

Clicks

The Online Marketing Guide for Small Business

HOW TO GROW
YOUR BRAND ON
**SOCIAL MEDIA
WITH CONTESTS**

WHAT IS
**GEO-TOPICAL
AUTHORITY**
AND WHY DOES MY
WEBSITE NEED IT?

Instagram
Adds Business Profiles &
What This Means for You



WINNING THE
**DIRECT
MAIL
GAME**

Contents

How to Grow Your Brand on Social Media with Contests 03



Social media can be a great way to boost the subscribers number, drum up the excitement and trigger the loyalty in your best and most potential customers. So...

How do you do them right? Today, we are sharing our best kept secrets.

Instagram Adds Business Profiles & What This Means for You 07



Let's face it - social media took the world by storm. And while it initially captured most of consumers, it also paved the way for the businesses to take part in the action too. As of

April, this year, Instagram launched a completely new feature to the platform - the Instagram business profiles. And just like Facebook there will be a lot of advantages for businesses who embrace it sooner than later.

What is Geo-Topical Authority and Why Does My Website Need It? 11



What do you want local consumers to do when they need a product or service that you provide? You want them to think of YOU without hesitation, right? The good news is

that there's a way for you to create precisely that reality. It's called geo-topical authority, and we're here to help you take the steps you need to become the go-to resource for your target audience.

Winning the Direct Mail Game 15



These days, digital marketing seems to get all of the attention. But printed marketing materials have a permanence and impact that simply can't be matched by

looking at a computer screen. So how can you update your direct mailers and make them relevant? Keep reading to learn six ways to do it.

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.

CLICKS IS PROVIDED BY:

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.

HOW TO GROW YOUR BRAND ON SOCIAL MEDIA WITH CONTESTS

We've all been there, trying to organize a contest on social media and ending up in total disaster with only a dozen subscribers and an prize that was wrote off as an expense rather than investment in traffic and conversions.

What happened in these cases?
It's quite clear actually – Their contest was

probably designed to fail from the start. The truth is, contests on social media can be a great way to boost the subscribers number, drum up the excitement and trigger the loyalty in your best and most potential customers.

But how to do them right?
Today, we are sharing our best kept secrets.



1

Set Goals Right from The Start

Is there a goal you want to achieve with your contest? Write it down. However, make sure that your contest goals are S.M.A.R.T. What does this mean?

Essentially, a SMART goal is Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely. Not to mention that this rule absolutely applies to contests on social media. So, make sure to define your contest's goals before even planning it.

Want to promote your product or service? Or maybe grow your email list? Social media contests can generate traffic for any of these goals.

2

Choose the Type of The Contest

Many contests fall short because it's the wrong type of contest for their fans & followers. But that's mainly due to lack of planning and preparation. Choosing the right type of contest is the first step. And there's plenty that like gangbusters. For example, there are caption-based contests, photo-vote contests, video-vote contests as well as sweepstakes, which are always a great choice for Facebook.

Offering some kind of prize for the winner will typically get the best engagement – and is referred to as a giveaway.

3

Choose the Right Software

You're not planning on running the contest, manually are you? Unless you have a lot of extra time on your hands, using contest software like from Hootsuite or Rafflecopter for your social media contest is probably the best way to manage it.

The truth is, software programs come with built-in voter verification features and other tools that will let you collect Facebook user numbers and name from everyone engaged with your post. And the best part?

Whatever type of contest you choose, you can always use the information you collect for any of your future marketing campaigns. Insights you can use to market to your audience better.





4

Set Your Time Frame

Do you have an idea of how long will your contest actually last?

One of the first things your audience should know is the start and end date of your contest.

The best-case scenarios for contests are typically one day contests for products and goods - and weekly or monthly contests for more valuable prizes (ex. higher value services, hotel stays, yearly prizes etc.)

5

Create Your List of Rules

How will you choose the winner? By random - or the community votes?

6

Determine Who Can Enter

If your local business wants to increase the foot traffic to your physical location, you should know that specifying an age requirement goes a long way when you are establishing your contest rules.

Your rules should be clearly displayed for everyone who enters the contest.

Make sure it's clear that voting is only part of the process, and that a judge or panel of judges will determine the final winner. Also, in the case of suspected fraud scenarios (yes, it happens unfortunately) - you have the right to choose the winner.

7

Make Sure Your Prize Is Relevant and Attractive

This pretty much goes without saying. But just in case we didn't emphasize this point enough just about every successful social media contest offers up an appealing prize for the winner. Without it, you won't attract any contest entrants.

