

Clicks

The Online Marketing Guide for Small Business

**IS SOCIAL MEDIA
AUTOMATION
RIGHT FOR YOUR
BUSINESS?**

**7 MISTAKES
YOU'RE MAKING WITH YOUR
FACEBOOK
ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS**



**3 STRATEGIES
TO HELP MAKE YOUR CUSTOMER
REFERRAL PROGRAM
A SUCCESS**

**WHAT
MOTIVATES
PEOPLE TO BUY?**

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"For the best results, have someone monitor your social media accounts all the time." It's solid advice meant to help you retain customers and make the most of your social

media marketing. But very few businesses can afford to have someone monitor their social media 24 hours a day. How and when should you consider using automation? Keep reading to find out.

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leisure activities than they are on the necessities like food and shelter! So how do you motivate this new consumer mindset? We explain how it all works in this article.

Welcome To Clicks Magazine

Thanks for checking out this issue of Clicks, your monthly marketing resource for small business. Each month we will be covering topics that resonate with local businesses just like yours.

Our goal is simple. We want to enable you to do big things with your marketing, and it all starts by breaking down the complexities of marketing your business.

It doesn't matter if you're just starting out, or an established business owner in your local community, you can always benefit from increasing your brand's visibility online.

To your success,

Ray L. Perry
Chief Marketing Officer
MarketBlazer, Inc.

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MarketBlazer is a leading small business marketing agency, serving the southeast for over 13 years. We help small businesses connect and engage with more customers.

If you want to build your business, you need to market, it's that simple. But you can lose thousands of dollars if you don't know what you are doing. So we urge you to develop a solid marketing strategy before you start.

For a done-for-you approach, we offer affordable solutions that deliver results. We hope you enjoy this issue of Clicks and feel free to reach out to us anytime.

IS SOCIAL MEDIA AUTOMATION RIGHT FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

If you've read multiple articles about social media marketing, then we're willing to bet that you've also seen some advice along these lines:

For the best results, have someone monitor your social media accounts all the time.

Or maybe...

Social media automation takes most of the work out of social media marketing.

Those both sound pretty good, right? Solid advice meant to help you retain customers and make the most of your social media marketing.

There's only one problem here. Neither one of the above statements is rooted in reality. Very few companies can afford to have someone monitor their social media 24 hours a day. Likewise, automating everything is a good way to show customers that you don't care about them.

In other words, the truth lies somewhere in the middle. Automation can be useful, but it can't replace genuine, human customer service.

How and when should you consider using automation? Keep reading to find out.





THE BENEFITS OF AUTOMATION

Let's start with the good parts of social media automation. The truth is that maintaining an active social media presence is a lot of work. You've got to generate content, work out a schedule, post the content, and monitor messages, comments, and responses.

If your company is active on just one site, it can be hard to keep up. And if you're on Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest? It would be easy to turn that into a full-time job.

Automation can help you do all of the following:

- » Monitor mentions of your company and industry on social media

- » Recommend content for you to consider reposting to your followers
- » Post content automatically according to a schedule you create

Those are all good things. They don't interfere with the customer experience at all, and in many cases they actually make it better.

For example, automated posting of content is useful because it keeps your accounts up to date and active even if you're swamped with work.

However, not every potential use for social media automation is a good one.

THE DOWNSIDES OF AUTOMATION

Now let's talk about the things that social media automation can do – but maybe shouldn't do.

The main thing is responding to customer messages and handling customer service.

When people contact a company for help, they expect to get it. They expect to speak to a real person who is capable of understanding their problem and solving it.

What they don't want is an automated and potentially irrelevant response from a bot. It is nearly impossible to have an automated system respond meaningfully to customer messages.

For example, bots are only as good as the

answers you preprogram into them. They can monitor for particular keywords but they can't appreciate and interpret the nuances of human communication.

The problem with using bots is that their uses are limited. Customers don't like it when they get canned responses.

Using bots can lead to some serious backlash if it becomes obvious that you're doing it. Don't believe me? Check out this ridiculous thread of comments from ASOS' Facebook page. Once users realized that the responses were automated, they piled on – and the end result was that ASOS came out looking like they didn't care about their customers at all.

