



THE **MARKETING** UMBRELLA

HOW TO TAP INTO **facebook**

MARKETPLACE TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS

THE UNSPOKEN Rules Of Effective

Online Reputation Management



6 **DIGITAL MARKETING**

CHANNELS THAT ARE CRUCIAL TO YOUR

BUSINESS'S SUCCESS



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You may have written off Facebook Marketplace when it comes to promoting your business. However, the feature has evolved over the years into much more than just a Craigslist imitator. Today, it's a powerful channel to explore. Small businesses "in the know" are opening up an entirely new traffic source with minimal effort. Here's how to approach your own Facebook Marketplace strategy to tap into those prospective customers.

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Having a robust online presence is no longer optional—it's expected of brands in every industry with very few exceptions. However, the nature of digital marketing is constantly

evolving, and it can be difficult to understand where to start. Each one offers its own set of pros and cons. Understanding how to effectively use each one is easier said than done. That's where we come in.

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Online reputation management is a must for any small business. Put simply, it's the process of keeping track of what's being said about your brand online. To take it one step further, it

often includes amplifying the positive mentions and doing damage control for any negative mentions. The problem is that most ORM advice assumes that your business has people whose sole focus, 40 hours a week, is managing your online presence. Many businesses just don't have that luxury so with that in mind here are six unspoken rules that make ORM possible for small businesses.

Welcome to the Marketing Umbrella Magazine



The best source to generate more sales for your business with online marketing.

Each month we break down the complexities of a few key digital marketing strategies.

We make it easy to understand so you can decide if they should be implemented in your business.

It doesn't matter if you're just starting out, or an established business owner, you will benefit from harnessing the power digital marketing.

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How to Tap Into

facebook **MARKETPLACE**

To **Grow** Your Business



Facebook Marketplace is Facebook's buy and sell feature. You may have written it off as unnecessary for your business. However, the feature has evolved over the years into much more than just a Craigslist imitator. Today, it's a powerful channel to explore.

At last count in 2018, Facebook reported 800 million Marketplace users per month in over 70 countries worldwide according to CNET. Here's how to approach your own Facebook Marketplace strategy to tap into those prospective customers.



Create Your First Listing

The first step to optimizing Facebook Marketplace is to create your first product listing. This is how your products will show up in search, and believe it or not, it's free! Facebook has a great walkthrough for the basic process [here](#), so we'll skip ahead to some specific tips about how to polish your listing.

Anticipate Questions in Your Description

One critical element of your product listing is the description. In addition to adding all the basic elements of a normal product description (size, color, key features, etc.), try to anticipate any questions your Facebook Marketplace audience might have.

Think about it this way: If you came across this product on Marketplace, what would you want to know before making a purchase? Consider adding details like shipping and return information, measurements and dimensions, and even your own favorite features or use cases for your product. You may also want to include care instructions when applicable—especially for clothing or furniture items.

The more (relevant!) information you put into your description, the easier it will be for viewers to gain confidence in your listing.

Nail the Photo Section

Next, make sure to nail the photo section of the listing. You can add up to ten photos per product, and you should take advantage of all ten slots whenever possible. Capture multiple angles, variations of styling for your product (if applicable), and even photos of the tag or other admin-style info about the piece.

The first photo you add will be the “cover photo” for the listing, which is how Marketplace customers will first come across your product in their feeds. Put some extra time and thought into that image to make sure it will stand out on a crowded page alongside similar products.

Respond to Customer Requests

Responding to customer requests is also critical for your Marketplace business. Facebook actually tracks your response rate, which it turns into a metric that customers can see before deciding to engage with your products. If you have a poor response rate, your prospective customers might assume it will take too long to hear back from you and purchase from a competitor instead.

To save time on this step, you may want to create a document where you write out answers to common questions you receive about your products or your payment and shipping processes. By taking that step up-front, you can then copy and paste your response and make small tweaks for each customer. While you won't be able to anticipate every possible question, this will definitely simplify your support process.





