

# ~ The ~ Social Media Cookbook

Strategic Marketing Recipes  
for Small Business Success



By  
Christina Kettman

# The Social Media Cookbook

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*For my wonderful kids, Ben, Lily and Sam. Thanks for your patience as I scribbled out this book in the waiting room of dance classes, voice lessons, sports events, and all the time crevices of a multitasking-mom-life.*

*And for my husband Seann who inspires me daily.*

# Intro to the Social Media Cookbook

Many small business owners today struggle to figure out how to make social media work. Maybe they jumped onto Facebook or Twitter because someone told them they needed a company page, but now they never update it and have no idea what to do next. Every day they're hearing how social media is the next "must have" marketing strategy, and they're worried about missing out on big sales, and maybe even driving customers away with their lukewarm social media presence. Does any of that sound familiar? Then I have some good news: this book is for you!

I wrote this book specifically for small business owners who want to know how to do social media in a way that counts. It's called the Social Media Cookbook because cooking is something we all know and understand, and effective social media marketing—like good cooking—requires a solid knowledge base and a dash of creative inspiration.

Chapters 1-4 cover fundamental cooking techniques for each of the four major social media platforms: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram. Chapter 5 covers video platforms, including Periscope, Snapchat and YouTube. In Chapters 6-8, I introduce some organizing principles for putting together an effective social media campaign, including marketing to your

ideal customer and developing calendars to stay organized. Finally, in Chapter 8, I provide some sample “recipes”: case studies of successful social media campaigns at different budget levels and for different types of small businesses. The world of social media is moving at a rapid pace, but the principles I cover in these chapters do not.

My goal is simple: to give you enough know-how and creative ideas to consistently cook up a social media strategy that works for your small business. Now... Let's Get Cooking!

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## Get the Complimentary Social Media Marketing Checklist Free

Looking for a way to organize and follow through with all the action items from The Social Media Cookbook? Simply go to <http://www.marketingstaircase.com/social-media-cookbook-checklist> and download the free Social Media Marketing Checklist to help you get started cooking with social media.

## Stay on Top of the Many Social Media Marketing Changes

Time moves fast and so does social media. To help you keep up with this rapidly changing industry, I will post periodic updates to The Social Media Cookbook on my website. Bookmark the page at <http://www.marketingstaircase.com/social-media-cookbook-updates/>.



# Keep an eye out for these special highlights and tips:

## Head Chef

All head chefs have their tricks of the trade. These sections give examples of what has worked for larger brands and businesses.



## Who Knew?!

We have all been a “kitchen beginner” at one time or another. These sections share some surprising lessons I learned as I entered the world of social media marketing.



## Key Ingredients

Sometimes you just need to keep essential ingredients on hand to make your meals a success. These boxes will give you the key ingredients for image sizing, character limits and other social media components.