Make sure to stay relevant to your business and your audience and choose relevant prizes. If you own a hotel, offer a night for two. An art dealer could offer a limited-edition reprint. If you run a spa, you might offer a free 1 hour massage. The key is to offer something that attracts the most amount of people. Make sure to include a photo of your prize to give people even more reason to enter.

8

Create Your Custom Hashtag

If you have ever wondered why brands choose personal and custom hashtags when running social media contests, there is a science behind it. Coming up with a unique hashtag that reflects your brand and your contest can be used to extend the reach of your contest across all social networks.

For example, there are tools like Hash-tagify.me that can help you find trends related to your industry and potential gold mines in terms of hashtags.



So, there you have it - you now know our best kept secrets to running a perfect social media contest. However, you should know that not every social media is the same. The demographics, type of content and a ton of other variables can play a role in how successful your contest ends up being. But following these rules will definitely give you an edge, especially if you've never run a contest before.



Instagram

Adds Business Profiles & What This Means for You

Let's face it - social media took the world by storm. And while it initially captured most of consumers, it also paved the way for the businesses to take part in the action too. And that is exactly what is happening on Instagram right now.

As of April, this year, Instagram launched a completely new feature to the platform - the Instagram business profiles. And just like Facebook there will be a lot of advantages for businesses who embrace it sooner than later.



SO, WHAT ARE THE NEW INSTAGRAM BUSINESS PROFILE FEATURES LIKE?

Basically, the Instagram algorithm for businesses is mimicking the Facebook for Business idea of advertising to a local audience and getting the best bang for your buck. You can reach your target audience and get exposure for your business for even a small ad spend.

However, a lot of people would agree that the new Instagram algorithm for business is even more personal than the Facebook algorithm that is already used by businesses worldwide. The difference is basically in the personal versus the public use.

In short, the new Instagram update filters the advertised content according to two factors - engagement and interest. That way, when a user that you follow engages with the advertised content (likes it or follows it) - you automatically see that content higher in your feed.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MARKETERS?

The best way to answer this question is simple. This new Instagram algorithm for businesses is like music to the ears of every marketer. More so, marketers see this content positioning as extremely helpful when promoting on Instagram.

So... What's so great about it?

Well, before this update, business profiles were hard to find on Instagram. The only way followers could engage with them was to click their website link in their profile. However, the all new Instagram for Business comes with contact buttons that directly lead to the business' email or phone - as well as its location on map.

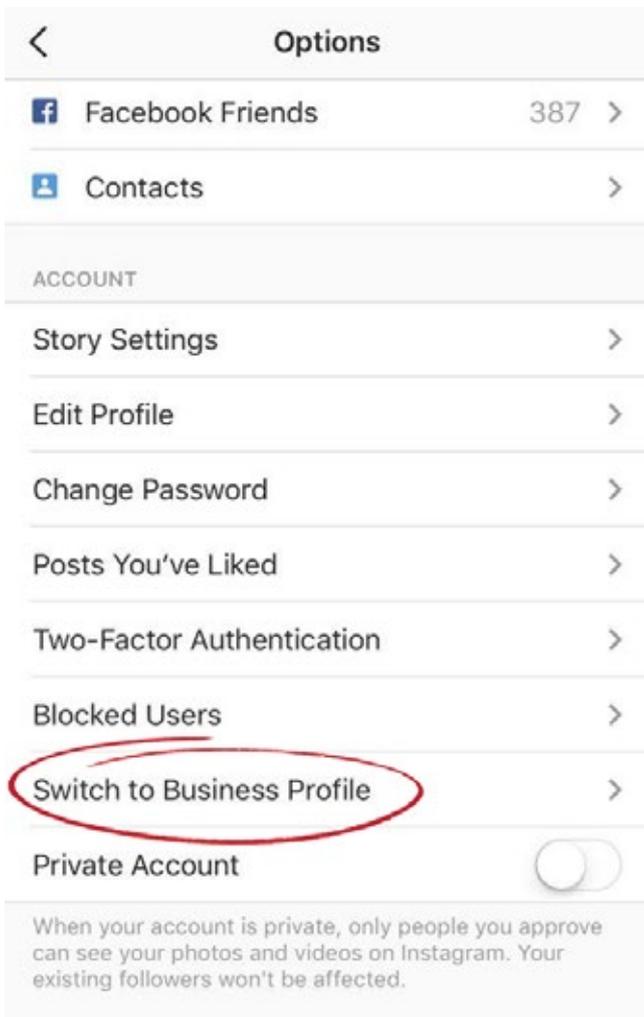
Whether you're a seasoned Instagram pro or have never used Instagram before - This platform is here to stay and they've just made it even easier to promote your business.





