eLearningU

DIGITAL MARKETING TOOLKIT

Prepared for:

Yukon

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A message from Tourism Yukon

These days, travellers coming to the Yukon are engaging with the digital world throughout their entire travel experience - whether seeking inspiration, making bookings, accessing information while in the territory, or sharing their experiences online during and after their trip. As participants in the Go Digital Program, you are already becoming experts in using this world to your advantage - but the digital space isn't always easy to navigate and understand.

That's why we've partnered with *eLearningU* to bring Go Digital Program participants a customized Digital Marketing Toolkit. In these pages you will find step-by-step tutorials on everything from posting on Facebook to using Google Analytics to crafting a modern website.

We've customized the Toolkit to fit Yukon tourism operators' interests and needs, and we hope this comprehensive resource will inspire and assist you as you continue to engage with the digital world even after you have completed Go Digital Yukon.

Happy Learning!

How to use this toolkit

An introduction

Each of the sections in this document have been built to help you to make the most of a specific category of digital marketing, so the most effective way to use it will be to use it as a reference guide for the topic or tactic that you're working on.

While every business will be able to take advantage of some, or many sections within this toolkit, every business is different, so it's unlikely that anyone will use every tactic that we've included. Because of that, we recommend that you review the sections as a series of best practice suggestions that you can select from to match your specific business need.

You'll also notice that this document includes both a Table of Contents at the beginning, and a Glossary at the end. Each of the items in both sections are linked to their relevant pages to make it easy for you to jump directly to a subject that you're looking for information on.

And finally - in many sections you'll notice links to supporting resources. You can use those to go deeper and learn more advanced information about the corresponding topic.

💡 **Toolkit Quick Tips**

- **Jump to the section that's most relevant to you**

- **Use the page links in the Table of Contents and Glossary**

- **Underlined black text takes you to the relevant section of the Glossary where that term will be defined**

- **Underlined grey text takes you to web links outside of this document with more advanced information**

Section 1

DIGITAL STRATEGY

What is Strategy?

There is no shortage of potential activities, tactics and various ways that we can approach digital marketing. In fact, it's unlikely that any company, no matter what the size, has ever been able to take advantage of all of the opportunities that are out there.

Strategy is about understanding what it is that you're working to achieve, what makes your brand unique and how you provide value to your unique set of guests.

In this toolkit you'll learn about a wide range of ways of digital marketing tools, but that's all that they are: Tools. And like any job to be done, the most important part happens in the beginning when you plan what you're working towards, and select the set of those tools that are going to help you to get there.

In this section we have provided for you a framework for goal setting that will help you to simplify and identify exactly what it is that digital marketing can and will accomplish for you and your business, then how you'll get there.

Step 1: Goals

The key to setting an effective goal is about connecting the digital world to your business world. The best goals are simple, they identify a meaningful outcome for the business, and they are something that your digital marketing strategy can reasonably impact.

Your goal may be directly connected to revenue, like: "Drive 100 new guest bookings this year". Or it may be tied to your broader mission, like: "Become the #1 rated provider of outdoor adventure in our region."

What's important is that your goal is **specific** enough that you can know exactly when you've achieved it, and it is **meaningful** enough that it will drive the various parts of your work to achieve that goal.

Step 2: Objectives

These are the numbers on your metaphorical scoreboard that you will keep track of on a regular basis to see if you're progressing towards your goal. It's a basket of 3-5 metrics that, when taken together, will let you know how you're doing.

Each objective should be tied to an important outcome that you need to create. For example, if you need to build awareness, then video views are a good number to track. If you're trying to convert an audience who already knows about you, then you might measure contact form submissions, or if it's important that you generate more referrals, then you might measure online reviews and user generated content.

Set your 3-5 objectives, and then track them each week, then use then to make adjustments along the way.

Step 3: Strategy

Strategy is one big, hard decision that makes all of your future decisions easier. It's about identifying how your brand is positioned against its competition, and how it will show up for its guests. The fact is that potential guests will make judgements about our brands on their own, and they will place us into one category or another, so our opportunity is to take control of those associations and execute a strategy that puts us in the best possible position.

Strategy doesn't need to be difficult, either - you're probably already doing it. The way that you serve your guests, your pricing, the experience that people have when they interact with your staff, all of these are strategic decisions that you may have made without knowing it. Now, your task is to apply those same decisions to your digital strategy.

💡 **Are you:**

- **Luxury or affordable?**
- **Adventurous or cozy?**
- **Business or family?**
- **Expert or beginner?**
- **Convenient or remote?**

There are no right or wrong answers in strategy, only the answers that are best for you. If you're having trouble pinning down what your strategy is, then try this exercise:

💪 **Exercise**

Your most loyal guest is out for coffee with a friend who has never heard of your brand. The guest turns to their friend, and between sips of their drink says "you should really check out this tourism brand that I love - what makes them special is_____"

Your job is to fill in that blank, because once you do, then you're going to create a whole lot more of those conversations among your guests.

Step 4: Tactics

Once you've determined where you're going, then the only thing that's left is figuring out which tools you're going to use to get there. Most of what we think of when it comes to digital marketing is a tactic: Social media, email marketing, advertising, even our websites are tactics.

Throughout the rest of this toolkit you'll learn about the various digital marketing tactics that exist and how they can be utilized. The tactics section of your plan is where you'll select the right tactic for your organization and commit to executing it over time.

Great tourism marketing businesses are built in exactly this way:

- They have a clear goal that every part of their marketing plan is working towards
- They have identified a basket of metrics to track along the way
- They are crystal clear about their strategy and why people choose them
- They commit to a set of tactics that they are going to execute consistently

GOST Table

A GOST table is a simple, but powerful way to organize your digital marketing strategy. This is where you'll collect the work that you've done in the previous four steps. Once you have, your completed GOST can be used to present to bosses, to share with your team, or to keep your own work focused on your goals.

It's recommended that you return back to your GOST on a regular basis. Many organizations will have monthly and quarterly reviews where they check in to see how they're progressing towards their Goal, which of their Objectives are seeing the most success, and how effective their Strategy has been.

Those reviews allow marketers to look critically at their Tactics, giving them an opportunity to make adjustments/reallocations as necessary. When we see our various Tactics as inputs to a greater goal, it becomes much easier to see where our resources are best invested.

Goal	What will we achieve for the business?		
Objectives	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
Strategy	Why will visitors choose us?		
Tactics	Tactic 1	Tactic 2	Tactic 3
	Tactic 4	Tactic 5	Tactic 6

Example

Goal	**By 2022 we will become the highest rated designation for outdoor adventure in the Yukon**		
Objectives	Engage 100,000 people her month	Build a community of 100 storytellers	Drive 10 bookings per month
Strategy	We will engage and attract a community that loves adventure, loves the outdoors, and are looking for a place to deepen their relationship with nature		
Tactics	Social media content	Email marketing program	Outdoor adventure SEO
	Ambassador program	Community Management	Social media advertising

Section 2

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social channels

When we refer to a "<u>channel</u>," we're essentially speaking of any social media <u>platform</u> where people share and consume content. In this section, we will cover the basics of each of the four biggest channels: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.

Facebook Business Page

How it Works

A Facebook Business Page is very different than a personal profile. Your Personal Profile is meant to keep up with friends and family on a daily basis. This is the place to share photos and updates with people who are close to you. You can also use your personal account to directly message ("<u>DM</u>") friends or comment on the activity they share on their personal page.

On the other hand, your Facebook Business Page is all about your brand and the services you offer in your field. You should invite past and potential community members to like your Business Page and use it to collect reviews, share essential details about your organization, and even post about things that are relevant to your industry, but not necessarily directly related to your business.
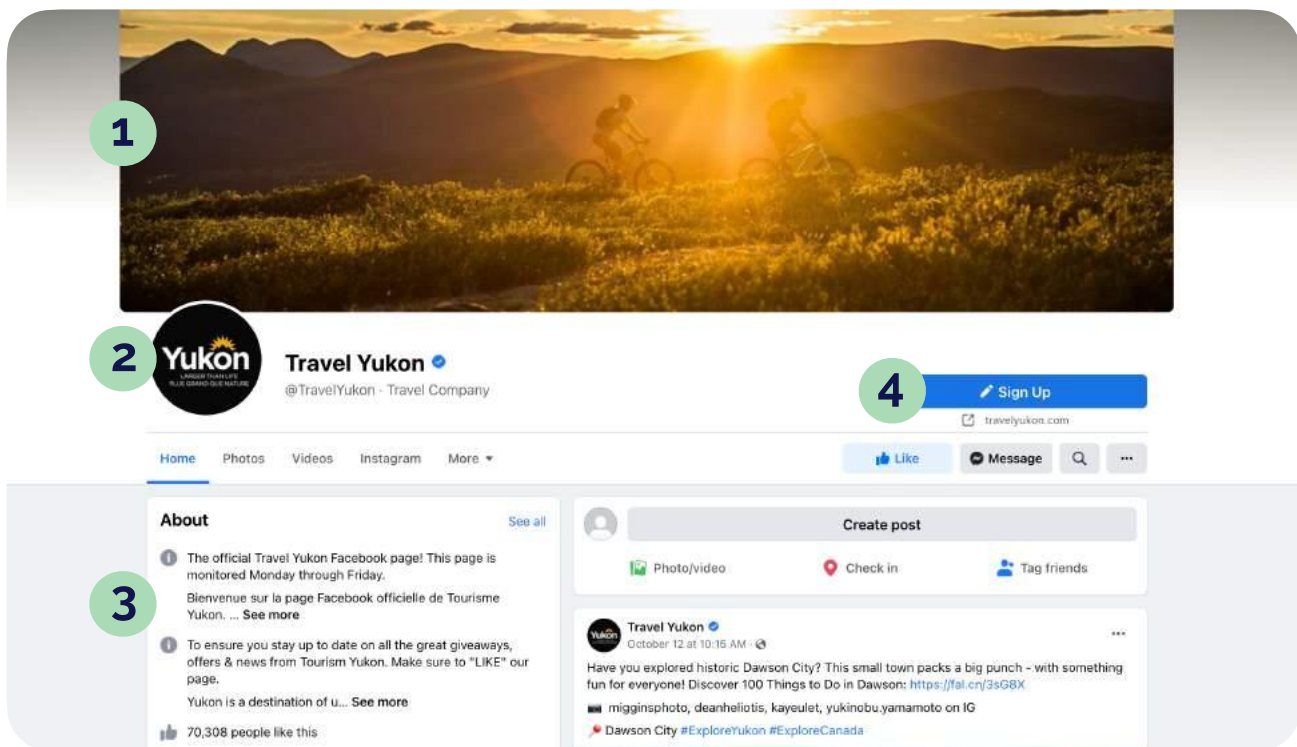
As a business page, you get a few added features, and some that are only slightly different than a personal profile.