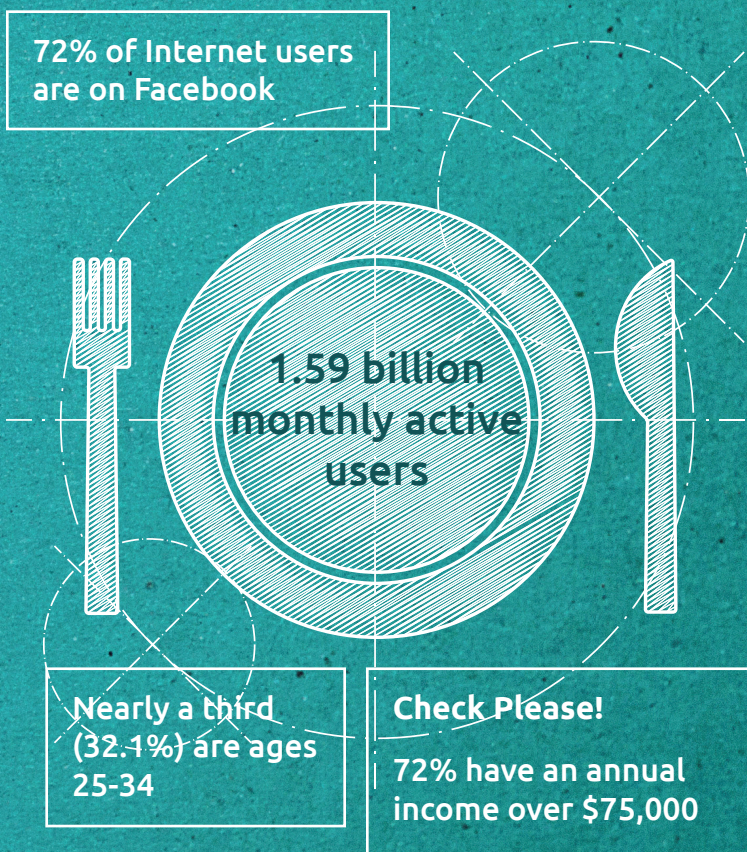
## Kitchen Tools

In your real kitchen, you have helpful tools like blenders, toasters and chopping knives to make your cooking easier. In social media marketing, there are some helpful tools too. You'll find them in sections with this icon.



# Chapter 1

## Facebook: It's What's for Breakfast



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**Sources:** <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/08/19/the-demographics-of-social-media-users> and <https://newsroom.fb.com/company-info/>. Accessed June 30, 2016.



# FACEBOOK MENU

Breakfast served 24 hours a day!

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# Intro to Facebook

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Facebook is the breakfast of social media for small businesses: it's the most important meal of the day. Don't skip it! This section gives you the information you need to set up an effective Facebook home page for your small business and create posts that resonate with your target audience. I'm sure you'll "like" it. (Sorry, I couldn't resist.)

## The flavor of Facebook

People use Facebook to connect, be entertained, share and learn. So when businesses jump into the Facebook space and blare out a sales pitch, it's not surprising no one responds. By sharing interesting, entertaining and valuable content, you can get into conversations, foster relationships and connect with your customers.

## Should Facebook be on your menu?

The audience on Facebook is so wide and varied that most businesses need some kind of presence, especially if they have a consumer market. Potential customers will check to see if your business has a Facebook page before searching for you on any other social platform. If you are looking for a place to get started with social media marketing, this is it.

## Facts and figures

The world of Facebook is immense. As of March 2016, Facebook has 1.09 billion monthly active users, according to its newsroom website. That's about one in every five people on Earth(!) and roughly two times as many users as those on LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram combined. Facebook users are dedicated: Sixty-six percent of monthly active users are active daily, and the average user spends more than 20 minutes per day on Facebook (40 minutes per day for users in the U.S.).

Facebook is used by practically everyone: Seventy-two percent of all internet users are on Facebook. The highest percentage of users by age is in the 18-29 range (82%), followed by 30-49 (79%), 50-64 (64%) and 65+ (48%). Women use Facebook at a higher rate than men (77% and 66%, respectively).

### Who Knew?!

Being from a traditional marketing background, and having obtained my MBA in a pre-social media world, I was trained to blare out messages. But working in social media marketing has taught me that louder is not always better. Knowing how to listen and react is what makes businesses successful on Facebook and other social media platforms.



## Your Facebook Business Page

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Facebook is the go-to platform for most small businesses and is one of the easiest entry points to kick off your social media marketing. In fact, 55% of marketers chose Facebook as the most important platform, according to Social Media Examiner's "Social Media Marketing Industry Report." This section will walk you through the components for creating your business page on Facebook and aligning it with your brand.

### Determine your Facebook goals

You would never start cooking a meal without knowing what kind of dish you're trying to make and what kind of flavors to use—savory spicy or sweet (yum). The same is true with your business Facebook page: before you start throwing ingredients in a pot and set it to boil, you need to take a step back, figure out what you want to accomplish and pinpoint your specific



goals. Anytime you embark on a marketing campaign, whether it be a direct mail postcard or social media page, you should have some goals in mind. Do you want to use Facebook to build your brand? Do you want to educate potential customers about your industry, product offering or niche? Do you want to drive traffic to your website? Write down all of the goals you want to accomplish through Facebook. Every post you share should contribute to at least one of those goals.



