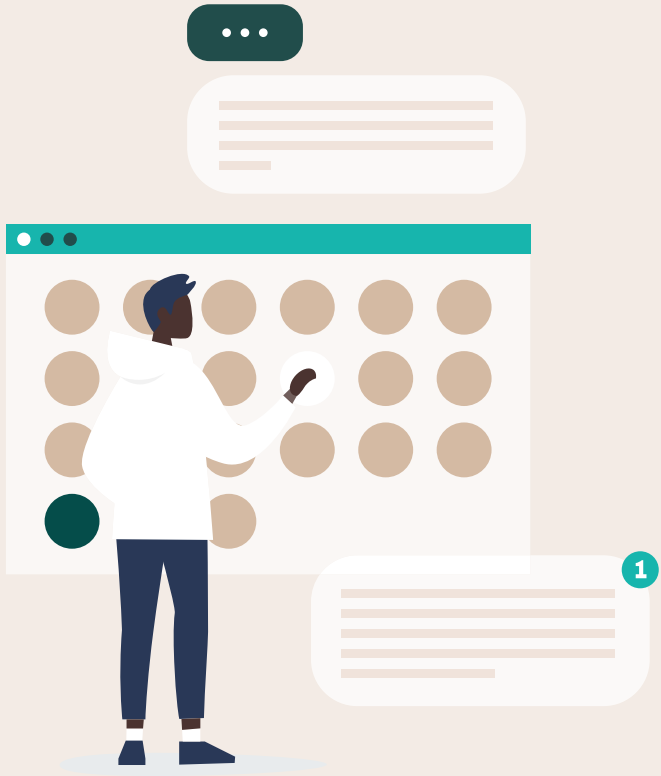


The 5 Step Social Media Strategy



Introduction

Hi There,

Thank you for downloading The 5 Step Social Media Strategy! Chances are, this is not the first 360 Gateway Brands eBook you have read. However, if it is, we hope you have as much fun reading this as we did putting it together!

As an agency dedicated to enhancing your brand, we understand that marketing and social media go hand in hand. Very rarely can you execute a marketing strategy without including some sort of social media advertisement or organic posting. The bottom line is, if you are going to be in business, you need to have a social media presence.

This sounds great in theory. However, when you start to dive into the world of social media, it becomes much more complicated. You have various platforms, tactics, and strategies that are available to you. It can be quite confusing on how to get started. That's where this book comes in.

In the following pages we will walk you through the 5 step process to creating and launching a social media strategy and presence. Now, this is something to get you started on your way. If you are really serious about putting social media to work for your company, we suggest claiming your free introductory call with our social media team.

We hope you learn a lot from the following content and we will meet back up at the end to review. Enjoy!



The Team at 360 Gateway Brands

Step #1: Define Your Target Audience

OVERVIEW

Before you create any kind of content, you must determine who you are talking to. If you haven't already, you will need to define your target audience. This is the group of people who are most likely to buy your products. Who are they and what motivates them? These are the people you need to craft your social strategy around.

Now, it may not be possible to create one piece of content for all of your audience. For example, you may sell a product that caters to women in their 30s and 40s. However, your data may also tell you that 5-10% of your customer base is in their 20s and 50s. This means there could be a 40 year age gap between your youngest and oldest customer. Do not make the mistake of trying to create one size fits all content. Cater the bulk of your messaging to the bulk of your audience.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics is a word you usually hear associated with TV ratings or political campaigns. The official definition states it as statistical data relating to the population and particular groups in it. In your case, the "population" is your customer base and the particular groups are the different types of customers you have. In simpler terms, this refers to the age and sex of your customers and audience.

Depending on your brand, your demographic breakdown might be easy. If your products cater to a specific sex and/or age range, then you are probably already all set. However, to truly get a feel of the breakdown of your customer base, we suggest creating a customer survey. This survey can be short and to the point by asking straightforward questions about a person's sex and age range. Any customer who fills it out is qualified for 10% off their next order.

BUYER PERSONAS

Hopefully, if you are ready to launch your social media strategy, you have created your buyer persona profiles. If you haven't, we highly suggest you put that on your to do list to complete later today. A buyer persona is a semi-fictional representation of your ideal customer based on market research and real data about your existing customers. When creating your buyer persona(s), consider including customer demographics, behavior patterns, motivations, and goals. The more detailed you are, the better.