CHAT BOT

Reorder

Here is a list of your last order.

CHAT BOT



Capuchino
Hot
Size : XL
Quantity : 1

Cancel

Reorder



TO AUTOMATE... OR NOT TO AUTOMATE?

As you might expect, then, the choice comes down to whether or not to automate – and if you do automate, which automation features to use.

The best way to decide is to put yourself in your customers' shoes. The point of using social media is to connect with your audience and enhance their experience of being your customer.

What does that mean for your automation decisions?

Every choice you make about automaton should be based on the customer experience. Will setting up a regular posting schedule and automating posts enhance their experience? The chances are good that the answer is yes.

Automated posting of content means that:

- » Customers know when to expect your posts and will look for them
- » Your account doesn't appear to be inactive even if you're on vacation or swamped with work

- » Followers have a steady stream of content to enjoy

Those are all good things, clearly, and they offer real value to your customers.

The same thing could be said of monitoring mentions, which can help you connect with social media followers and let them know that their mentions of you are appreciated.

However, the rubric of customer experience falls apart when it comes to automated customer service mentions. The one upside is that it ensures that people who write on social media get an immediate response – but that's where the benefits end.

- » Customers get boilerplate responses that may not address the issue they raised
- » They may feel that you do not care about their satisfaction
- » Automated messages from bots can make your company look callous or ridiculous

Does that mean that all message automation is a bad idea? Of course not. In fact, there is one way you can use it to your advantage.

Program one – and only one – response into your automation. It might say something like this:

Dear Customer,

Thank you for reaching out to us. Your happiness and satisfaction are important to us. We can't monitor Facebook 24 hours a day, but we promise that a real live human will get back to you with a response as soon as possible.

Thanks,

Your Company Name

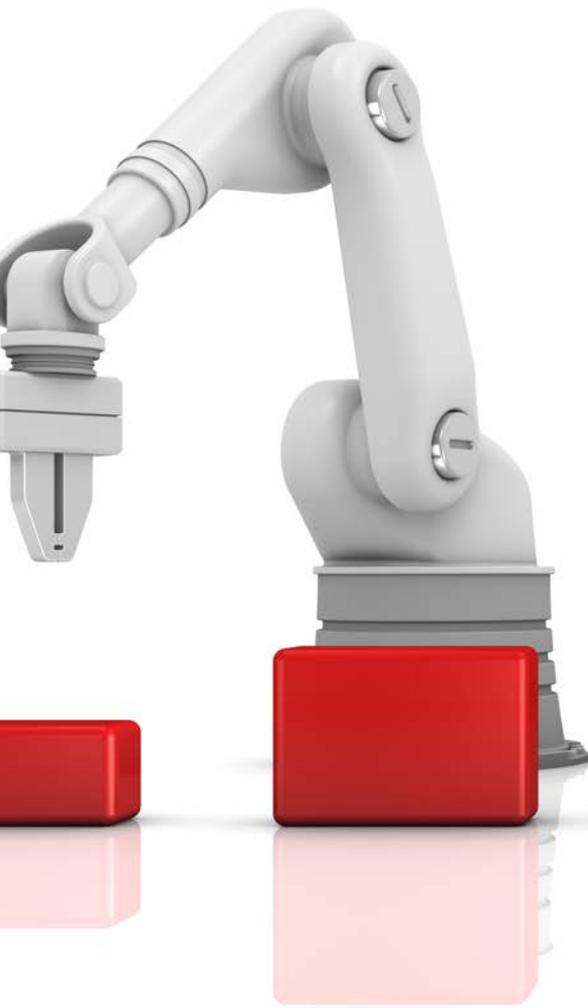
The benefit of this approach is that the customer gets the satisfaction of an acknowledgement without having to cope with an impersonal response. There's a real warmth to this response, which acknowledges the difficulty of providing 24 hour customer service.

As long as you keep the promise you make in a message like this, you can use automation to let customers know that you care.