## Common Facebook Goals for Small Businesses

**Answer these questions to see if they match your goals:**

- Are you trying to increase customer awareness of your business, products or services?
- Are you looking for ways to drive traffic to your website?
- Do you want Facebook to help you generate new leads?
- Are you looking to position yourself as a thought leader / expert in your industry?
- Do you need to extend your brand reach?
- Are you trying to learn more about your customers?

## Make a good first impression

Customers may discover you on Facebook in a variety of ways: by clicking on an icon on your website, by seeing a “Like us on Facebook” sign in the offline world and then going online to check out your page, or simply by searching for your brand on Google and having it pop up. Chances are your Facebook page will be the first place customers get a taste of your social media brand. Just like in the real world, you need to make a good first impression. From the moment customers scan your page,

they need to “get” your company’s style. Are you serious and thoughtful? Educational? Humorous? Fun? What kinds of topics are you discussing on your page? Are you posting enticing videos and images to encourage customers to learn more? You want new page visitors to come away with a positive first impression of your brand.

## Create a powerful profile and cover photo

Whether you call it an avatar or a profile photo, this 160 x 160 pixel image is the main face of your business. This image “follows” you throughout the Facebook world when you comment or share something. Most companies use a company logo, but you can use a headshot if you are building your personal brand. Do not make frequent changes to your profile photo. It should be familiar, memorable and representative of your business.

Your cover image acts as a backdrop for your page. Every Facebook user who follows your page will be alerted in their news stream when you change out your cover image. This is a simple way to remind your followers about your brand. Like your profile photo, your cover image should represent your company or brand. Design your image with a seasonal promotion or theme in mind and include your company name, tagline and URL. The Sharpie cover photo in the Head Chef box is a good example.

### Key Ingredients: Company Page Images

- Avatar/profile image: 180 x 180 pixels
- Cover image: size 828 x 315 pixels
- Shared\* image in post: 1200 x 630 pixels

*\*This is an image you add to your posts.*



## Season your page with keywords and contact info

Use keywords as, well, a “key” strategy to attract customers to your Facebook page. Keywords are the terms your customers are most likely to type into search engines when looking for your product or service. Sprinkle these keywords throughout the About section of your page, including in both the short description and long description sections.

Include your URL in the About section and on the front page. If a customer does a keyword search and ends up going directly to your Facebook page, you want to make it easy for them to click through to your website.

## Activate your Call-to-Action button

When customers get to your Facebook page, what do you want them to do? This is where your Call-to-Action button comes in handy. Every business page comes with a Call-to-Action button in the cover photo area that you can edit to your liking. Do you want people to review your website next or pick up the phone and give you a call? Your Call-to-Action button directs them.

You can use a Call-to-Action to steer your Facebook audience in the direction that meets the goals of your page. Don't miss the opportunity to get potential customers more involved with your business.



### Call-to-Action Button Choices

Facebook offers the following Call-to-Action button options and allows you to select variations of each:

- Book our Services
- Get in Touch with Us
- Learn More About Us
- Make a Purchase or Donation
- Use Our App or Game

## Head Chef: Sharpie



Sharpie has been known to update its cover photo in coordination with some of its marketing campaigns.



## Posting on Facebook

Once you've set up your business page, you need to have a game plan for posting updates. If you never post, it won't take long for your customers to forget about your page. This section will give you some important tips for posting effectively.

### The first rule of posting: mix it up!

Believe it or not, you already have a slew of valuable content to share. For more on this, check out [Chapter 7, Editorial Meal Planning](#), where I talk about mining your existing content sources for social media material. But don't just unimaginatively post what you have. Be creative and repurpose your content into different formats. The same piece of content can be shared many ways: plain text, a text-based graphic, a chart or other data visual, an image and even a video. These days, posts with images or videos, especially, are much more likely to get attention than plain text. Monitor what your audience responds to. Once you



know what's getting the most engagement, you can focus on coming up with more posts of that type, but don't get too one-dimensional. People love variety.