Setup

Start here:
- **How to create a Facebook Business Page**
- **How to setup a Facebook Business Page**

Business Pages have a few basic elements that are essential to their success:

1. **A Cover Image —** The image or video at the top of the page that introduces people to your page.

2. **A Profile Picture —** Usually a logo, this will appear beside every one of your posts as well as at the top left of your page.

3. **The About Section —** Where people can find your address, phone number, and lots more information.

4. **The Button —** At the top right there is a blue button that allows people to take an action, usually to contact you. You have the opportunity to customize that button with a few options: Visit your website, phone you, send you an email, start a Messenger conversation or watch a video.

It's important that each of these four elements is well thought out and complete in order to take advantage of any success that you'll have on Facebook.

Posting

Creating a post for a Page is very similar to posting for a Profile, but you'll find that you have a few more options now. Each of the icons below is a post format that's available to you.

How Replies Work

You can reply to posts by clicking the "Comment" button and the original poster will receive a notification that their post received a comment. Anyone can comment on a post unless the original poster has set their post to private.
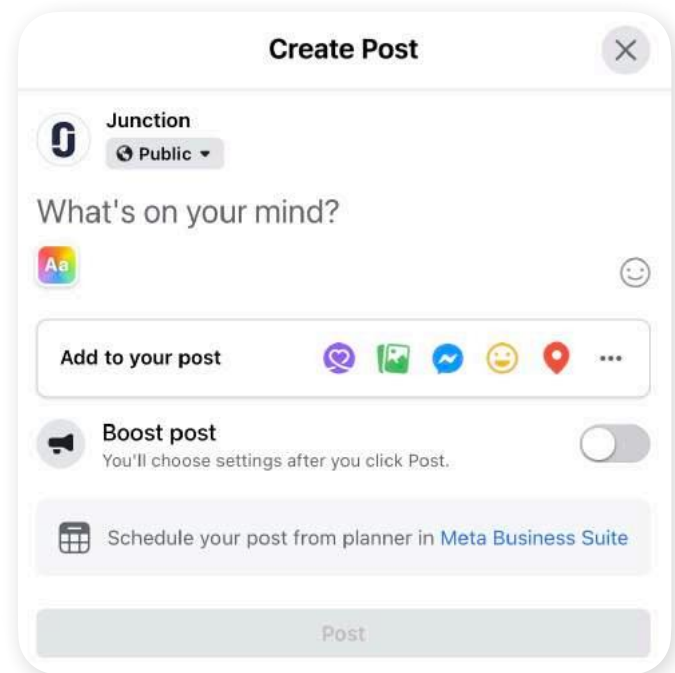
Threaded Replies

You can also reply to a comment and that reply will be <u>threaded</u> within the original comment, making it easier to keep track of the conversation – Just hit the "reply" button directly beneath the comment.

When replying to a comment, people can <u>tag</u> their friends by using their friend's names, though brands can only tag people who have already commented on the post or other brand Pages.

How Facebook Commenting Works

Post comments are an active opportunity for interaction on your Page. It's where the majority of conversation happens, so in order to make sure that you're replying in the best way possible, it's important to take a look at the other comments around the one that you're about to reply to.

Take note: Have other people asked the same question? Has someone in the community already answered it? How can you modify your response to make it unique to the follower's comment and add value to the overall conversation?

Direct Messages (Inbox)

A business page can receive and reply to direct messages from people, but cannot initiate direct messages themselves.

When a business page receives a direct message, you may receive an email notification that will take you directly to the message. The message can also be accessed via the Messages tab on the business page.

Business pages can create automated replies in order to reduce the time each reply takes. To create new automated replies, just click the "Messaging Settings" button. You can also include personalization that will automatically insert details about the user into the message such as their name, or pre-selected details about your brand, such as a phone number or address.

Guide to Viewing Messages

Likes

Business pages can "Like" guest posts, comments, and replies to comments on their own Page, but cannot like people's posts on their own timelines. Business pages can Like other Page's posts via the "Pages Feed" option on the right-hand sidebar of the business page.

This is one distinction between Facebook as a profile vs Facebook as a business page — Pages cannot view personal Profiles, add them as Friends, or in any way initiate an interaction with them. You can, however, Like other Pages, Like their posts, and send them direct messages.

It's important to remember that everyone on Facebook has access to both the posts on your Page, your replies, and they can also join in on the conversations if they choose. Business Pages can delete or hide guest posts that use offensive language or contain inappropriate content and can turn off notifications for guest posts that may have a high volume of comments.

Community Management

It's important to create a regular practice to scan the community for mentions and underline engagement needs. 15-20 minutes per day should allow you enough time to make sure that people are being replied to, and that you're clear about the conversations that are taking place.

Also, create a regular practice where you proactively seek out content and engage with it, thereby developing a sense of community support, and attracting additional attention to your brand.

The only community management required on Facebook is in the comments on your own page, as well as the content that you've been tagged in.

Reply daily to questions – be helpful, be generous, and if someone has a complaint, try to get to the root of the complaint and improve their day. If it's not possible to resolve a complaint within 2 comments, then ask for an email follow up.

> **Lorne Alderson**
> Does anyone know if there will be a Dempster to Dawson run in 2023?
>
> Like   Reply   1w
>
> > 🎤 Author
> > **Travel Yukon** ✔
> > **Lorne Alderson** unfortunately we are not too sure! Maybe our friends at **Visit Dawson City** might know?
> >
> > Like   Reply   6d

💡 Facebook Quick Tips

- When your objective is to drive website traffic, use carousel (multi-image) posts whenever possible.

- Video is by far the most valuable content – try using short video in place of images to gain increased exposure and <u>engagement.</u>

- When publishing a video, use the Facebook captions feature to ensure that people can experience your video without sound.

- Always publish videos directly to Facebook. They will get significantly more exposure and engagement than if you post a link out to YouTube, Vimeo, or another <u>channel.</u>

- When adding a link to your post: Paste the link in, wait for the preview image to load, and then delete the link text to create a cleaner, more professional looking post.

- Use Events to drive signups for just about any online or offline event. When people RSVP, they receive notifications and reminders leading up to that event.

  - <u>How to set up a Facebook Event</u>

Instagram

How it Works

Instagram can be looked at like a stripped-down version of Facebook. It's a simple Feed that contains only images or videos (no links or text-only posts) and allows users to like, comment, and share each other's posts.

Each account profile shows a grid of posts in an order determined by an algorithm that Instagram claims will surface the most relevant posts for a given user, based on their interactions with various posts and accounts.

The features are very similar to Facebook (Direct Messages, Threaded Replies) and the most notable difference is that business accounts and personal accounts function very much the same as each other.

Each account has the option to be Private or Public, so when an account is public, anyone can follow it and it can follow any other public account. Private accounts must approve follow requests. For most businesses, being public is the appropriate choice.

Setup

Start here:

- **How to set up a Business Account**

Optimize your profile

- Write a bio that lets people know who you are and why they should follow you (what **value** do you consistently provide in your Instagram posts?)
  - Note: Bio character limit = 150
  - Keep it short & sweet, and show some personality
  - Use line breaks. Line breaks can make it easier to read bios that include multiple types of info

- ◦ Use emojis, if that's your thing. The right emoji can replace words to save space, show off some personality, and call attention to important info. Use them sparingly or it will have the opposite effect of making it more difficult to read quickly

- ◦ Add a Call To Action. Let people know why they should click your website link

- Include a link to your website

- Choose a profile image that **clearly** represents your brand.

  - ◦ Typically that is your logo with a simple background. Ensure it can easily be seen at a small size.