Your customers are smart...

And your use of automation should be too. As long as you make creating a stellar experience for customers your top priority, then you can use automation to make your life – and theirs – easier.





Use These 3 Things to Help Make Your Customer Referral Program a Success

Get any group of marketers together and ask them what they think about customer referral programs. The chances are extremely good that you'll hear a universal chorus of approval.

What's not to love about customer referrals? They're a free way to generate leads. Even if you offer an incentive for referrals, you'll probably end up paying less for them than you would for advertising.

There's a reason that so many companies offer referral programs...

But what you may not know is that most of them are actually failures.

That might surprise you, but it shouldn't.

Referral programs fail because companies just set them up without thinking about them. They don't consider the three big questions:

1. What makes customers refer their friends and acquaintances to a company?
2. What are the benefits customers receive from your products?
3. When and how should you promote your referral program?

If you're shaking your head and realizing that you've made this mistake too, don't worry. We're here to help you figure out how to make your referral program a big success.



Why Do Referrals Happen?

Let's start with question number one: What makes a customer want to refer a friend to a particular company?

That's a big question and an important one. If you don't understand it, you might just end up spinning your wheels with a referral program that appeals to nobody.

According to Jonah Berger, who wrote a book called *Contagious: Why Things Catch On*, there are six potential factors that might make your customers want to give you a referral:

- » Social currency comes first. Will a referral make your customer look good on their own or in comparison to other people?
- » Emotions play a big role in decision making. If your referral program engages customers' emotions, they'll be more likely to refer.
- » Virality is up next. When an idea or concept is easy to remember, it's also more likely to spread. That's just as true of referrals as it is of cat videos.
- » Stories are important to people. If your referral request comes disguised as a story, then it's

more likely that people will want to share it.

- » Practicality is really at the core of referrals. Is your product practical? Is the incentive to refer it practical too?
- » Publicity is the final factor. People tend to follow what others do, but only if they can see that they're doing it.

The good news is that you don't have to engage all six of these factors to make your referral program a success. You just need to use the ones that make sense in the best possible way to inspire referrals from your existing customers.

How can you optimize the "why" of your referral program? The key is making it clear that your product aligns with your customers' core concerns, beliefs, and values.

For example, Apple sells its products by talking about their desire to challenge the status quo. They encourage their customers to think of themselves in a certain way that tells a story and taps into their emotions.

Keep in mind that this aspect isn't about what you offer in return for a referral – although it's a good idea if you can connect it to those same values.

Next, let's talk about the benefits that existing customers can gain if they refer their friends to you.

This question relates most closely to the issues of practicality and social currency. If someone is going to give you a referral, they want to know:

- » Will it make me look good?
- » Will it help my friend?
- » What's in it for me?

To understand how this might work, let's look at an example.

Cloud storage company Dropbox increased their sign-up rate by 60% in 2010 by using a simple referral proposition that hit all three of these points perfectly.

The specific offer was that for every friend who signed up for Dropbox, the customer making the referral would receive 500 MB of free storage – and so would their friend. They placed of 16 GB on the referral program.

This offer makes the referrer look good because they're offering their friend a practical and valuable solution for cloud storage along with a freebie. The benefits to their friends are obvious – and then the person making the referral gets a freebie too.

Think about what you can do to highlight the practical benefits of participating in your referral program. The more obvious they are, the easier it will be for people to make the leap and take part.





When and How Should You Promote Your Referral Program?

The last step is knowing when and how to promote your referral program. Where do you advertise it?

The key is making sure that your customers see it (there's no point in showing it to non-customers) at the time when they are most likely to take action.

A lot of companies make the mistake of putting information about their referral program in the footer of their website or on their home page.

That does nothing to speak to the emotions of your customers, or to trigger them to take part.

Instead, a better bet is to consider the best way to reach out directly to your customers when they are at their most emotional – and most likely to be enamored of the practicality and value of your products.

In case you were wondering, that's right after they make a purchase!

The best way to get it to them is to use an email autoresponder. Most customers expect to see a follow-up email after they make an online purchase, and it's the perfect opportunity for you to outline the benefits of your referral program.