## **Resist the urge to blatantly sell and self-promote**

Your Facebook page is not the place to try a hard sell. If you do nothing but pitch your product on Facebook, you will quickly be tuned out. People go on Facebook to communicate with friends and family, be entertained, explore topics they are interested in and maybe even learn something new. In fact, Facebook has announced that if the majority of your posts are promotional pitches, they will significantly limit your reach.

There are thousands of businesses on Facebook that have found ways to reach their audience effectively. Share interesting information about topics that resonate with your audience. Show the character and personality of your business. You will be much more successful when you post meaningful content consistently, and post about product offers or company sales occasionally.

## **Send traffic to your website**

Your Facebook page can be a great tool for sending traffic to your company website. SEO (search engine optimization) techniques help search engines locate and rank your website so your business can be found higher up in the search results. Essentially, every time you link from your Facebook page to your website, you are giving a boost to your SEO. Posts about customer stories, testimonials, blog updates, and company news such as a new product launch are all easy ways to send Facebook users to your website.

## **Educate your audience**

More and more, people log on to Facebook to learn something. Freely sharing information about your product, business or industry establishes you as a knowledgeable source who

customers can turn to when they need help or want to learn more. Share updates of your business blog if you have one. If your followers like what you post, they are more likely to share your tips with other potential customers.

## **Post content consistently**

How often should your business post on Facebook? If you asked 10 different social media experts that question, you might get 10 different answers. Some would say once a day, some several times a day and some several times a week. And they all could be right. The truth is, every case is different. Some businesses with a highly engaged audience can post several times a day and every post will get some degree of engagement. Others are better off limiting their activity to a few posts per week. To figure out what's right for your Facebook page, you need to monitor your audience's engagement trends and plan accordingly.

Consistent posting works best, so once you decide on a schedule that works for you, stick with it. Your social media schedule may depend on other marketing action items. For example, if you routinely publish a new blog every Monday, you can plan to share excerpts from it later during the week. The most successful businesses on social media stick to a posting schedule, and their followers know to look for updates at regular times.

## **Share information and advice you'd give to your favorite customer**

Strive to give your Facebook audience something that will improve their life or business in some way. Before posting something, stop and ask yourself if this is what your followers want to get from you. Did your followers “like” your page because they wanted to hear you remind them on a daily basis how wonderful you are? Probably not. Remember to be human. When you chat with your best customers, you don't tell them you are amazing—you show them by being amazing. Make your customers lives' easier by posting helpful advice and insights.



## Head Chef: GEICO Insurance

GEICO uses its entertaining and humorous Gecko to make the topic of insurance fun. This post attracts attention with a captivating image and throws in a little “holiday” humor.



## Focus on engagement

Engagement on social media refers to how people respond to your posts. Usually this is by liking, commenting or sharing the post. Being successful on Facebook means generating a lot of engagement with your followers. Are people eating up your content, or leaving your Facebook page hungry? If your followers enjoy your content, you likely have a higher level of engagement. Manage your page in a way that fulfills your audience needs, and you will be rewarded by an increasing number of followers who appreciate your content.

Feeling a bit overwhelmed yet? That's OK. Take a deep breath, drink some coffee (the go-to stress response of us Seattleites) and take the time to set up your Facebook page. In the next section, I've included some techniques for monitoring your account, plus an advanced technique.

## Explore Facebook Live

Facebook Live allows you to broadcast live-streaming video from your mobile device. You can share the video on your business page, event page, personal profile or a group you are in. Facebook Live offers the opportunity to show your followers and customers your authentic brand and personality. You or your employees can plan regular broadcasts to share new sales, product announcements, Q&As, how-to videos for your niche, and more. We'll explore Facebook Live more in [Chapter 5](#),

### Who Knew?!

Any social media manager will tell you engagement is important. But on Facebook it's especially valuable: every time someone comments on your post, it gets a boost from Facebook's algorithm, and Facebook will show it to more people. The recipe is more comments = longer lifetime of your post = more people see it.