Creating a buyer persona could be its own eBook topic. Therefore, we provided the link above for you to learn more about it. For now, we will give you a brief example using a workout supplement company as an example. The ideal customer for them would be both men and women in the 20-40 year age range. They are determined individuals who usually work out before or after work. They are looking for fast and consistent results from the products they use. If they work, they will most likely keep using the same one. However, they do enjoy learning about new products as well.

With this type of information, you can begin to craft a social strategy that will engage this type of customer. In this example, you want to offer coupons and make your audience aware of special sales and discounts. You also want to craft eye catching posts that announce brand new products. Lastly, you want your client testimonials to be front in center so people know that your products are high quality and worth their time and money.

Step #2: Determine Your Brand Message and Voice

OVERVIEW

Speaking to an audience on social media is a lot different than having a one-on-one conversation. Consumers want to be entertained and engaged. If they find your posts boring or dry, they will navigate to one of your competitor's pages. Also, if you spend too much time getting to the point, they will become distracted and leave as well. Remember, social media is designed to keep the user entertaining and interacting at all times. It is up to you to gain and hold their attention until your message is received.

BRAND MESSAGING

Social media is a conversation. What is the message you want to get across to your audience? What do you want them to know before they leave your page? Yes, you want them to take a certain action like navigate to your website or make a purchase. However, what is going to get them to do that? What value are you providing? How does your product make their lives better? Each social post should tell the user why your brand is worthy of their time and money.



Let us go back to our fitness supplement company for another example. Their end goal is to get gym-goers to make their company their go-to solution for all their supplement needs. To achieve this goal, they must showcase what makes them different. They can do this by sharing content that provides free weight loss advice, consistently offering new products and highlighting their staff who is trained to recommend the ideal supplement for you.

BRAND VOICE

Brand voice often becomes an afterthought when crafting a branding strategy. However, if done correctly, it can take your social game to a whole new level. As we mentioned early, when consumers research brands on social media, they want to be entertained. They do not want to engage in a lifeless conversation with a company that sounds like a robot. More importantly, they do not want to be sold to without getting anything in return.

Your brand voice depends on what you sell, the industry you are in, and who you are talking to. If you sell healthcare products your brand voice must be calm and knowledgeable. This is because your target customer is most likely dealing with a health issue and is looking for guidance. If you sell baked goods, your voice can be funny and silly because anyone buying cookies and cakes is generally in a good mood. If you are selling to Mom's you want to get straight to the point because they are super busy and just want to know if your product works.

Step #3: Create Your Content Plan

OVERVIEW

The idea of creating social channels might be exciting at first. Then, you have to actually figure out what you will post. In the beginning it may be easy to post past content, maybe a few pictures of your office or an event you attended last year. Then comes the hard part of consistently posting entertaining and engaging content to your various platforms. If you do not plan ahead, you will end up with accounts that look abandoned. This is the last thing you want a customer to see when researching your brand.



TYPES OF CONTENT

The key to posting social content is to mix it up and offer something for everyone. This makes customers keep coming back to your page to see what you are posting today. It also helps avoid gaining a reputation of posting too much of one thing and alienating part of your customer base.

Here is a brief list of the different types of content you can post on social media.

Short Form

The entire post can be read on social media. Usually reserved for making announcements or providing tips or advice. Traditionally a relevant link is provided at the bottom, such as a product page or website URL.

Long Form

These posts highlight content like blog posts and case studies. Your post will include a few lines to give a sneak peek but does not include the whole thing because it is too long. Each long form post should end with a link to the piece of content mentioned.

Questions

Asking your audience questions is a great way to keep them engaged. These questions can be general or relate specifically to your industry. Do not add any links to these posts.

Product Highlights

These posts are used to highlight specific products. Try to highlight the benefits and value instead of making a straight sale. Each post should end with the appropriate product page link.

Images and Videos

Try to mix in images and videos that communicate your message such as motivational quotes, tips and tricks, other content that positions you as an expert.

CONTENT STRATEGY

Once you create the type of content listed above, you then must create a cohesive strategy for posting it. It is not enough to just randomly post stuff and hope for the best. Everything you post must be intentional and have a purpose. Since we are trying to provide something for everyone, it's important to not overload one week with a specific type of content. You also want to make sure you are offering the right balance of free value and product selling.