- Add contact information

  - ◦ Include your email address, phone number, and address

1. **Account <u>handle</u>**
2. **Profile Image**
3. **Bio**
4. **Website Link**
5. **Location**
6. **Calls-to-Action**
7. **Story Highlights** (learn more on the next page)
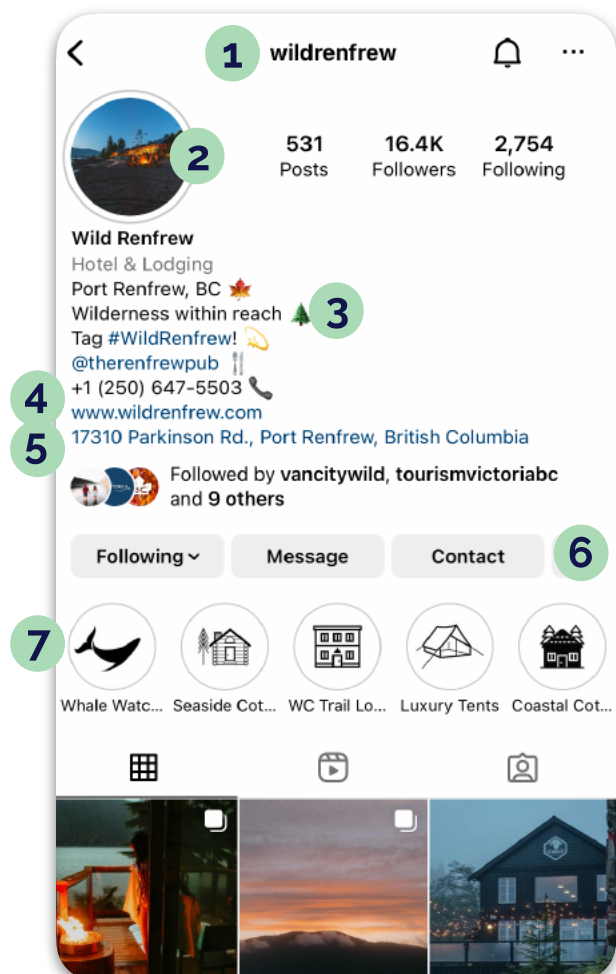
Components of a Post

Instagram posts are images or videos accompanied by text (aka caption). The caption can be up to 2200 characters, though it is generally best to use only as many as needed to succinctly tell the story of your post.

It allows for a **variety of image sizes** to be shared, but generally the bigger the better (use the highest quality images you have available).

Post Types

Instagram offers the ability to post photos, videos, and Stories. Use a variety of these formats to test what your audience engages with the most.

- **Single image**: The classic and most common format is one image + caption
- **Image Carousels:** Publish up to 10 photos/videos in a single post + a single caption
- **Stories**: Images and videos that automatically disappear from your profile after 24 hours (unless you delete them sooner)
- **Story Highlights**: You can choose to feature select Story posts on your profile, even after they expire
  - Add a cover image and title for each Highlight (keep them both short and clear)
    - Typically each Highlight will focus on a single subject or theme – this allows people to catch up on past events, quickly browse through services or offerings, etc.
- **Reels**: Videos on Instagram are automatically converted to the <u>Reels</u> format
  - Typically used for vertical/portrait orientation videos, though landscape orientation will also be accepted
- **Guides**: These can be used to share itineraries, products, news, and more

Post Engagement

There are a variety of ways in which people can engage with your content on Instagram, including comments, likes, tagging friends in comments, re-sharing, and DM'ing (Direct Message) other users.

In this example, several followers have commented on the posts, and the account has replied back by using the @ mention features.
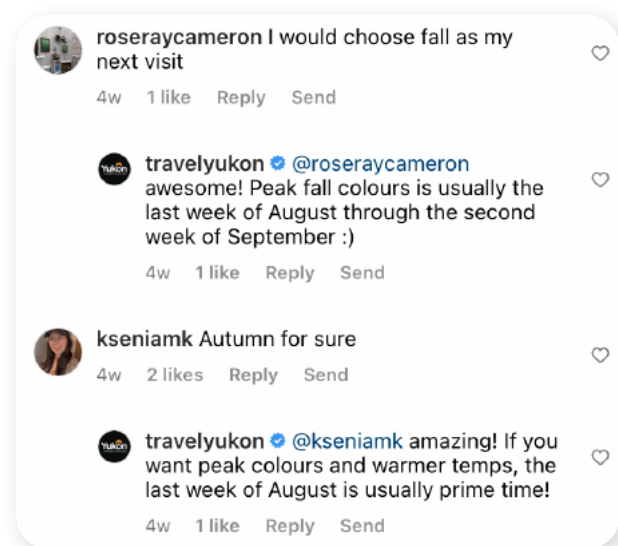
To effectively manage your Instagram account, start with the following:

- Stay on top of this engagement and always respond when relevant
- To respond to a comment or acknowledge someone who has re-shared your content, tag their handle ("@bcgirl2020 Thanks for sharing!")
- DM's will appear in the top right corner of the app, you can reply directly to these by clicking on the notification
- Follow similar best practices to Twitter/FB when crafting your response — educate, add humour when appropriate, anticipate needs before they arise

Geotags

As you publish each post you'll notice that there's an opportunity to add a location. That feature allows users to find all of the posts that have been tagged with a venue, business, or attraction. Many people use geotags as a way to plan ahead and shop for options by seeing what other people have experienced at a place.

You can use general geotags like *Dawson, YT* or more specific locations such as local businesses or even parks and landmarks.
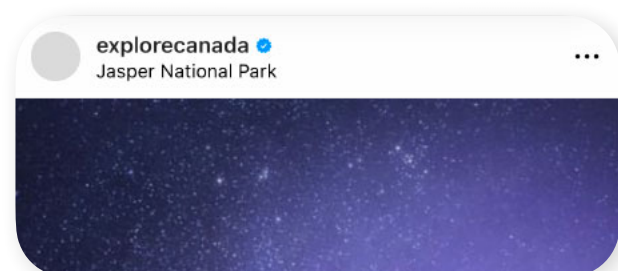
Image Tagging

Much like the @ mention in comments, Instagram gives us the opportunity to tag accounts right in our photos. When you've created a new post and added a photo, there will be an option to Tag People. Tap anywhere in the photo you'd like to tag an account, type in that account name, and when you hit publish the account(s) will receive a notification that you've tagged them.

Additionally, any user who taps on your post will be able to click on the tags to be taken to the account(s) that you've tagged.

For tips on how to create great social media content, see page 34.

Direct Messages (DMs)

Instagram Direct lets you exchange threaded messages with one or more people, and share posts you see in Feed and Stories as a message. Users will often reach out with questions in Direct Messages in lieu of phone calls and emails. Ensure that you regularly check your inbox and address messages as quickly as possible.

Community Management

The daily practice should consist of checking messages and comments for questions and complaints. Resolve them **generously** and **quickly.**

Each week (or more, if possible), search hashtags and locations related to your brand and engage with posts and comments if it will add value to a conversation.

Look for opportunities to comment on posts, rather than simply liking them. Encourage people's adventures, make recommendations, and answer questions if they exist.

💡 Instagram Quick Tips

- Optimize your profile

- Use account tags and <u>geotags</u>

- Create Stories frequently (see page X for more on Stories)

- Use Story Highlights for the most engaging and relevant information

- Don't include <u>URLs</u> in the caption (send people to your link in bio)

- Focus on one primary message (and <u>CTA</u>) per post

- Monitor your Direct Messages

- Check Professional Dashboard Insights to see what is working and adjust as needed

- Be consistent (the algorithm tends to reward accounts that post regularly)

Twitter

How it Works

Twitter is by nature, a **fast-paced**, **educational**, and **fun** digital community. It gives the opportunity to create content in-the-moment, but more importantly, interact with guests in the digital world the same way that you would in person.

On Twitter, you are the public face of your brand, and should offer all of the same resources, knowledge, and connection with your community.

Beyond simple communication, the following is possible on Twitter:

- Tell the story of what's happening whenever there are events, launches, and announcements happening around you.
- Provide customer service by seeking out people talking about your organization and/or your area and replying to them in a helpful way.
- Jump into real-time conversations that are happening around industry news, events, trends, or breaking news.

Components of a Tweet

A tweet can be a maximum of 280 characters – including spaces, line breaks, hashtags, and the link (if you're using one.)

A tweet can be made up of a variety of things including an answer, question, quote, video, image, or link. Always work to respond how you would to a friend. Your goal is to **inform, humanize,** and **educate.**

How Replies Work

Replying to a Tweet is very straightforward. Just hit the reply button and a new threaded reply field will open and the person who you are replying to's Twitter handle will be included in the reply automatically.

You can attach media, a location, or a poll to a reply, as you can with any other tweet. The beauty of the reply is that it appears only in the timelines of the people who follow both accounts. This is why brands are able to engage with nearly everyone who tweets at them without flooding the timelines of the people who follow them.

The limited exposure can provide a false sense of privacy, however, and it's important to remember that although not everyone will see your reply in their timelines, they are still visible to anyone who goes to your account.

Conversation Threading

Twitter will automatically <u>thread</u> conversations that are made up of multiple replies between users.

Less Can Be More

- Twitter is a playground for the creative and witty. Words are able to paint a powerful canvas and you are the artist.

- Your responses can be short and sweet, witty, or chock-full of education – ideally a combination of the three.

- All the characters count, so if you can cut a word without losing the message, do it. Which means, if you can remove an extra: 'the,' 'a,' 'and' or any extra words, don't be afraid to cut them. Removing these filler words can help tighten your prose and give what you're writing an extra punch.

Images

When Tweeting or replying, you can include up to 4 images along with the full 280 characters of text. You'll see a thumbnail of your image(s), and you can <u>tag</u> people using their Twitter <u>handle</u> by clicking the "Who's in this photo?" link.
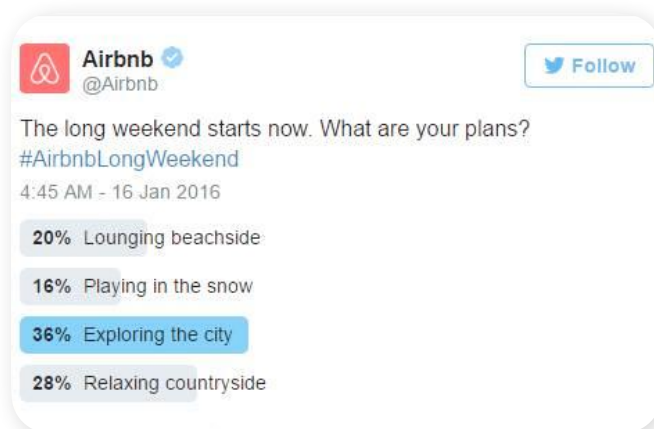
Most images automatically expand in timelines, so when people are seeing them, they'll see the Tweet <u>copy</u> and the image paired alongside each other.