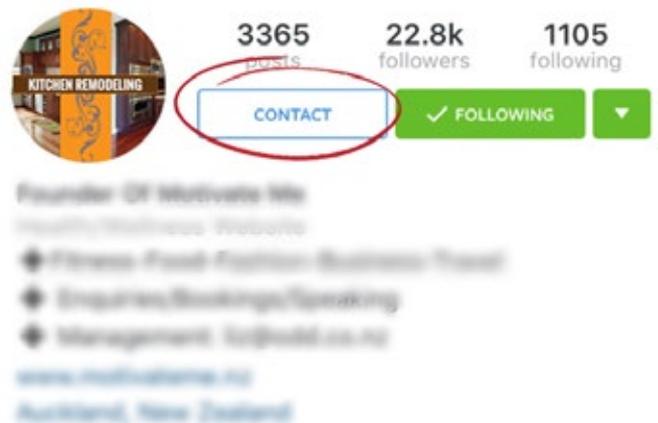
HERE'S 5 TRICKS TO MAXIMIZE YOUR SUCCESS WHEN USING INSTAGRAM FOR BUSINESS

» Upgrade A Personal Instagram Profile to A Business Profile - First and foremost is to upgrade to a business profile on Instagram. You can do that by linking your Instagram account to your Facebook business page. Yup that's it! Instagram will see the designation and connect it accordingly.



» Ditch the Stories at Start—Some businesses do very well with “Stories” on Snapchat and Facebook. But for now, Instagram doesn't support stories - Instead, try out some of the other great tools and features.

» Make Use of the CTA/Contact Button - Direct communication is one of the best features of Instagram for Business. When you set up the Contact button, you can choose how people will reach you - whether it's email, phone or both.



» Post on A Regular Basis, But Don't Over-post – Sometimes people can get too much of a good thing, right? And it's certainly true in this case. Over-posting can have a counter-effect and followers will be more likely to skip your posts. That is why 3 great posts a week can out-perform 30 of them.



» **Track the Analytics** - Another great part of the all new Instagram for businesses algorithm are the analytics. Only business profiles have access to this feature which definitely makes it an exclusive perk. In order to open it, tap or click the little bar graph icon on your profile and you will see several metrics - one of which is the 'Insights' option. There, you can analyze and see how many people see your posts and how many of them viewed your business profile.

A FINAL WORD

It certainly goes without saying that Instagram's latest update is an exciting new option to promote your business with.

But the bottom line is that no matter how many updates and new features social media platforms rollout on us, what really matters is the content that you choose to share and the people engaging with it. So, I say give it a shot. There has never been a better time to promote your business on this immensely popular platform. Instagram profiles for business is nothing short of a bulls-eye for small business.

Insights

Insights are only available for new posts.
[Create a new post](#)

FOLLOWERS [See More](#)

Thursdays

12a 3a 6a 9a 12p 3p 6p 9p

[What do these mean?](#)

Impressions
The total number of times all of your posts have been seen.

Reach
The number of unique accounts that have seen any of your posts.

Website Clicks
The number of accounts that have tapped on the website link on your profile bio.

Followers
Average times your followers are on Instagram on a typical day.

WHAT IS GEO-TOPICAL AUTHORITY AND WHY DOES MY WEBSITE NEED IT?



What do you want local consumers to do when they need a product or service that you provide?

It's hardly a mystery, right?

You want them to think of YOU, immediately and without hesitation, as the best possible source of information (and products)

in your area of expertise. Not your competition, not the company that's in the next town. You, and you alone.

The good news is that there's a way for you to create precisely that reality. It's called geo-topical authority, and we're here to help you take the steps you need to become the go-to resource for your target audience.



WHAT IS GEO-TOPICAL AUTHORITY?

Let's start with a quick explanation. Geo-topical authority is just like any kind of authority, except it is both:

1. Specific to the geographical area where you do business; and
2. Specific to the topics that are most important to your customers.

That makes sense, right? The idea is that your website – and indeed, your entire online presence – should establish you as a company that can provide detailed, valuable, and actionable information about any topic related to what you do.