If you want referrals to pour in like rain...

Don't just dump your referral program in some out of the way corner of your home page.

Instead, make it clear why people should give you referrals and what they (and their friends) can gain from doing so.

Then, hit them with the information about it at exactly the same time – and sit back and collect the referrals that result.



7 MISTAKES YOU'RE MAKING WITH YOUR FACEBOOK ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS

In the world of social media sites, Facebook is the big kahuna. Sure, there are older sites – but it's the biggest and gets the highest engagement. Facebook advertising has been around for a while, too, and you might think you've got it all figured out...

Except you don't. In fact, we're willing to bet there are a few things that you're doing wrong.

Do you want to start getting it right? Start by correcting these 7 mistakes.



#1: SPRAY AND PAY

Are you doing some kind of math that says since you're only paying for clicks, you don't need to target your ads? Maybe you figure since people who aren't interested aren't going to respond to your ad, you might as well reach as wide an audience as possible.

If that sounds familiar, you're making what could be a costly error. Ultimately, the people most likely to click on your ads are people who are in your target audience.

A far better bet is to target your ads to users who match your customer persona and do what you can to maximize your ROI. You'll end up spending less and earning more as a result.

#2: AVOIDING VIDEO MARKETING

Are you doing some kind of math that says since you're only paying for clicks, you don't need to target your ads? Maybe you figure since people

who aren't interested aren't going to respond to your ad, you might as well reach as wide an audience as possible.

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You can't go anywhere online without reading an article about how video marketing is the belle of the ball – the one thing everybody's doing.

While it's true that video gets a ton of engagement, it's also true that on Facebook, the bulk of advertising money is not being spent on video.

In other words, video isn't as saturated as standard ads and that means that if you make the investment in video ads, it's likely to boost your ROI. They're more expensive than standard ads but they can pay for themselves.

By the way, statistics back this up. A majority of consumers say they'd rather learn about a product or company from an explainer video than from written content. Why not take advantage of that?





#3: FOCUSING ON ENGAGEMENT INSTEAD OF CONVERSIONS

There's no question that Facebook advertising can be useful as a way of increasing social media engagement and building your following. And you might even assume that's all it's good for.

Think again. The truth is that more companies are using Facebook advertising to send traffic to their websites and encourage sales there than are using it to build engagement.

While social media engagement is important, sales and conversions are what keep your company afloat. With your next Facebook ad campaign, focus on conversions to get the biggest possible return on your investment.



#4: ASSUMING CPC COSTS ARE INCREASING

Given the popularity of Facebook and the saturation of ads there, you might expect that the added competition would compel Facebook to raise its advertising rates.

You'd be wrong.

In fact, CPC ad rates on Facebook have been holding fairly steady. It's still one of the most cost-effective and beneficial forms of advertising around.

That doesn't mean that costs won't go up at some point in the future. If and when they do, you'll have to make an assessment of how Facebook advertising will fit into your marketing mix.

But for now, the low prices make Facebook advertising a must.



#5: NOT USING LEAD ADS

Facebook has a vested interest in keeping users on Facebook (or on the mobile app if they access the site on their smart phone or tablet.) But it's still true that the majority of advertising money on Facebook comes from web conversion ads.

While all of Facebook's algorithms are proprietary, you might get slightly better placement for your ad if you use a Lead ad that allows people who click to fill out a lead form without leaving Facebook.

Best of all? You can integrate Facebook advertising with your CRM to ensure that you don't miss those leads as they come in.



#6: BOOSTING INSTEAD OF ADVERTISING

Since you pay for boosting posts, that's basically the same thing as paying for an ad on Facebook, right?

We've lost track of how many times we've heard this one – and if you're making this mistake then the chances are good you're losing out in terms of ROI.

Here why. Facebook boosted posts are ONLY meant to increase engagement. They can bolster the reach of a particular post, ensure that all of your followers see it, and potentially earn you a few new followers, too.