Polls

Tweets and replies can also include polls, where you can ask a question and provide pre-selected responses.

They present an interesting opportunity to add some fun or feedback to the content that's going out.

Video

Tweets and replies can also include video, and Twitter will allow you to trim your video within the web interface.

There is a significant opportunity for brands to be using video for quick, personalized replies. Sometimes, video can be used to convey a message that 280 characters never could.

Retweet/ Quote Tweet

When <u>Retweeting</u> (re-posting another user's Tweet from your own timeline), you have the option to include your own comments about the original Tweet (<u>Quote Tweet</u>). It is still possible to simply Retweet something without adding any commentary. When doing this, you'll still have 280 characters, should you choose to use it.

In most cases, it will make sense to add some commentary: What's important about this? What is your connection with the writer? Is there something that you can add to it?

Direct Messages

Direct Messages can be used to take private conversations out of the mainstream timeline. They are similar to text message conversations in that they are conversations that are between a small number of accounts and are <u>threaded</u>.

It's important to remember that any <u>DM</u> conversation can, at any time, get screencapped and shared, or otherwise made public. Always approach a DM as something that could be seen by the Twitter world.

Where Direct Messages are most useful is to follow up on guest-specific information like their contact info or to gather feedback details.

Community Management

The Twitter practice mirrors Instagram exactly, although the time required should be less.

💡 Twitter Quick Tips

- All tweets should feel in-the-moment, as if the subject is happening the moment that the tweet is being published.

- Participate in <u>hashtag</u> conversations about important events

- Include hashtags that are being used that day – events, trends, and news items are ideal.

- @mention partner organizations, local personalities, and interested accounts to generate additional <u>engagement.</u>

- Use <u>threading</u> to your advantage. If you have an idea that deserves more than 280 characters or just one tweet, hit the + sign on the bottom of your draft to add additional Tweets. The result will be that all tweets are published simultaneously, and followers can read the whole thread together.

YouTube

How it Works

YouTube is one of the most prolific content hubs in the world, with more than 400 hours of video uploaded every minute, and it's now the world's second-largest search engine.

Being owned by the world's largest search engine (Google) gives it another boost, as they refer users back and forth.

By committing to YouTube, you can gain access to a community that is already searching for, consuming, and creating the type of content that you're well positioned to be sharing. Inviting viewers into high-energy/ long-form narrative/ day-in-the-life/ etc. stories creates a new proof point for people researching travel options.

How it's used

- 68% of YouTube users watched a video to help them make a purchase decision
- 80% of YouTube users who watched a video to help them make a purchase decision said they watched the video at the beginning of the shopping process

Setup/Optimization

Every video should take full advantage of YouTube's customization options, which will increase discoverability and engagement.

1. **Channel**
2. **Title**
3. **Description**

Channel

Covering the basics will ensure that viewers are able to better discover and understand what the channel is about.

- Verify your account – this allows for additional customization.
- Write a strong "About" description that speaks to what the channel aims to share. Your passion for the activities, people, region, and mountain should shine through.
    - Include relevant keywords
- Set channel category
- Set channel Trailer video to introduce new viewers to your brand

Titles

Video titles may be up to 100 characters in length, though anything longer than 70 characters will be truncated in previews. Focus on making the first 70 stand out.

- Keep search terms/phrases in mind when writing titles
- Insert focus <u>keywords</u> in titles

Descriptions

Video descriptions are an opportunity to share an overview of the video, and specifics about the **who/what/where/when/why.**

- Focus on the first 125 characters – this is what will appear in search.
- Include keywords (but don't overuse them). Language in the descriptions should flow naturally.
- Dig into the details to catch viewers searching for specific terms. ie:
  - Names of profiled people
  - Equipment
  - Venues
  - Events

Keywords

Use tools (see below) to identify opportunities for future content, and to optimize existing videos. Consider **longtail keywords** when applicable.

Tags

Similar to keywords, these increase discoverability. Add 10 of the most relevant tags to your video details. **(Do not add these in the video Description)**

Growth/Community

YouTube is strongest when the focus goes beyond publishing videos and waiting for views. Ensure that your strategy is one of community and the channel will be rewarded by viewers and the algorithms.

- Create playlists for **themed content buckets** (increased channel watch time and time spent on YouTube are factors that the algorithm favours)
- Encourage comments
  - Reply to comments as quickly as possible
- Encourage viewers to Subscribe to your channel
- Publish regularly
  - Studies have shown that accounts that post **consistently** grow engagement and subscribers more quickly than those that post sporadically or rarely
  - If people are subscribed to your channel, they will get notifications when you post a new video
  - If you are able to stick to a regular schedule, viewers may start to look forward to the new release and watch quickly after it's posted – potentially resulting in greater overall reach and engagement

Ongoing Practice

Ensure each new video includes as much relevant information and customization as possible. All of the above recommendations can also be applied to the existing videos on your channel. Go back and edit each one to breathe new life into them. Delete any videos that no longer serve the brand in a meaningful way.

Analytics

Regularly check **YouTube Studio Analytics** for such things as Audience Retention, Traffic Sources, age/gender, etc. Use these insights to inform future content planning.

Tools

Use the following tools to identify potential content ideas, keywords, titles and descriptions:

- **Google Trends** (Free)
- **Google Keyword Planner** (Free)
- **vidIQ** (Freemium)
- **YTCockpit** (Paid)
- **UberSuggest** (Free)
- YouTube/ Google Autocomplete (Free, native)

Community Management

Check the comments section and reply only to direct questions or concerns. Ignore comments that are unrelated to the content, or to your brand in general (watch for **Trolls**).

💡 **YouTube Quick Tips**

- **Consider each video's desired audience. The energy, music, and language should all be well-aligned with the target.**
- **Focus on the first 15 seconds of every video. This is your chance to hook viewers to watch more.**
- **Use captions so videos can be played without sound**
- **Use text overlays (where applicable) to highlight important features**
- **Set custom thumbnail Preview image – Use most captivating frame from the video**
- **Use Info Cards**
- **Add End Screen**
- **Add as much info as possible in the Video Details (Basic + Advanced)**

What makes a great piece of Social Media content?

Great social content is so good that people want to share it with others. What that means is it has a **remarkable** message that's communicated **clearly**, be it through copy, imagery, video, or a combination of each.

You likely have more than a single, narrow demographic, but the best content speaks directly to a specific group and/or has a specific message that doesn't apply to absolutely everyone. It's okay to address different audiences at different times – just be sure to strike a balance so that everyone sees value in continuing to follow your channels.

Most of us are trying to sell or promote something, in one way or another, on social media, but building an audience and creating great content goes beyond asking people to buy from you in every single post. Selling isn't a bad thing — in fact, a majority of users consider social media to be a shopping destination — but it's best to create content that provides a combination of the following:

- Entertainment
- Information
- Helpfulness
- Utility
- Inspiration
- Call to Action (CTA)*

*Include only one CTA per post. Most people will take a single action (at most), so choose the most relevant and make it extremely easy to understand and take action.

Content types

When we talk about "content," we are almost always referring to one of four categories: Text (Copy), Images, Video, and Stories.

Each of the four categories are created in a different way and used for different purposes. To make sure that we're on the same page for the rest of this material, we'll define here the various ways that content is created and where it's used:

Text (Copy)

Also known as "copy," text content is used in website content, blog posts, Tweets, or as the captions that accompany other types of content in Facebook and Instagram.

How it's made

Typically written by the social media manager in a copy document that plans all blog posts, tweets and/or other posts 2 weeks + in advance.

Sometimes contractors or other members of the team will contribute to writing copy, especially for blog posts; however, many organizations choose to use one primary writer in order to keep the voice and tone consistent.

How to draft great copy

Captions tell the story of social media posts, and the key to success is telling a **consistent**, **compelling** story over time.

Consider the following 4 criteria to create effective copy:

1. **What's the story?**
   Start by isolating the key message from the image, video, or link. Tell that story **simply** and **directly**. Copy and captions must, first and foremost, communicate that message in a way that's easy to understand. Most often that means putting the most important message in the first line.

2. **Why is it important?**
Once we've communicated the *What*, then we can provide context. Consider what the impact of this story will be to multiple readers. Help them understand what they're looking at and how it will affect them.

3. **Is it inclusive?**
Inclusivity starts with language that can be understood by the broadest possible audience. Consider that many readers may read English as a second language, or have a learning impairment. Typically, a reading level of grade 6-7 will allow most readers to be included. Not only does this help share the message with more people, it also helps make copy more readable to the general audience.
Inclusivity also extends to people using screen readers, and in order to include them, copy must describe what's happening in the associated image.
Note: Many platforms *include features to add '*alt text*' to shared images.*

4. **Is it helpful?**
An account that's helpful shares news and information with the followers' wellbeing in mind, and it seeks to help by clarifying anything that's unclear, and providing additional info and resources where necessary.

💡 Copy Quick Tips

- **Define your brand voice to maintain consistency**
- **Use simple language**
- **Be clear and concise**
- **Use active voice**
- **Lead with the main idea (or a teaser)**
- **Focus on providing value to the reader**
- **Ask questions**
- **Incorporate hashtags and emojis (sparingly)**

Effective Copy Examples

1. What's the story?
2. Why is it important?
3. Is it inclusive?
4. Is it helpful?

rosslander

518 likes

rosslander It's different here... We build trails instead of fences and backyard pump tracks instead of in-ground swimming pools. We spend our time in the mountains, on the trails, on two wheels or in hiking boots. We aprés with a craft brew and patio views and we shop in boutiques instead of shopping malls. Our golf courses aren't pretentious, our nearby lakes and rivers will cool you off, but the best thing we offer is our welcoming smiles. Welcome to Rossland.