## Monitor Facebook to Improve Your Recipes

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Are your customers sending compliments to the chef, or is their food getting sent back to the kitchen? “Insights” is Facebook’s built-in analytics tool to help you understand how your page



is doing. By using Facebook Insights, you can learn about your audience's likes and dislikes, problems, worries and values, so you can create content that resonates with them. Here are some tips for understanding your audience on Facebook.

## Track your topline metrics monthly

When you first go into the Insights area, you will see some basic metrics, including how many people you have reached, post engagement, and likes within the last seven days. In addition to these metrics, take a look at the following:

- How many followers do you have?
- How many followers did you gain or lose during the month?
- How many times did you post during the month?

Taking inventory of these simple metrics helps you determine whether your overall activity is increasing, decreasing or staying consistent.

## Evaluate individual posts. What's working?









































Insights gives you a quick visual of your recent posts and how well they performed. For a more complete list, go to the Posts link in Insights, as shown below. Look at the reach, clicks and engagement each post received.

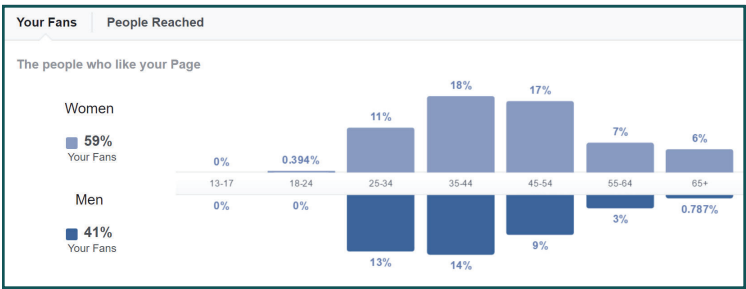
Take some time to play detective and see what makes your audience take action. Look at what they share. When people share your post, it shows they value the content and believe it will benefit their followers.

## Who is actively engaging with your content?

Facebook Insights allows you to see the demographics of your fans, as well as the demographics of your engaged fans under the People tab. It's more useful to see who is engaging with your content. Those are the folks who are most interested in what you have to say. They want to learn about your business and are more

likely to buy from you. Know who they are. The bar graph below shows you the breakdown in age and gender of fans.

Published	Post	Type	Targeting	Reach	Engagement	Promote
10/26/2016 11:20 am	 Read what clients are saying about MCW Fitness! And learn about			21 	2 0 	<a href="#">Boost Post</a>
10/24/2016 5:15 pm	 No regrets.			126 	0 0 	<a href="#">Boost Post</a>
10/22/2016 6:15 pm	 Get back into the swing of things! Your body will thank you. <a href="#">http://o</a>			17 	1 0 	<a href="#">Boost Post</a>
10/20/2016 3:15 pm	 Contact MCW Fitness today. We'd love to hear from you. <a href="#">http://o</a>			35 	0 1 	<a href="#">Boost Post</a>
10/18/2016 7:15 pm	 No excuses.			114 	0 0 	<a href="#">Boost Post</a>
10/16/2016 1:15 pm	 Watch Jason break down the kettlebell swing step-by-step. <a href="#">http://o</a>			31 	0 2 	<a href="#">Boost Post</a>
10/14/2016 2:15 pm	 Find out how Jason McWalter can help you reach your goals throu			10 	0 0 	<a href="#">Boost Post</a>
10/12/2016 7:15 am	 Love yourself.			128 	1 0 	<a href="#">Boost Post</a>



## Note what's working on a monthly basis and plan for the next month

You're busy, I hear you. But take just 15 minutes to evaluate what is working on your Facebook page at the end of every month. Identify "lessons learned" to carry over to the next month. It's time well spent. Did everyone love your "free kitten giveaway" post, but no one responded to the post about ridding your house of fleas? (This assumes you are running a pet care business, of course). Plan to create more posts that resonate with your audience the following month.



## What You Can Learn from Your Facebook Posts

**Answer these questions when reviewing your content:**

- Which content topics are getting the most reach? What about the best engagement?
- There are four types of post content for Facebook: text, links, photo and video. Which post type is getting the most reach? The most engagement?
- What is the tone of your most popular posts? Are they sharing a feeling? Are they entertaining? Informative?
- When are your posts most popular? What time of day? What days of the week?