Focus on Customer Service

Speaking of customers, providing great customer service is essential especially if you're just getting your Marketplace business off the ground. Your customer rating is shown publicly on your Marketplace shop, so anything less than a stellar reputation can tank your business in the short and long-term.

As you're building up Marketplace sales, take more care than usual to delight every single customer. If you make even a small mistake, go out of your way to make it right. Your first few reviews carry disproportionate weight in your Marketplace fate, so make sure they send prospective customers the right quality signal.

Pick the Right Category

One often overlooked element of Facebook Marketplace is the category feature. There are 18 primary categories for products in Facebook Marketplace, and each category is broken down into a number of subcategories.

You get to pick the category and subcategory where you list your products and getting the placement right is important. In some cases, this will be simple. If your product is especially straightforward or aligns perfectly with a particular subcategory, you'll know exactly what to do. But many products are ambiguous and may seem to fit into a few subcategories.

Our advice? Take a look at what other products people are listing in each of your potential subcategories, and pick the one that seems to fit your product best. If you're still not sure if you made the right decision, leave the category

alone for a few weeks, monitor engagement and sales results, and then swap categories to compare outcomes. Whichever one performs better is likely where your product should be tagged in the future.

Run a Paid Ad Campaign

Because Marketplace is a feature within Facebook, you can use Facebook's ad landscape to create paid campaigns that will show up in the main news feed or in Marketplace itself. Play around with this option to try to build traction for slower products or to give extra momentum to products that are already selling well.

Ads in Marketplace will look like regular products with a "Sponsored" label, and they can really help to lift sales for the products you highlight and your shop as a whole. After all, when one product starts to take off, you're likely to see increased traffic to your shop's other listings too.

Monitor Results

Last, as with all sales and marketing channels for your business, monitor your results over time and adapt based on what's working and what's not working. If sales for a particular product drop off, consider tweaking the description or lowering the price just slightly.

If one listing is overperforming, try to apply those findings to boost the results of other products.

By tracking your results over time, you can optimize each listing to perform at its best.

We hope these steps empower you to get Facebook Marketplace up and running for your business. Since it's a free platform, there's nothing to lose and a whole lot to gain. Apply the recommendations above to set yourself up for success!



6

DIGITAL MARKETING CHANNELS THAT ARE CRUCIAL TO YOUR BUSINESS'S SUCCESS



You probably already know that digital marketing is essential to the success of your business. Having a robust online presence is no longer optional—it's expected of brands in every industry with very few exceptions. However, the nature of digital marketing is constantly evolving, and it can be difficult to understand where to start.

Part of the challenge for many marketers is just how many digital marketing channels exist. Each one offers its own set of pros and cons. Understanding how to effectively use each one is easier said than done. That's where we come in. Here are the six digital marketing channels that every business should use plus tips and tricks for implementing each one. First up: SEO.



Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

SEO, or search engine optimization, is arguably the most popular acronym in the marketing world. In essence, it's the process of strategically creating and organizing your marketing content in order to rank highly on search engines. Google has algorithms that determine which pages show up on the search engine results page (SERP) when you enter a search term. With SEO your goal is to optimize the many factors that affect the algorithms so that Google trusts your content and wants to serve it to audiences.

Why does this matter? According to Search Engine Journal, the first result on Google for a given search term gets an average click-through rate of 28.5%. The second position drops to 15%, and by the time you get to the tenth position, it's all the way down to 2.5%. For your business, this means that the higher you can get your content to rank, the more organic traffic you will generate for your website.

Getting Started

For SEO, the key is to have content on your web-

site that aligns with the search queries for which you want your content to rank. Make sure your main site copy accurately reflects the products or services you provide, then use your blog pages to fill in supplemental content that establishes authority in your industry.

Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Advertising

With PPC advertising, advertisers (that's you) pay for the placement each time a user clicks on the ad. When people see the ad but don't click on it, those impressions are free because they're less likely to lead to a sale.

Paid search ads are the most common form of PPC ads. They're the sponsored listings that you'll see in the first few slots of many search pages, and they're often effective for the same reason that earning the top slot organically is effective. PPC ads are a great channel if you have specific keywords that reliably drive sales for your business. The higher the conversion rate from the ad, the more successful your campaign will be.