Liked by **bmburnham** and **others**

klahoosewildernessresort Grizzly Bears are highly intelligent. They are self aware, have very high navigation skills, can use tools, and will grieve the death of a mother. Scientists have even watched bears interpreting natural beauty as they sit for hours watching a river or mountain view.

This beautiful bear photo was taken by @chase.teron during our photography tours.

Liked by **driss_mansar** and **others**

darelsadaka It's ok to be a swimming pool traveller too. You'll just have to share ours with a giant sheep 🐑

Liked by **anya_gilbert** and **others**

away Travel well—and do some good for the world while you're at it. For tips on how to reduce waste when you travel, check out @here.mag. 🧳 @lucylaucht #travelaway

Hashtags

Hashtags are used to sort content for users who would like to see posts around a certain topic, event, or idea. People have started to use them in a variety of creative ways: as a collaborative wedding photo album, as an interactive restaurant menu, and to crowdsource ideas, among many other uses.

Follow these best practices when using hashtags:

- Incorporate into events: Promote the use of hashtags (branded or otherwise) at events to get coverage.

- Topical hashtags: Similar to Twitter, you can use hashtags to group photos and conversations.

- Develop a unique branded hashtag: Include this hashtag in your bio and ask that users share photos with it. This will help you to build your bank of user generated content (UGC). I.e. #travelyukon
  - Note: Only create your own if you think it will be useful to a lot of different people, or can be used to curate your community's content.

- Keep it relevant: Use hashtags that are related to you and your message. Keep generic hashtags to a minimum.

- Find out what is already popular (and also relevant to your message) and include that, so you expand your reach.

- Include key industry hashtags: Include industry-specific hashtags to reach new people/organizations in your network

- Keep them short. Be **clear** and **concise**

- Hashtag responsibly. #Do #Not #Overuse

- No spaces, punctuation, or symbols. (#donot instead of #don't)

Images

The majority of current social media content is image-based. Facebook, Instagram, even Twitter posts almost all have an accompanying image, making photography and graphic design critical to a successful social media strategy.

How it's Made

The simple fact is that better photos lead to better social media results. Not everyone can hold a professional photo shoot every week, but there are creative ways to increase the overall quality of your content without breaking the bank:

Batch photo shoots

By planning your social media content ahead by one or even two months, it is possible to hire a photographer to shoot many photo assets for you in a single session, significantly reducing the per-photo cost.

- To do this effectively, get clear on your goals, upcoming events, seasonal offerings, campaigns and initiatives, then create a brief that clearly outlines the intended outcome for a content creator.

- Try to get as much **relevant** and **varied** content as possible per photo/video shoot, so that it can be used and repurposed in a variety of ways and on relevant channels.

- Be clear about which channels it will be used for, and what sizes/orientation/formats are required

User-generated content

As mentioned in the section on page 54, it can be an effective practice to showcase the content that users have been generating at or about your property. The key here is to **ask for permission** and let your audience know where the photo came from via tagging.

Internal staff engagement

It is possible to run a high quality social media strategy using only the tools that you already have in your pocket and the people who you have on staff. If you choose this option, follow these 5 tips for effective Smartphone photography:

- **Take your time**
  Set up the shot and make sure that the frame is clear of distracting clutter. Sometimes the best option is to set aside some time once a week to shoot social media photos. Giving yourself space in your calendar will ensure that your photos aren't rushed.

- **Use the best equipment available to you**
  Smartphones have incredible camera technology on board. The latest iPhone will almost always take the best photos. Some Androids also shoot high quality, and when in doubt, go with the newest model phone available.

- **Lighting changes everything**
  Natural light is often best, especially when filtered by a few clouds. Make sure that your subject is facing the light source, rather than away, and that it isn't overexposed by too much light.

- **Have a consistent style**
  Some accounts choose to use only soft colours, or vibrant, or white backgrounds. Whatever your style, allow your audience to get to know you by being consistent.
  - Examples:
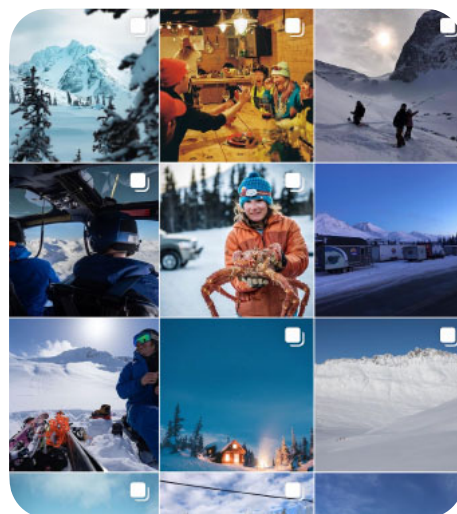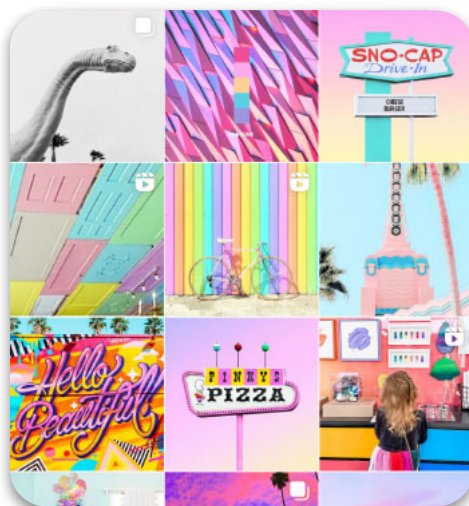
- **Take lots of photos**
  The best way to get great shots is to keep shooting. Try shooting in different light, with different subjects and at different times of day. It's a major asset for the social media manager to have a huge folder full of photos to choose from when posting, even if they're not all professional grade.

Photos typically provide the best experience for an audience as they **communicate** a message much more quickly than text. Aim to share photos/videos of people engaged in activities (candid is best, but not essential), landmarks, places, and elements that represent that topic being discussed, etc. People are drawn to photos with a single point of focus, so try not to do too much with a single frame.

When creating photos, consider the following questions:

1. **What's the story?**
   Great social media content puts the subject of the post front and centre. It understands what the story of the image is, and makes it easy for the audience to understand. When evaluating content, ask yourself: Is it immediately obvious what's going on in this image?

2. **Is it clear?**
   Clarity is key for social media in a variety of different ways. Specifically look for the following elements that can get in the way of clarity:

   - Is the image high enough quality to be seen clearly?
   - Are the colours/editing simple enough to communicate the message clearly?
   - Does the image draw the eye clearly to the subject?

3. **Is it clean?**
   Many social media images fail simply because there's too much going on in a disorganized way. A clean image is one where the subject of the photo is balanced, the rest of the image is uncluttered, and the lines within the image complement each other.

Examples

What's the story?

- No central subject
- Nondescript elements
- No sense of scale
- Low contrast
- Monotonous colouration

- Central point of focus
- Clear distinction between foreground and background
- Powerful demonstration of scale
- Distinct contrast and colouration

Examples

Is it clear?

- Out of focus/ pixelated
- Flat lighting
- Lack of contrast makes subjects difficult to identify
- Distracting foreground elements

- Sharp focus
- Clear contrast
- Creative lighting
- Distinct colouration
- Foreground elements separate subject, rather than distract from it

Examples

Is it clean?

- Subject difficult to identify
- Distracting background & foreground elements
- Indistinct colouration between subject and surrounding elements

- Clear subject
- Central point of focus
- Strong contrast between subject and surrounding elements

💡 Image Tips

- Always consider the experience of the viewer before the intention of the post.

  - Does it draw (and keep) attention?

  - Is it interesting?

  - Is it high quality?

  - Would they share it?

- Images can appear pixelated when they are cropped from small source images. Pixelated images result in lower interest and <u>engagement.</u>

  - Minimum size requirement for all source images: 1080 X 1080px

  - Preferred: 2000px+

  - <u>View optimal Image Sizes by Channel</u>

- Graphics and text overlays should be used sparingly.

- Text overlays should be supplementary/complementary to photos (let the photos do the heavy lifting and allow text elements to add important details)

- Share large volumes of text in the post <u>copy</u>, not in the image

Video

Today, every social media <u>platform</u> has incorporated video in one form or another because they know that it is the media format that people engage with most. We can also use video content effectively on our websites by embedding clips from platforms like YouTube or Vimeo. The result is that there are all sorts of types of video ranging from quick, unedited clips to professionally produced videos.

How it's Made

The majority of brand video content is planned ahead of time using simple <u>storyboards</u>, or video concepts. Social media video doesn't have to be scripted and overly produced, but the best videos almost always starts with a plan to follow.

Quick, how-to, or behind the scenes video can be shot on a smartphone and edited using social media apps or dedicated video editing software.

Each type of video has its place and can be effective. The most important thing is to match the quality of your video content with the brand message that you're trying to portray.

💡 Video Tips

- Use a high quality camera (even if it's just a smartphone)
- Develop a script - even if it's not followed to the letter. Knowing the key message(s) you want to land will help keep it clear and concise.
- Start with a strong <u>Hook</u>
    - Grab attention right away
- Keep it short & sweet
    - Social media users are constantly opening and closing their apps, scrolling, and sending & receiving messages — ensure your videos get your point across in as little time as necessary. (Note: sometimes that's 15 seconds and sometimes it's 2 minutes – just be sure to make it interesting, entertaining, and valuable)
- Add Text or Subtitles
    - The best social video is created to be viewed with audio turned off. Most views come from smartphones, and many of those viewers won't have their sound turned on. Ensure that there are captions on your videos so sound-off viewers can follow along.
- Include a Call To Action
    - In the video itself or in the post caption, give people a reason to take action and get additional value.