That's all well and good, but here's what you need to remember. When you run an ad for the purpose of conversion, Facebook targets people who are likely to convert. Likewise, lead ads are targeted to people who are likely to fill out a lead form.

The purpose of the ad dictates who sees it. Decide which goals are most important to you and then tailor your Facebook advertising campaign around them.



#7: NOT USING FACEBOOK FOR B2B ADVERTISING

There's no denying that Facebook advertising is a useful tool for B2C companies, but that doesn't mean you should ignore it if you sell B2B.

In fact, Facebook's targeting makes it possible to target people who work in certain industries or who have a particular job title. If a company is big enough, you may even be able to target its employees specifically.

You might have to use slightly different tactics than you would for B2C marketing, such as offering an eBook or white paper as a lead magnet, but the bottom line is that Facebook advertising can be a remarkably effective lead generation tool for B2B companies.

Facebook advertising is not be new...

However, we have found that quite a few companies are still operating in the dark in terms of how best to use it. They make mistakes, fall victim to common myths and misconceptions, and ultimately, they end up losing out.

Don't be like them. Start by avoiding these 7 mistakes to make the most of your Facebook advertising, maximize the return you get on your advertising investment, and meet your top marketing goals.



WHAT MOTIVATES PEOPLE TO BUY?



Every business owner wants to know the answer to this question. After all, if you know how to motivate people to buy, then you should have no trouble boosting your sales, which is the ultimate goal.

Once upon a time, the golden rule was give people what they need, because that is what they will spend their money on. While that may well have been the case a few decades ago, things are a little bit different now.



Statistics show that in today's media driven society people are actually spending more money on the things that they want like, smart TV's, High Tech Electronics and leisure activities than they are on the necessities like food and shelter!

That's why it only stands to reason if you have a product or service to sell you need to

present it to your prospects as something they want. Focus on what is in it for them, stress the benefits and make them feel like it is something they absolutely must have. Make them feel like they can't live without it.

People buy because they get pleasure from their purchase. They don't walk into a car dealership and buy the latest

model because they need it they do it because it makes them feel good to drive it.

Whether it is the comfort of the plush leather seats, the power windows, or the symbol of status, they just love driving their new car! Whatever their reason, you can rest assured that their decision was based on want, not need.





Want isn't the only thing that motivates people to make a purchase. While it is the leading factor, many other triggers can motivate them to whip out their wallets. For instance, if you can connect your product or service to consumers in a way that can help them:

- » Save or make more money
- » Save more time
- » Be more comfortable
- » Be happier and healthier
- » Be more popular
- » Increase their enjoyment
- » Attract the opposite sex
- » Escape pain and sadness
- » Avoid trouble
- » Make life easier

Or take advantage of opportunities that will benefit them in a positive way then you can motivate them to take action. Once you find out what they want and present your product or service to them in a way that makes them feel like they can't live without it, you should have no trouble boosting sales for your business.

HARNESS THE POWER OF TESTIMONIALS

If you shop online or if you've ever made a purchase from a website like Amazon then chances are testimonials probably played a big part in your decision-making process.

Customer testimonials have the power to boost your sales substantially and they do it without spending and extra money on advertising. They are excellent emotional triggers. A glowing

recommendation from happy customer can create a level of trust and provide potential customers with the ability to imagine what it would be like to purchase your products or services.

Typically, when someone begins shopping for a new product and service, one of the first things they take into consideration is the recommendation of

others. They seek advice from family, friends, and testimonials of complete strangers. They do this because they want to make an informed choice.

Testimonials give them insight into how other people feel about the product or service as well as a good idea of what can do for them. So, do not underestimate the impact they can have on your business.



ONLINE MARKETING ASSISTANCE - CAN YOUR BUSINESS AFFORD TO BE WITHOUT IT?

If you would like more advice on how to boost your presence online and generate more customers please don't hesitate to get in touch. We have helped many businesses just like yours. And it's likely your competitors are focusing their advertising efforts online - can you really afford not to?

[Click here to request your free Q & A strategy session >>](#)



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HAVE TO BE A HEADACHE!**

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visibility will result in more
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and emails!**

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