Let's consider an example to make sure you know what we mean. Imagine a pest control company that has several nearby competitors. The company that will win out in terms of online searches is the one that has:

- » A website that makes it easy to find all relevant information about the business (we'll talk more about that in a minute)
- » Content that's geared toward answering their target audience's most common questions
- » A coherent online presence that maintains a strong brand voice and vision

This company might publish blog posts or videos to show people how to prevent pests from taking up residence in their homes. That, combined with accurate and comprehensive information about the business, will turn them into a geo-topical authority on pest control.



WHY DO YOU NEED GEO-TOPICAL AUTHORITY?

The answer to this question might be obvious, but let's talk about it anyway.

The only way for your business to succeed is for you to differentiate yourself from the competition and make it clear to consumers in your area that you are the best possible choice to help answer their questions and meet their needs.

If your website isn't designed with geo-topical authority in mind, then the chances are good that you're missing out on attracting new customers.

In other words, building geo-topical authority will help you beat out your competitors and increase your profits. You can get more online traffic, more foot traffic to your store, more referrals, and a bigger social following – and that's just the beginning!





WHAT YOUR WEBSITE NEEDS

Now, let's talk about what your website needs for you to become a geo-topical authority in your niche. You may already have some of these things, but we highly recommend that you review this list and then get started on adding those things that you're missing.

Home Page

You undoubtedly have a home page, but does it have all the information it should? To be effective at building geo-topical authority, your home page must include key information about your company at a glance, so that customers who are in a hurry can contact or find you immediately.

It should also have intuitive navigation, an easy-to-find menu, and a structure that makes it easy for customers with more time on their hands to explore your site.

Customer Service Policy/Customer Bill of Rights

This first item includes one piece of content that will remain internal to your company and one that will be published on your site.

Every company needs a well-thought-out customer service policy so that employees know your guidelines for handling customers.

The flip side of that is a customer bill of rights that lets your customers in on how they should expect to be treated by your employees.

NAP Listings

Your name, address, and phone number must be clearly listed on your site – and identical on every page. That's important because it helps customers find you and also helps Google connect all of your online listings.

Make sure everything is spelled properly and punctuated in the same way on every page. Your NAP listings should be in crawlable HTML, and ideally, you should mark them with Schema to help search engines find your site.

While you're at it, you should also check your off-site NAP listings if you haven't done so recently. Any discrepancy can hurt your geo-topical authority.





Reviews and Testimonials

You already know that social proof in the form of customer reviews is important for every local business. For that reason, your site needs a review/testimonial page and a clearly stated policy that lets customers know what you will and won't publish in terms of reviews.

A typical policy specifies that you will remove reviews that are profane, abusive, or threatening, as well as any that include personal information about the customer or a third party.

Contact Us Page

You probably have this page too, but again, you need to make sure that it's comprehensive. You need a complete NAP listing, a list of every possible way that customers can contact you (phone, email, social media, online chat, etc.)

You should also include a map, detailed directions to your store, and photographs of the exterior. The more thorough this page is, the easier it will be for customers to find you.

Location-Specific Landing Pages

If you have more than one location or service more than one geographical area, you should have a dedicated page for each one. That way, customers can find the precise information they need.

You may also want to add store finder location to your home page to make it as easy as possible for local customers in each area to find you.

Products/Services

Your product or service page should be detailed and thorough. It should give descriptions of

each item or service, including parameters and prices, and include high-quality images as well.

It may also be helpful here to include reviews or information that helps to differentiate you from your competitors in the area.

Other Pages

In addition to the other items listed, your website needs to have:

- » A FAQ page that answers the most common questions you receive and provides a mechanism for users to enter a question you haven't addressed yet
- » An About Us page to tell your company's story and explain what makes you special
- » A call to action on every page that makes it clear what you want users to do

A site that has all of these things will go a long way toward making you a geo-topical authority.

But Wait... There's More

Your quest to become a geo-topical authority doesn't end with your website. In addition to doing what's outlined above, you should claim your profile on all third-party review sites and check your NAP listings.

You should also create content that addresses helps potential customers answer questions and complete tasks. What do your customers want to do, know, find, or buy? The more you do to answer those questions, the more likely it is that your company will be the geo-topical authority you want it to be.



WINNING THE DIRECT MAIL GAME

These days, digital marketing seems to get all of the attention. That's with good reason – no company can afford to skip it given how reliant on the internet consumers have become. But what if you're missing an opportunity connect with clients in a new way?

Believe it or not, we're talking about... direct mail!

That's right – but this isn't your grandfather's direct mail, or even your older sister's. The key to using direct mail effectively in this day and

age is to update it, twist it, and make it feel brand new.