# Short-form Video (Reels, TikTok, YouTube Shorts, etc.)

Social media users — particularly younger audiences — have recently shown strong interest in short-form, portrait (or vertical) video formats. This was, in many ways, led by TikTok, but has since been adopted by just about every other major platform, including Instagram (Reels) and YouTube (Shorts).

Short-form video is now commonly used for everything from funny and lighthearted dances and memes, to deep dives into scientific theories and travel itineraries/ recommendations. If you can think of a topic, there's a very good chance that there's a short video, or even niche communities, covering it.
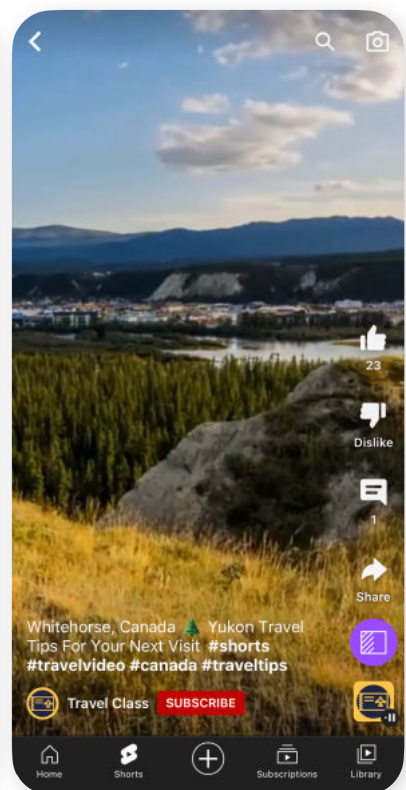
As of 2022, the format is dominating social media algorithms, and should be considered when creating a comprehensive content strategy.
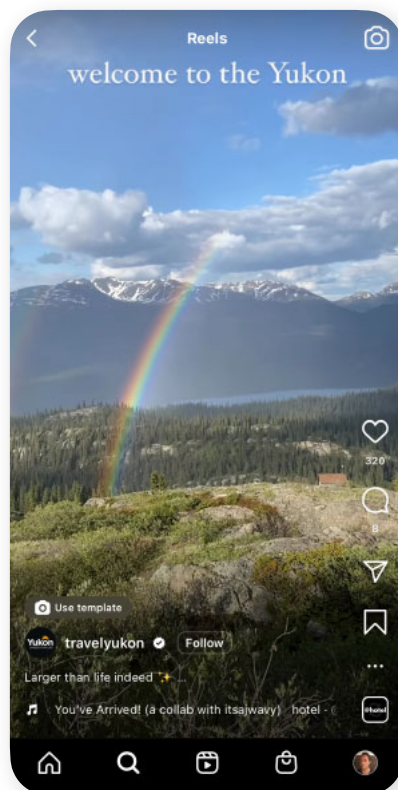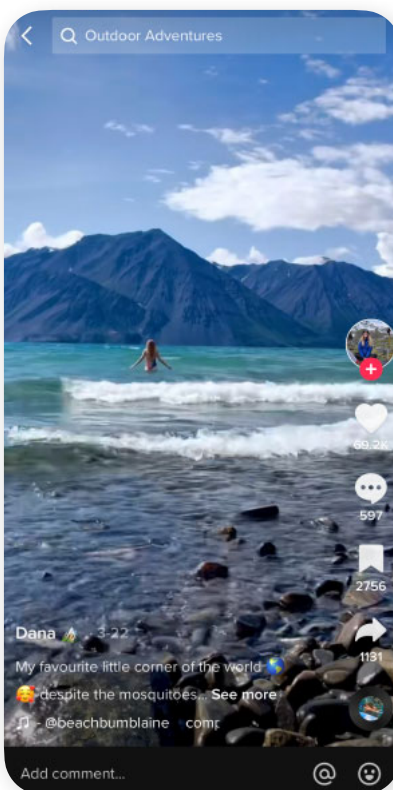
Instagram Reel   TikTok   YouTube Short

How does it work?

The mechanics vary slightly from channel to channel, but in general, videos range in length from 5 seconds to 3 minutes.

With a condensed format, it's critical that you get all of the important information into the allotted time, so taking the time to plan out the narrative/story arc will help create an interesting/useful/entertaining video. The platforms attempt to create a never-ending stream of videos for users to watch, so aim to set the scene and include a <u>hook</u> in the first 3 seconds in order to keep people from swiping to the next.

These videos typically feature some combination of popular music, a narrator (on- or off-camera), on-screen text, and are almost always close-captioned. Each of the platforms includes these features as editing tools, so you don't need professional third-party apps to create a professional-looking video.

On that note: outstanding cinematography and animation is not a requirement for this type of content – in fact, it's often the ones that don't focus on a high level of production quality that resonate with these audiences. So go ahead and get creative, and don't worry if it doesn't look like a Scorcese film – that's probably a good thing.

Short-form video is still a relatively new format, and there are no universally-accepted styling, editing, or delivery secrets, so it is a perfect excuse to experiment to find what works for your brand.

💡 Short-form Video Quick Tips

1. **Perfect your** <u>hook</u>
   Time is of the essence, so make sure to give viewers have a reason to stick around within the first 3 seconds

2. **Structure the flow.**
   Having a plan, and even a loose script, will help you to be clear and succinct, and avoid missing any critical details.

3. **Keep the pace**
   Once you have viewers hooked, make sure that the rest of the video is also interesting and entertaining, and has a relatively quick pace and rhythm.

4. **Keep it simple**
   It can be tempting to try to include every last bit of information in a single video, but that can overcomplicate the delivery, and overwhelm the viewer. Focus on delivering a few key messages in the strongest way possible.

5. **Show some personality**
   Having someone appear on-camera is a great way to create an engaging video, and develop familiarity and trust with your audience.

6. **Use closed captions**
   People may need to read captions if they have a hearing impairment or if they're in a place where having the volume turned up on their phone isn't possible. Ensure everyone can enjoy your video, no matter their needs and environment.

💡 Short-form Video Quick Tips

7. **Use visual and audio enhancements**
   Music/sound snippets, text, and other elements are available as part of the editing tools. Use the ones that are most relevant to your message and brand, and those that will create the best video. Caution: Don't overdo it.

8. **Stick the landing**
   The initial hook is important, and so is the wrap up. As the last thing your viewer sees, it's critical that the ending is also memorable and drives a valuable action – whether that's leaving a comment, watching more of your videos, following you, or clicking out to a Call to Action.

💪 Short-form Video Resources

- [How to Create Great Reels](#)
- [How to create a TikTok account](#)
- [How to setup a TikTok profile](#)
- [How to create TikTok videos](#)
- [Additional TikTok tips](#)

Stories

Stories are a relatively new type of social media content. These show up in Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, and they're regularly being tested and added to other platforms. In short, Stories are a series of images and videos that you can upload into a sequence. When your audience watches them, they'll see them in full screen, beginning with the oldest and ending with the newest.

On most channels, all Stories expire 24 hours after being uploaded, so users will always see only the most recent content as they watch.

The short-term nature of Stories means that there is a lot of opportunity to create fun, casual, imperfect photos and videos that show how something is made, give a peek behind-the-scenes, or share an event with people who couldn't make it.

How it's Made

Stories are typically shot by a user using their phone. Some brands are now designing and shooting professional content specifically for their Stories, but because they only live for 24 hours, this approach is typically reserved for marketing departments with larger budgets.

No matter which app you're using to publish your Story, you'll be able to shoot a photo/video in the moment, or upload something from your album.

Much of the appeal of the Story format is the ability to play with your photos and videos after they've been shot. You can draw, add stickers, gifs, and other features like user and location tags.
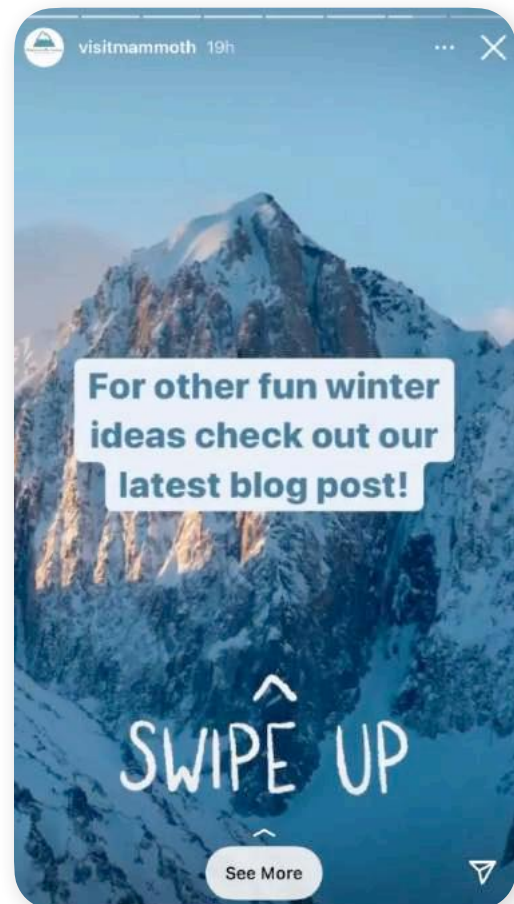
The best way to get to know Stories is to open your app and start shooting. You can create drafts, view them, and discard your draft and start again until you're happy with your creation.

💡 Story Quick Tips

Casual still means awesome. Here are some guiding points to keep in mind:

- Shoot vertically ("portrait"). Horizontal (or "landscape") photos and videos require the viewer to turn their phone sideways – switching between the two can be jarring

- Use text to explain what's happening. Overlaid text (or even text-only lead-in slides) can support photos and videos so our guests can learn who's who, what's what, and where's where

- Descriptions of people, places, events, and things should be clear enough that somebody being exposed to your brand for one of the first few times can follow along

- Invite your friends into the photos & videos. You likely have loyal supporters, industry friends, and others who are big fans of what you're up to. Go ahead and celebrate that.
  - Tag your friends. (But make sure they're ok with that)

- Use location tags + stickers. Think of these as wedding decorations, rather than Halloween – a little goes a long way.