Getting Started

Learning the ad landscape can feel complicated at first, so it's a great practice to either hire an expert to get you set up or just start trying things and monitor results. Google Ads is a great network to start with, and you can tweak your approach over time once you start to get a feel for how the process works.

Content Marketing

Content marketing is an umbrella term for any content you put out related to your business. It can include blog posts, eBooks, infographics, photos, videos, social posts, and any other content your brand distributes.

Content marketing is useful for a few reasons. First, it's a subtle way to help nurture relationships with your audience without directly pushing a sale. You can focus on educating or entertaining your prospective customers with your content, and they will naturally learn more about your business offerings over time. It also helps to boost your SEO results, as we mentioned above.

Getting Started

With content marketing, the most important thing is to get started. Brands often put off content creation indefinitely because they get overwhelmed by the options. While you can definitely start with a comprehensive strategic plan and make sure every single share is perfectly in

line with your vision, skip those steps if they'll hold you back from creating content at all. Once you've started putting something out there, you'll be better informed to develop a strategy and cadence that make sense for your business.

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is another great way to build up your online presence. It's actually a subset of content marketing, so all the tips above can be applied to your social strategy too. One common mistake digital marketers make with social media is assume that they have to keep up with all the common social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, TikTok, and more.

Thankfully, this isn't necessarily the case. Spend some time thinking about where your audience is most likely to engage with your content and where your content style fits best. Then prioritize only the platforms that align best with those goals.

Getting Started

Start by deciding how much bandwidth you have to put behind your social strategy. Then decide which platforms you'll prioritize, how often you'll post, and what kind of content you plan to share. You may also want to start by following other creators in your industry and hashtags related to your niche.



Email Marketing

While it's admittedly not the most exciting channel, email marketing is still one of the best ways to drive results for your business. Your subscribers have already opted into receiving your content before they start to get your emails, so you have a captive audience that already likely has an understanding of who you are and what you offer.

Email is also highly customizable. You can send different emails to different segments of your subscriber list. For example, you can send one promotional offer to current customers and another to people who haven't yet made a purchase.

Before you dive into email, make sure you understand and plan to comply with email laws in your country. In the US, you need explicit permission to send emails to your audience and there needs to be an unsubscribe option on every marketing email you send.

Getting Started

Spend some time thinking about how you might segment your subscriber list and what your goals are. Your strategy will differ depending on whether you're trying to nurture relationships, drive sales, or accomplish something else entirely. So, understand your aim before you send anything out.



Voice Search Optimization

Voice search is the newest channel on this list, but it's catching up to the mainstay channels quickly. Voice search is responsible for the responses you get when you ask Siri, Alexa, Google, Cortana, or any other digital assistant a question.

The process is pretty much the same regardless of which platform you're using. The device essentially does a web search for your query and returns the most relevant and concise answer it can find. Sometimes this answer is from the top-ranking slot on the results page, but other times it could be from a source much further down on the page.

Getting Started

When you're creating web content (like your

website pages or blogs), consider the questions that your audience might want to ask about your industry or your products and services. Then include a response directly in your content in a question and answer format. The key is that Google needs to be able to connect the dots between the question and your intended answer. The more logical you can make that relationship, the more likely it will be selected from the pack.

Conclusion

There you have it! The explanations above serve as your introduction to the digital marketing landscape. Following the tips in the "Getting Started" sections is sure to set you up for success. You might be surprised at how quickly you'll build expertise just by setting up these six channels. We can't wait to see what you accomplish!



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THE UNSPOKEN RULES OF EFFECTIVE ONLINE REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

Online reputation management (or ORM if you like acronyms) is a must for any small business. Put simply, it's the process of keeping track of what's being said about your brand online. To take it one step further, it often includes amplifying the positive mentions and doing damage control for any negative mentions.

The problem is that most ORM tips and tricks assume that your company has people whose sole focus, 40 hours a week, is managing your online presence. Many smaller businesses would be lucky to get a few hours a week to dedicate to ORM, so we've tailored our tips to that time constraint.