Printed marketing materials have a permanence and impact that simply can't be matched by looking at a computer screen. When you hold a postcard or brochure in your hand, it connects you to a company in a way that an email can't.

So how can you update your direct mailers and make them relevant? Keep reading to learn six ways to do it.



Variable Data Printing

Did you know that there are printers who will segment mailers into small batches to print personalized information on mailers? It's called variable data printing and it's one way to bring information you gather digitally into your prospects' homes.

You can choose to print mailers based on users' geographical information. For example, if you were targeting a nationwide audience, you might do a different mailer for each state featuring an iconic image like the Empire State Building for New York or the Everglades for Florida.

If you wanted to get more specific than that, you could even produce postcards that showed customers in your local area how to get to your store from their neighborhood.

Alternatives might be based on customers' previous buying habits or their ages. You can get creative with it and give your direct mail pieces the kind of personal touch that translates into sales.



Personalized URLs

One of the coolest ways to bring your direct mail campaigns into the digital age is to give customers a personalized URL (PURL). When they enter it in their browser, it directs them to a special page that you've created for your campaign.

What makes the page personalized is that the PURL you create incorporates their name. It might look like this:

www.yourcompanyname.com/customername

The benefits here are two-fold. First, your customer feels that you have reached out directly to them, and that increases the chances that they will visit the website and check it out. Second, it gives you the opportunity to determine exactly who has responded to your mailer – and you can use that information to follow up based on the actions they take once they visit the Personalized URL.





QR Codes Use QR code image

Another thing you can do is to combine mobile marketing with direct mail by including a Quick Response (QR) code on your mailer.

A QR code is similar to a barcode but it can store up to 100 times as much information as a traditional barcode. The people on your mailing list can scan the QR code with their smartphones and from there, the sky's the limit.

You can use your QR code to direct people to a PURL or landing page, provide them with personalized coupons, or give them access to exclusive content. QR codes are easy to create, and they're an especially good marketing tactic for local companies and companies with ecommerce stores.



Interactive Mailers

While it's definitely a good idea to try to combine digital marketing with print marketing, you can still create interesting and compelling mailers without a digital component.

For example, you might try creating a mailer with multiple folds that recipients have to open to reveal relevant information. They're more interesting than sending a flat postcard or letter – and they can be a great way to create suspense and surprise.

Another option is to create an unusual mailer that changes in some way as the recipient interacts with it. Here are two suggestions:

1. Use a magnetized mailer that encourages recipients to move one piece of your mailer (an attached cutout of an image, for example) and put it in a designated spot on the card. When they do it, the embedded magnet moves the object. Bonus points if you can use this one to illustrate one of the benefits of your product or service.
2. Use interesting shapes to create movement. If you're advertising an event that includes a meal, you might have a small round envelope shaped like a plate with food showing through a window. When the customer pulls out the insert, the plate is empty, and the food is in their hand.

These are just a couple of examples, but you can really get creative with this idea.



Pop-up Mailers

When you were a kid, you probably owned at least one pop-up book. While these books are aimed at children, you can take the same basic idea and use it in a mailer.

One classic example of this technique came from the retailer IKEA. They sent out a mailer that popped up and turned into an IKEA table when it was removed from the envelope. The mailer was fun and creative and made a big impression on their customers.

There are thousands of ways you could adapt this idea for your business. The key is to choose a pop-up that represents you, your product, or your service.

postcard or envelope, consider doing one of the following:

- » Send a larger item, such as a poster, in a tube
- » Print your marketing information on an object and send it in a box. For example, Amnesty International did a mailer that looked like a pair of chopsticks. When the recipients opened it, they turned out to be pencils. The enclosed material encouraged people to write letters to the Chinese government on behalf of political prisoners.
- » Enclose a sample of your product. This technique isn't new – but it still works! It's especially effective if you're launching a new product.

Again, don't be afraid to get creative with these ideas. A 3D mailer is more likely to be opened than a letter.



3D Mailers

A variation on the pop-up mailer is creating a 3D mailer. Instead of simply sending a boring



From Inbox to Mailbox

What are you waiting for? Use these ideas to expand your marketing from your target audience's inbox to their mailbox – and reap the rewards of thinking "outside the box".



FRUSTRATED WITH YOUR CURRENT MARKETING RESULTS?



WE'VE BEEN THERE.

And we know how to help. No matter what your current situation. Contact us today to schedule a free 1 on 1 strategy session. We'll show you exactly how to generate more leads and sales online. These sessions fill up fast so don't miss out. Contact us today.

(770) 893-2443 | WWW.MARKETBLAZER.COM