Your first step is creating a social media calendar using a [scheduling tool](#) or a basic excel document. Here is where you want to map out what you will post, each day, on each channel. We suggest planning at least one month at a time so you can include new content, products, and sales to highlight.

Ideally, a typical week may look something like this:

Monday	Question
Tuesday	Video Highlight
Wednesday	Product Highlight
Thursday	Short Form
Friday	Long Form

Step #4: Select & Launch Your Platforms

OVERVIEW

The most common mistake we see new business owners make is thinking they need to be live on every social channel out there. While this is tempting, it may not be necessary. Having a social media presence is not about amassing the largest following possible. It is about choosing the channels that your target audience uses. Once you determine the demographics and habits of your ideal customer, you can research what social channels they use the most and focus your attention accordingly.

SOCIAL PLATFORMS

As we mentioned, we advise you research the platforms your audience tends to use. Below is a brief list of the different types of social platforms and what they are best for.



FACEBOOK

Consumers are now using Facebook to research brands and see what other customers have to say about your company. This is especially true for consumers who are in their late 20s to early 50s and are shopping for their family or household.

INSTAGRAM

Instagram is the channel of choice for teenagers and young adults. If your product or service caters to them, you need to create images and videos to post. Instagram can also work for brands whose products are photogenic such as food, art, and events.

LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is required for any company that has employees so they can show they work for you. It is also a great place to post content that will position you as a thought leader to your community. LinkedIn is ideal for most B2B companies.

TWITTER

Twitter has always struggled to define a niche for itself. However, it can be used as a customer service channel for users to leave questions, comments and concerns. However, if you go this route, you must designate someone to monitor this channel.

PREPARING FOR LAUNCH

Once you determine your social channels, audience, and content strategy you are finally ready for launch. First, be sure to create your accounts using an e-mail everyone has access to in order to avoid issues in the future. Second, each platform must have a high resolution logo and professional looking banner. You can use [Canva](#) for one or both of these items. Third, each page should have accurate information including your "About Us", your website and how to contact your brand.



Step #5: Manage, Analyze & Adjust

OVERVIEW

Once your channels are launched, your job has just begun. It is key to assign the responsibility of managing and updating your channels to someone in your individual. This can be a virtual assistant or someone in your marketing department. This person will be responsible for ensuring the pages stay updated, all posts are professional, and any customer comments are resolved in a timely manner.

MANAGE AND SCHEDULE

Managing your social media channels is an important responsibility. If someone posts something unprofessional or inappropriate, it could be extremely damaging for your brand reputation. Even something as simple as a typo or incorrect information could prevent a prospective customer from making a purchase. It is this person's responsibility that all posts are of the highest quality and integrity.

Whoever is in charge of your social channels will not have time to post on each channel every day. This is where social media scheduling platforms like [Hootsuite](#) or [Sprout Social](#) can be incredibly helpful. Each Friday afternoon, you can open up your social media calendar and schedule all the posts for the following week. However, be sure to continue to monitor your pages for customer responses.

ANALYZE AND ADJUST

As you move forward, you will want to analyze the performance of your posts and adjust accordingly. Take note of which posts get the most interaction including likes, clicks, and customer comments. If a specific type of content is outperforming the rest, then you can double down on that type. Each social media platform offers an analytics dashboard for you to review on a weekly or monthly basis.



Conclusion

Hi Again,

Wasn't that fun?! We covered A LOT so please don't feel like you need to grasp it all at once. We highly suggest you bookmark this page somewhere and use it as a reference as you move forward building your brand.

So, let's recap! First, you need to determine your target audience or the people you are actually selling too. Then, you need to use that information to create buyer personas that will help you craft engaging copy and content. Then, you will map out your content so you never run out of stuff to sell. At this point, you are ready to choose and launch your social channels. Finally, you can continue your momentum by consistently managing and providing your social presence.

We wish you the best of luck as you continue to build your brand through social media. We also invite you to check out resources section each week as we upload new blog posts, eBooks, and additional content to help push your brand forward.

All The Best,
Your Friends At 360 Gateway Brands

Ready For More?

Thinking you might need some help to implement all of these valuable social media strategies we listed out? We would love to help you craft and execute the right strategy for your company.

Since you downloaded this eBook, we are offering a FREE strategy session for you to take advantage of! All you need to do is send us a message at contact@360gatewaybrands.com and tell us a little bit about you and your business.

We look forward to hearing from you!