With that in mind, here are the six unspoken rules that make effective ORM possible for small businesses. For the sake of convenience, we've listed them in the order that you should prioritize them if you're pressed for time. Let's dive in!



**RULE #1:
MONITOR REVIEWS REGULARLY.**

The cardinal rule of ORM is monitoring your online reviews on a regular basis. If you have the time, the ideal cadence would be to check in with reviews on a daily basis. If not, try not to go more than a few days without checking in—definitely no longer than a week.

Why is this so important? Online reviews are a key indicator of social proof for local businesses. Think about this in your own life: When was the last time you tried a new restaurant, workout studio or tailor shop without checking the reviews first?

If your prospective customers are checking your reviews, you should be too. Which brings us to our next rule...



RULE #2: ENGAGE WITH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE REVIEWS.

Once you have a habit of checking your reviews regularly, it's time to take action. The key here is to respond to both positive and negative reviews whenever possible.

For positive reviews, thank the person for their business and for taking the time to leave a review. If they left a longer account of their experience, find a small detail to mention in your response. This step helps with customer satisfaction by making your reviewer feel appreciated, and it gives the impression that you care about delivering a great experience. Win win.

For negative reviews, your approach should depend on the content of the review. Check out the two sample responses below for inspiration. The first option works well if the person didn't share any details about what specifically went wrong—like those pesky one-star reviews with no written comments. The second option works

well if you do know the specifics of where you went wrong.

- Hi John, so sorry to hear that you were disappointed! We'd love to hear more about what went wrong. Can you email us at [email] so we can make it right?

- Hi John, so sorry we let you down in [XYZ way]. We've notified our team to make sure this doesn't happen again. Can you email us at [email] so we can get you a refund right away?

If you happen to receive a negative review that you feel is unfair, say so in your response only if you can really back up your side of the issue. A response explaining the alternate perspective can help mitigate backlash from an uncharacteristically difficult customer. Just make sure you're truly innocent in the matter before you take this approach.



RULE #3: TAKE ACTION TO CORRECT COMMON COMPLAINTS.

As you monitor reviews, keep an eye out for any complaints that are coming up frequently. A single bad review about a particular issue isn't a red flag, but multiple mentions likely indicate that you have a bigger problem on your hands.

In these cases, take the time to speak with your customers and your team to understand the problem as clearly as possible. Then, put mea-

asures in place to correct the problem long-term. Follow up with your unhappy customers to let them know what you've done to make things right, and make sure they feel good about the outcome.

This process is a great way to stay on top of your company's image and to preserve the experience you're delivering to customers over time.



RULE #4: HAVE A SOCIAL LISTENING PLAN.

Next, ORM isn't just about reviews—it's also about your holistic online presence. To monitor what's being said about your company outside of reviews, have a social listening plan (or software tool) to keep track of your mentions. You may want to set up specific tracking measures for keywords like your company's name, your

industry and even your founders' names.

The same best practices about review management apply to your social listening plan. This expansion of your monitoring strategy just gives you more insight into what's being said about you across multiple channels.



RULE #5: SHARE USER-GENERATED CONTENT.

User-generated content (UGC) is one of the best perks that comes from successful reputation management. By keeping track of what's being shared about your brand, you're likely to come across photos, videos and, of course, reviews that you can use to market your company to prospective customers.

Happy customers are an incredible asset for your brand. They speak the same language as your target audience, and their recommendations will feel more authentic than your own endorsement. When you come across positive UGC online, ask for permission to use it to promote your business, then share away.



RULE #6: HAVE A CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN.

Last, if you have the luxury of time to plan long-term, put some thought into your crisis management plan—AKA what you'll do if something horrible happens to your online image. Think terrible press mentions, a slew of negative reviews or a similar disaster that could tank your business overnight.

While you don't have to create a contingency

plan for every possible outcome, thinking ahead can help you feel more in control if one of your worst-case scenarios ever happens. Hopefully, you will never have to use these plans, but you'll be glad you took this time if you do.

There you have it! Put these tips to use for your own business and watch as your online presence becomes stronger by the day.

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