- Consider total Story length. People are taking time out of their day to spend time with us. We want to be respectful of their time, so make it count. If they click on our Story and see that there's 20 clips to get through, they might skip it if they're strapped for time.

- There is no minimum. Don't have something awesome to share that day? Don't sweat it.

User-Generated Content

Here's good news: you don't have to create all the content for your social media channels by yourself. You can also consider something called User-Generated Content (UGC): content created by other users and shared publicly on their channels. UGC can, in fact, be your most powerful type of promotional content, and brands often repost as a part of their own content with the user's permission.

UGC can also help build trust, as people tend to trust stories shared by friends and "regular people" as opposed to brands. Using this kind of content requires you to be comfortable giving up some control on how your brand is perceived. Consumers are already generating content about you, but the key is to help them to do it in a way that aligns with your brand and can ultimately benefit your business.

Here are a few remarkable statistics on user generated content:

- People are now posting an astounding 1.8 billion photos per day to social media sites (source: Business Insider)
- 80% of all online content is consumer-generated (source: Folio)
- 40% of Millennials say they use user-generated content (UGC) to inform their purchase plans (source: Crowdtap)
- 72% of all Internet users are now active on social media and are using it every single day (source: L2 Think Tank)
- 92% of consumers say they trust word-of-mouth over all other forms of advertising (source: Nielsen)

💪 **Resource**

- **What Is User-generated Content? Everything You Need to Know**

Tools for Creating Content

We don't all have to rely on expensive professional designers and photographers. There are a whole host of tools available that make it possible for even the least design-adept person to create great looking posts. The following are a few of the best:

- **Canva** – image editing
- **Pablo** – image editing with stock backgrounds
- **Unsplash** – stock images
- **VSCO** - photo editing on your phone
- **Stencil** - image editing for ads and posts
- **Piktochart** - create infographics and charts

Section 3

DIGITAL ADVERTISING

Digital Advertising

The most obvious way of thinking about digital advertising is that it is simply **paid media that appears online**, but digital advertising itself has a few properties that make it unique. The world of offline, or traditional advertising is characterized by content that is designed for a broad audience, then placed into spaces that might interrupt an audience who may generally be interested in what they're selling. Examples of this include bus stop ads that sell products for people on the go, or high end product ads in luxury magazines.

Digital advertising creates the opportunity for more **specific** targeting, and therefore a more **focused** approach to our audiences. For example, Google Ads gives us the ability to put a link to our website in front of people who search for specific search terms. Similarly, social media ads give us the ability to target people based on their interests, and in some cases we can even target people based on what they've previously interacted with.

This increased ability to target audiences gives us the opportunity to think about advertising in a much more customer-centric way. The best digital advertisers deeply understand who their customers are, where they get their information and what they're looking for when they're online.

The following sections will describe the most common, and some of the most effective methods of digital advertising - as a marketer, your job is not to make use of all, or even most of the methods. Instead, your task is to select the method(s) that will best connect your message with your audience.

Search Engine Advertising

One of the oldest, and most effective forms of advertising on the internet, Search Engine Advertising places your business' link in front of people who are searching for specific terms that you have chosen.

The practice of search engine advertising is not limited exclusively to Google, but Google does control 92% of the market, so it is the vast majority. For the purposes of this toolkit we will focus on Google, and if you choose to explore alternatives like Bing or Yahoo, know that the same principles apply.

How Google Ads Work

Every Google ad you see goes through an "ad auction" before appearing in the search engine results pages (SERPs). To enter into an ad auction, you will first need to identify the keywords you want to bid on, and clarify how much you're willing to spend per click on each of those keywords.

Once Google determines that the keywords you bid on are contained within a user's search, then you're entered into the auction.

Not every search will display an ad related to that keyword. Some searches don't have enough commercial intent to justify incorporating ads into the page. For instance, when you type "What is Marketing?" into Google, you may not see any ads because Google doesn't think that people searching that term are looking to buy anything.
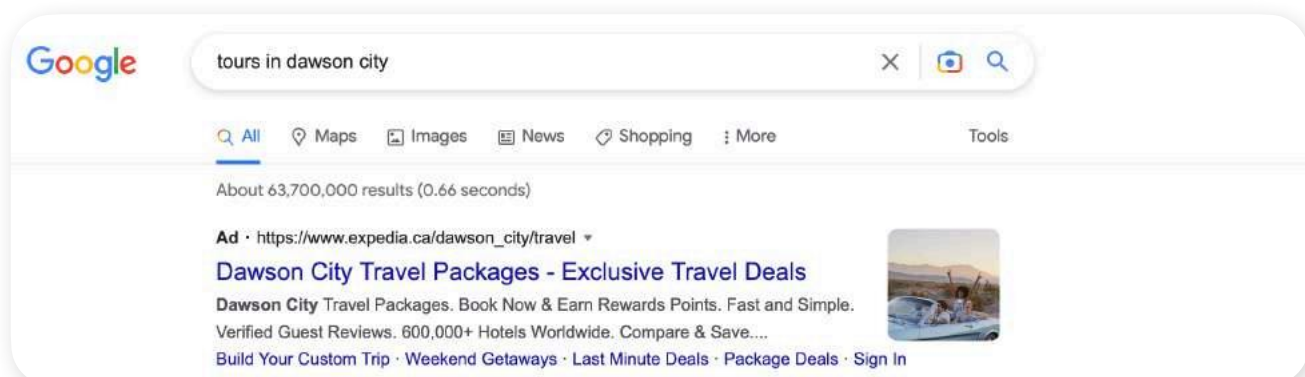
Similarly, even if your keyword is a good fit for an ad, it doesn't mean you'll appear on the results page. The ad auction considers two main factors when determining which ads to place in the results: How much is your maximum bid? And what is your ads **Quality Score**?

A Quality Score is an estimate that Google comes up with that's meant to aggregate the quality of your ads, keywords, and landing pages together. **If you already have a Google Ads account running, you can find your Quality Score in your keywords' "Status" column in your Google Ads account.** How relevant your ad is to a user, as well as how likely a user is to click through and have a high quality landing page experience, both factor into your overall Quality Score.

When to Use Google Ads

Search ads are best used for bottom of funnel marketing, which means that people are actively searching for a solution and are ready to buy today. However, in tourism we will often use search ads a little higher up the funnel, for example to drive traffic to a trip planning page, or to let people know that a new attraction exists in our destination.

Because search ads are almost entirely bought using a Cost Per Click model, the easiest way to evaluate whether Google Ads are right for you is to ask yourself: Are there people searching right now who would benefit from my content? And, how much is a visit to my website worth to my business?

If your website does solve a problem that people are searching for, and that traffic is worth more than a dollar or two to you, then Google Ads may be worth trying out.

How to Get Started

Google has a very user-friendly onboarding process that will take you through the basic steps one by one at: **https://ads.google.com**

Once you've set our account up, or if you have already run your first Google Ads campaign, the next step will be to explore Google's Skillshop where they have shared a series of specific tools and tactics that you can use to take your Google Ads account to the next level: **https://skillshop.withgoogle.com/**

Social Advertising

Nearly every social media <u>channel</u> now offers some form of paid promotion on its platform. Social advertising is the practice of identifying the right channel and the right <u>ad unit</u> for your objective, and then buying advertising in that channel. For the most marketing teams, the majority their social advertising will happen on one or more of the following channels:

Social Advertising Channels

Meta

By far the largest social advertising <u>platform</u>. On Meta, you can choose to place your ads on Facebook, Instagram, Messenger and/or their <u>Audience Network</u>, which is a series of websites and apps where your ads can appear. Meta is also home to the broadest set of <u>ad units</u> and targeting, so many marketers choose to start their <u>ad campaigns</u> here.
To learn more about setting up your Meta advertising campaign, check out their **Ads Manager guide here**.
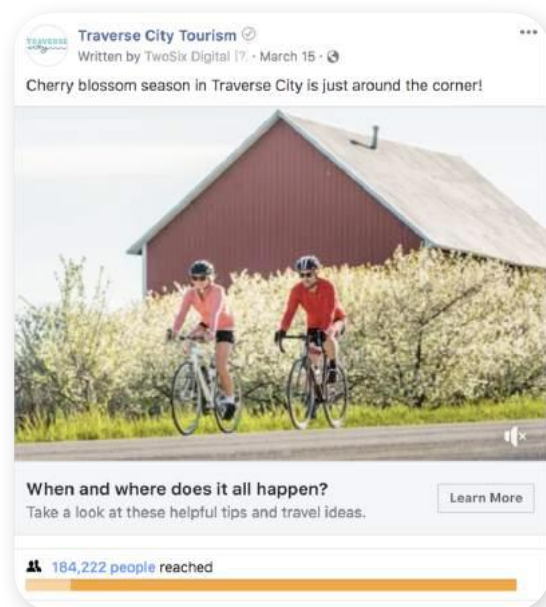
Twitter

Often referred to as the What's Happening app, Twitter is best used by advertisers who want their content to appear next to breaking news, or be a part of a relevant conversation. Twitter's targeting is largely structured around what people Tweet about and what they've been engaging with. Given that people are typically scrolling through Twitter to get news and hear the latest from accounts that they follow, successful ads typically match that format, educating and informing their readers.
To learn more, check out **Twitter Business here**.

Pinterest

While Pinterest is a social media channel, its advertising operates like search engine advertising. People use Pinterest to find answers and inspiration, so advertisers target interests and search terms with the goal of having their ads appear in the searchers' results. Successful Pinterest ads are highly visual, grab people's attention, and are often created to match the vertical ad formats that Pinterest makes available.