## My Favorite Dish: Contests and Sweepstakes

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Running contests and sweepstakes is a fun way to boost your Facebook engagement, brand awareness and following, while also providing some entertainment. Remember, people are on Facebook for community and connection, not to be blatantly sold to. If done right, your contest or sweepstakes can provide something fun.

### Determine your campaign goals

Sounds simple, but not everyone sets specific goals before embarking on all the work of a contest or sweepstakes. Before planning anything else, decide what you want to achieve with your campaign. Are you trying to foster more engagement with your audience, gain brand awareness or collect email subscribers for your newsletter before a big product launch? Whatever it is, craft your campaign to meet those goals.

## Understand the difference between contests and sweepstakes

Typically, a contest requires engagement with some degree of skill or effort from the audience. The winning entry is usually the “best” of something: cutest dog photo, best barbecue recipe, most creative haiku... You get the point. A sweepstakes allows you to add your name to a lottery with a chance of winning. For example, you can ask your audience to comment on your post for the chance to win a shopping spree. Start by deciding which one to use. Since contests require more effort to enter, you are likely to get fewer participants, but the ones you get will be more invested. If you are trying to cast a wide net of participants, an easy-to-enter sweepstakes might be more appropriate.

## Use a third party contest app

Facebook has a lot of rules you need to abide by to run contests and sweepstakes, and they change from time to time. The last thing you want is to get yourself in trouble with Facebook. (Or the law! One of the things Facebook’s rules guard against is accidentally running a lottery.) Third-party apps keep up with the rule changes so you don’t have to, and the better ones will provide graphics, landing page templates and contest results and metrics. There are many third-party apps on the market for running contests. The Kitchen Tools box names a few.

## Make the prize equal to the ask

You want to get a healthy response if you’re going through the trouble of setting up a contest or sweepstakes. To maximize your chances, make the reward on par with what you are asking your participants to do. Asking someone to comment on a post is easy, but asking them to take a selfie with your product or write a review requires more work and dedication on their part. Offer something worth their time and effort. A new phone, a \$500 shopping spree, or a vacation getaway are all items that get most people’s attention. If possible, make the reward something relevant to your business or product.



## Kitchen Tools: Third Party Apps for Contests

**Shortstack**, [shortstack.com](http://shortstack.com)

Allows you to run not only Facebook and Instagram contests, but also customized promotions on other platforms.

**Woobox**, [woobox.com](http://woobox.com)

Another low-cost sweepstakes application that is easy to set up yourself.

**Heyo**, [heyo.com](http://heyo.com)

Easy-to-use app for creating contests, promotions and deals for Facebook.

## The bigger the prize and the ask, the more lead time you need

Give your promotion enough time to run. The bigger the promotion, the more run time it will need. Give people enough time to react to your offer. They may need to see your contest several times before they decide to participate. About three weeks to a month is a good amount of time for a larger-sized campaign. An example of a larger campaign is a contest asking people to submit a poem about how much they like your product for the chance to win a luxury vacation.

## Consider runner-up prizes to make more people happy

Offering runner-up prizes can bring in more response, because participants know they have a better chance of winning. You can do this without increasing your overall outlay. For example, instead of offering one big shopping spree of \$500, you might offer a first prize shopping spree of \$400 and four \$25 gift certificates as runner-up prizes.



## **Tell the story of the happy winner**

When you give away the top prize to your contest winner, take note of the details so you can share the story through social media or in a blog post. Ask the winners for a quote, get a photo of them receiving the prize or capture some aspect of the promotion on video. Not only is this a great story to share, but when you tag the winners in your post, their Facebook friends are likely to congratulate them and help spread the news of their success.

## **Promote your campaign with Facebook advertising**

Run some ads about your giveaway and direct them to your target market. If you are offering a prize relevant to your business and your target market is well chosen, you should see some immediate interest in your campaign. Create a few fun images with less than 20% text to promote your campaign. Promote each of the image posts to your audience to increase awareness and participation.