple platforms**, therefore you have to do all the work in order not to lose business.

# Ways to integrate paid social with the rest of your marketing activity

Social media platforms can be very chaotic/overwhelming for many users which results in lower engagement time. In order for a brand to stand out, they will have to **provide content and posts that grabs attention**. Coming up with clever posts isn't enough in today's digital driven world, posts need to serve a purpose, they need to be able to drive a potential customer to take a desired action, whether it is to buy from your post or even just to share it improve brand awareness further.

The cliché '**Content is king**' applies to your marketing campaign whether it be social media related or not, therefore sharing engaging graphical posts and relevant content will entice customers to want to learn more; however, this may not always mean customers will convert. One of the main purposes of social media is to help build brand awareness and drive users to the branded website, which will allow customers to view additional content and therefore convert.



Along with content, ensure that your social media ads & posts are **targeting the right audience**. Social media platforms offer an array of consumer information that allow brands to target customers' groups specifically, which in turn allows for budgets to be maximised and ROI targets to be met.

Once you have identified your main target audience the next step is **being consistent with your content and posts** to continue engaging with your current followers while attracting more.



# Tactics that will help you to gain new leads and conversions

Driving traffic to your website and landing pages isn't enough; you need to be able to show that there is engagement across social media in order to build further trust and therefore convert more visitors into customers. While this may sound simple to some, you may know firsthand how difficult it can be to accomplish this; thankfully, there are plenty of proven tips designed to increase conversions.

**Firstly**, brands need to focus on perception and what they want their online presence to portray. If a brand has been around for some time, it is easier to gauge from the general public how they feel about that brand and how they perceive it by doing short surveys or basic questionnaires. From this, a brand can think about the psychology of sharing content online – ensuring that it is more personal and encompasses what direction the social media account wants to go down. If a brand can get users to feel an affinity to the brand, you're on the right track.

**Secondly** resolving any issues quickly and professionally without bias will also help to improve conversions. Firms need to understand that when it comes to social media no brand is perfect, there will be a social media post that doesn't resonate well or have high engagement depending on your target audience, especially if there is negative press around the brand; therefore, firms need to adapt and have strategies to help re-engage with their audience.

If an issue does arise, brands need to deal with it fast, effectively and with empathy, remember social media is normally perceived as a way of users connecting with a real individual rather than the management staff, therefore they believe they will be listened to more. Understanding that due to the perception by users of social media accounts, users will target your accounts more and more with complaints and enquires, therefore, daily management coupled with how you deal with clients of these are key from turning potential negative customers into positive experiences. Most online users will read online reviews so make sure it's a positive message being spread on your social media.

Today's users are getting accustomed to being in a world surrounded by technology. Many users especially millennials have an innate ability to adjust to new technology & as the upcoming generation will soon be the decision makers of this world, now is the time to capitalise on their interest. Expectations of users today are far from what they were even a few years ago, such as brand presence on social media & integration. **Users expect brands to answer their questions quickly & effectively across multiple channels as many do not expend much energy searching for brands. If your brand is not visible and not interacting with users, you'll lose business.**

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