

AUTHORITY

TRAFFIC



GUIDE 6:

SOCIAL SHARING METHOD

Encourage Social Media Sharing to Extend Your Reach

As soon as social media started growing in popularity, it became apparent that it had huge potential for marketers and that it could help companies to promote their products and services.

There are countless factors that make social media platforms ideal for this purpose but unfortunately there are only a handful of marketers and entrepreneurs that know how to leverage their full power.

In this report, we'll unveil the inner workings of social media and how to encourage sharing.

The True Power of Social Sharing

First, it can be useful to understand the scope and the full potential of social media as a marketing platform.

The limited way to look at social media, is as a podium from which you can shout about the benefits and great qualities of your products or your business. Facebook now has 2 billion monthly users, which is absolutely huge. Instagram is behind with well above 700 million. Twitter is a little behind that.

These are *massive* groups that you can market to and thus you might be forgiven for thinking that this is the scope of what you could hope to accomplish on those platforms.

But this is not what social media is about. What social media is about instead, is reaching that audience in a way that allows your content to spread and proliferate: to go viral in the truest sense of the word.

Social media is just that... it's social!

On Facebook, Twitter or any other social media account, you will have a series of connections. These often represent real-world relationships and friendships, which means that those connections are probably likeminded and perhaps similar in terms of their demographics.

If you like or share a post, that will then be seen by all of those people in your extended network. What's more, is that if *those* people like or share your content, then it becomes visible to everyone in *that* network.

Not only is your content being spread, but it is being spread among people who actually care and who are actually interested in what you have to say. And on top of this, each time your content is shared on social media, it will also receive a testimony.

That 'like' is social proof and it is social pressure. It is a way of someone saying 'I like this, so perhaps you should too'.

When we see that something has been liked by our friends, we then become far more interested and far more likely to say we like it too.

This has been demonstrated by countless scientific studies and the effect is only even stronger when it comes to products that people can actually buy in exchange for their hard-earned cash.

And as if *all* that wasn't already enough, social media finally has the added bonus of being able to facilitate conversation *around* your given product, website or page. This can massively increase engagement and it can get people even more interested still.

Most of us are far more likely to check out a link when we can see that it is generating a lively and fascinating conversation!

This is what your aim on social media is. And to add the cherry on top of the already very tasty cake, the aim is also to get your visitors to do all of that for you, with no need for your intervention.

The Basics

So that's the aim, now how do you go about it?

The first thing you need to do is to optimize your pages themselves for sharing. How does this work?

The most obvious and straightforward step to take, is to add social sharing buttons to your pages. That means you need to add a link somewhere on your page, where people can automatically share on Facebook, on Twitter, or on Instagram etc.

These links will likely take the shape of buttons that will float around on top of the text to act as a constant reminder for visitors that they can share your content should they wish.

There are lots of ways you can accomplish this, but perhaps the easiest and the most straightforward is simply to use a WordPress plugin, if your site is with WordPress. These should automatically keep the visitor

logged in too, so that all they need do is click the button and type something if they so wish.

At the same time, you also need to optimize for how your image is going to look when it is shared. You do this with your meta description, which are what will show in the SERPs as well as when someone share your post.

This is the little snippet of text that appears when someone shares your link. If you don't add anything here yourself, then it will default to a snippet of text taken from your post.

While this can sometimes work, it can also sometimes can truncated in awkward ways and it will at times appear random: most of us like to begin our posts with a little preamble and introduction.

Instead then, try to come up with a meta description that will make your content sound exciting and interesting. This could be a little summary, a promise of what the reader can expect and maybe even a poised question that will get them thinking before they even start reading.

Along with this, it's also important to think about the image that will show. This will usually be the first image that appears in the text, though sometimes an image will be plucked from further down the page.

Either way, try to make sure that your images will jump out and grab attention. They should be high quality, both in terms of the resolution and color etc., and in terms of the composition and just *what* you've chosen to photograph.

You should also keep in mind what the image says about the subject matter that you're covering. If you want to make the *right* audience click the link, then the image needs to be relevant to your discussion.

Finally, think about the things that are psychologically most likely to grab attention. Did you know for instance, that people are more likely to pay attention to a human face? Likewise, certain colors are also well documented as being more eye catching and attention grabbing. An example is red, of course!

Some Added Tips

One added little tip, is to consider simply asking your visitors to share your content – which can actually make a big difference. Right at the end of your post, just say that if someone enjoyed reading your post, it would help you out a big deal if they would share.

Ever heard of the book *1,000 True Fans*. This essentially states that it only takes 1,000 fans to ensure any business will take off in an unstoppable way. This is because 'true' fans are most likely to re-share what you have written and to help you get the word out.

You might not think this makes much difference, but asking your visitors for their help can build that kind of relationship and prompt action that might otherwise never have taken place.

Another little tip is to consider using hashtags in your titles. This way, when someone clicks to share your content, they will automatically include hashtags that can help to make that even more discoverable. This won't always be appropriate.

In fact, it often is *not* appropriate. However, for events or for anything that you are trying to make into a ‘movement’, it can work quite well – so use it sparingly.

The Right Titles

One of the very most important things you can do to ensure that your content shares well on social media, is to use generally the right titles. A good title will grab attention and it will encourage people to read.

In fact, you might have heard about articles that do just this and that are actually *named* after that fact. These are the infamous ‘click bait’ posts.

A click bait post is a post that is designed to get people to click at all costs, even if they don’t offer anything of value once the title gets clicked.

Of course, you don’t want to create click bait. Click bait is frowned upon for being spammy and because it is very frustrating for the user. But what you *can* do is to learn from these articles and to see what it is that makes them successful.

Why do people click on ‘clickbait’ titles anyway?

Often, this comes down to the use of mystery. People hate not knowing something, and so if you tease a revelation or if you tease that something interesting will happen, then they will often click through in order to read and to find out what that is and whether you deliver. This is why we so often see titles like:

“This one weird trick” – people want to know what the trick is!

“10 amazing things... number 4 blew my mind” – people want to know what number four is!

“A woman walks onto a train, you’ll never guess what happens next!” – people want to know what happens next!

The key is that these titles get an emotional response, they pique our interest and they promise to give us information we don’t already have.

Contrast this with something like:

“10 Ways to Lose Weight”

Or

“The Top Mistakes Made by Business Owners”

These titles are generic. We’ve seen it all before. We *know* how the story goes. It sounds boring and we don’t want to read it.

So, your objective with creating socially sharable titles is to create titles that have that emotional impact and that intrigue, but that aren’t spammy.

How do you do this?

Simple: by coming up with something genuinely new and interesting to say within your niche.

For example:

“Why Cardio Acceleration Might be the Most Brutal Workout Technique Around”

Now there’s a title that *sounds* interesting and that really is – if you’re interested in exercise or losing weight. It’s not generic, you’ve not seen it before and it promises something of note inside, while *still* being meaty.

Another good example:

“This Virtual Reality Assault Course Challenges the Limitations of VR”

That’s a genuine article title I saw on social media recently and it instantly grabbed attention while also delivering on the promise.

The Content

Finally, keep in mind that the content also needs to be genuinely good. This needs to be writing that people really want to read and that they want to share with their friends.

How do you do that?

First, you tick all the usual boxes. Your content needs to be well written, it needs to provide value in some way shape or form and it needs to be unique and different.

But on top of this, it’s also *highly* important that your content is aimed at a specific target audience. That is to say, that your content should have a ‘persona’ in mind. This is a particular individual that you think will appreciate the content you’re developing.

This person should have a fictional biography and you should think of precisely what they're like. What their hobbies and interests are etc.

Now write *for* that person.

This allows you to focus on what really interests that particular type of person – rather than making the futile attempt to appeal to everyone. Moreover, it encourages sharing.

Why? Because remember: social media is ultimately a tool for communication. When people share, they do so as a *way* to communicate. They either way to say something about themselves, or they want to say something *to* the person they are sharing with.

If your content is very narrowly aimed at one person, they can share that as a way to express themselves and their friends will share it with them, knowing that they're likely to be interested in it and seeing it as a way to show they're thinking of them!