The **Pinterest advertising guide can be found here**.

YouTube

Ads on YouTube are part social and part search, and can be highly effective. They are purchased on the Google Ads platform and can target users based on search terms, viewing history and other on-platform behaviours. The ad units on YouTube include pre-roll videos, videos that appear within other content, discovery ads that promote your YouTube content, and overlay ads, which are images or text that appear overtop of video content.

To learn more about how YouTube ads work, check out their **How to advertise on YouTube guide here**.
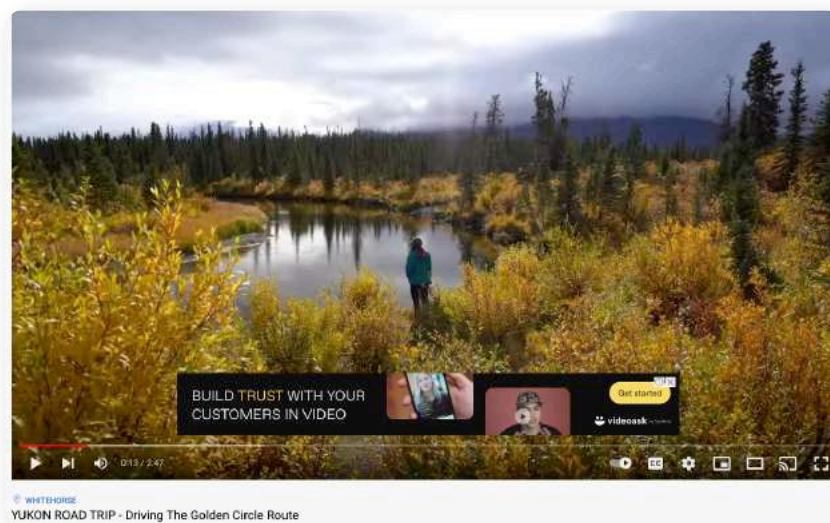
Buying Social Ads

There are a variety of other social advertising options out there, and new ones arriving all the time. Each one will have its own nuance, but there are principles and concepts that can be applied in nearly every case. The following are the most important of those:

Campaign structure

Social ad platforms typically organize your advertising in the following way: Account, Campaign, Ad Set, Ad Unit. Each one of those categories contains a different set of information and is set up to help keep your work organized.

The **Account** level is where your basic profile information lives. It's where you'll enter your payment information, where you'll add or remove users and add your contact info, among other things. Account information should need to be set up once and then updated only when your information changes.

The **Campaign** level is where you build the high level goals of your ads. Some smaller organizations will structure their campaigns around seasons, running only 3-5 campaigns each year. Other larger organizations still set up campaigns for different objectives, like one for brand awareness and another for a sales promotion. If you're just getting started with social ads, start with a single campaign with a single goal in mind before creating a second campaign.

The **Ad Set** level is where targeting and bidding happens. Each Ad Set lives within a Campaign, and there may be many Ad sets within a single campaign. In most social channels, you will define who your ads will be appearing for, the type of bidding that you'll be using and the budget limits that you'd like to set within your Ad Set.

Within your Ad Set, you'll have the opportunity to target users based on the following:

- Locations - Either where they live, or where they are currently located
- Age - Based on their self-reported birthdate
- Gender - Also self-reported
- Languages spoken - Applicable mostly for advertisers targeting non-English speakers
- Interests - Hobbies, brands, activities, etc.
- Behaviour - User habits gathered by Facebook including travel, mobile device usage and purchase behaviour, etc.

Ad Units are the individual pieces of creative that you will be promoting with your advertising budget. Each channel has different creative options, but they may include videos, images, carousels, and links, among other things. At the ad unit level you may choose to test multiple creative options, and you may use creative assets that best match the targeting of the Ad Set that the Ad Unit lives within.

Budgeting

Social advertising budgeting is typically set by maximum spend per day, or maximum spend within a certain time period. If you choose to go with the per day option, be aware that it doesn't have an end, so the channel will run your ads and charge you the same budgeted amount every day. Conversely, if you choose to set your budget by time period, then it will stop running at the end of that period regardless of how well your ads have been performing.

Targeting

One of the main reasons that people choose to buy ads on social media platforms is because they are able to offer superior behaviour-based targeting. In social advertising, you select the audience but have little to no control what the content that appears next to your ads will be.

Effective social advertising targeting is all about selecting an audience of people who are the best fit for the product that you're selling, and then matching your creative assets to that audience.

Retargeting

Available on most social platforms, retargeting is the practice of creating an audience of people who have previously engaged with your brand and showing an ad set exclusively to them. That engagement could be a click, a video view, a comment or like on your post or even that they went to your checkout page but didn't actually book.

The theory is that many people need to be reminded of a brand offer many times before they make a purchase decision. Therefore, the creative that you use in retargeting will likely be different, and more direct, than the creative that you use for brand new audiences.

Pixel Tracking

The way that ad networks are able to track website behaviour and create
<u>retargeting</u> audiences is through a tiny bit of code that you put on your website. All
of the major social <u>channels</u> will provide you with that code and by pasting it into
the relevant portion of your website, that channel will start collecting data on the
people who have clicked from their network to your website.

**To install your <u>Pixel</u>, log into the ads manager section of the social channel
and look for ad tracking or Pixel tracking, then follow the instructions.**

Pricing Options

There are three primary ways that ad networks price and charge their clients. The
first, and most common, is <u>CPM</u>, or Cost Per Thousand Impressions. The M in this
acronym is the roman numeral for Thousand, so in this pricing structure you are
paying for the number of users who are exposed to your content. The network
may track and report on a variety of metrics including clicks, <u>engagement</u>, and
shares but the only number that you'll be charged for is impressions. This pricing
option is best when the objective of your ad is to build awareness among the
largest number of people possible.

The second most common pricing structure is Cost Per Click, or <u>CPC</u>. Attraction to
CPC is that the buyer only pays when people actually take an action and click on
their ads. Therefore it is possible that your ad could appear to millions of people,
or hundreds, and cost the same amount if the same volume of those people chose
to click. CPC is best for ads whose objective is to drive interest, sign ups or
bookings, and is often used along with <u>retargeting</u> campaigns.

The third most common pricing structure in Cost Per Acquisition, or <u>CPA</u>. Some
networks make it possible to charge you only when a user takes a <u>conversion</u>
action that you define. In some cases that may be to fill out a contact form, sign up
for a newsletter, or request a booking. The CPA option, while attractive for some
campaigns, may limit the reach of your ads and should be used for bottom of
funnel, direct response campaigns within a highly targeted audience.

Display Advertising

These are the ads that fuelled much of the early internet, and still make up a significant portion of digital advertising today. There are a variety of ways to buy display advertising (see below), but all display ads are created in one of 5 basic categories.

Display Advertising Channels

Google Marketing Platform

By far the most common way that small businesses buy display ads, the Google Marketing Platform places a variety of ad categories (see below) on millions of websites across the internet. Advertisers get access to Google's audience targeting tools, as well as its relatively easy to use ad creation tools.

Ads can be purchased using the same account that you would use to buy other Google Ads.

If Google's ad platform may be right for you, follow these simple steps, and refer to Google's own guide linked here for more information.

1. **Sign in to your Google Ads account** - If you don't yet have an account, the same link will walk you through the setup process

2. **Click Create a New Display Campaign** - You'll begin by creating a new campaign in your Google Ads account and selecting a goal for your campaign. The goal that you select should align with what you want to achieve with your campaign. For example, if you want to encourage people to visit your website, select "Website traffic" when you create the campaign.

3. **Select your campaign settings** - Your campaign settings allow you to choose the locations and languages where you want your ads to appear. You can also select how often your ads appear to the same customer, opt out of showing your ads on content that doesn't fit your brand, set start and end dates for your campaign, and more.

4. **Set your budget and bidding strategy** - Your budget influences how often your ads show and how prominently they're featured. Your bidding strategy determines the way your budget is spent. Display campaigns support automated and **Smart Bidding** strategies that can manage your bids for you and can help you meet performance goals.

5. **Choose your targeting strategy** - Display campaigns offer multiple ways for you to reach people. You can:

   - Let Google Ads find the best performing audience segments for you with optimized targeting.

   - Add additional criteria like audience segments or keywords (also known as "targeting signals") to optimized targeting to find similar criteria to serve your ads on.

   - Or, turn off optimized targeting and choose your own targeting signals that make the most sense for your campaign.

6. **Create responsive display ads** - Display campaigns support responsive display ads which automatically adjust their size, appearance and format to fit the available ad spaces. With responsive display ads, you can upload your assets (images, headlines, logos, videos, and descriptions), and Google will automatically generate ad combinations for websites, apps, YouTube, and Gmail. When you finish, select Add to ad group. You can then choose to add a new responsive display ad to the same campaign, or choose Next to finalize your campaign.

7. **Review your campaign -** On the "Review" page, you'll have the opportunity
    to review all of your setting selections. Here, you can address potential
    issues described in alert notifications. To do this, click "Fix it" in the
    notification. If you're ready to publish, select **Publish campaign.**

Meta Ads Manager

Yes, Meta is primarily a social media platform, but it also has access to a huge
network of display advertising inventory across websites and apps and you can
purchase display ads on any/all of those sites through the same Ads Manager
account that you use for regular Facebook ads.

The advantage of buying display ads through Meta is the ability to harness both
Meta's ad targeting tools, as well as any custom audiences that you have created
within your Meta Business Manager.

If Meta's display network might be right for you, then all that you'll need to get
started is to follow the same process described in the Buying Social Ads section
above, and when you get to Placements, select "Edit Placements", then <u>Audience
Network.</u>
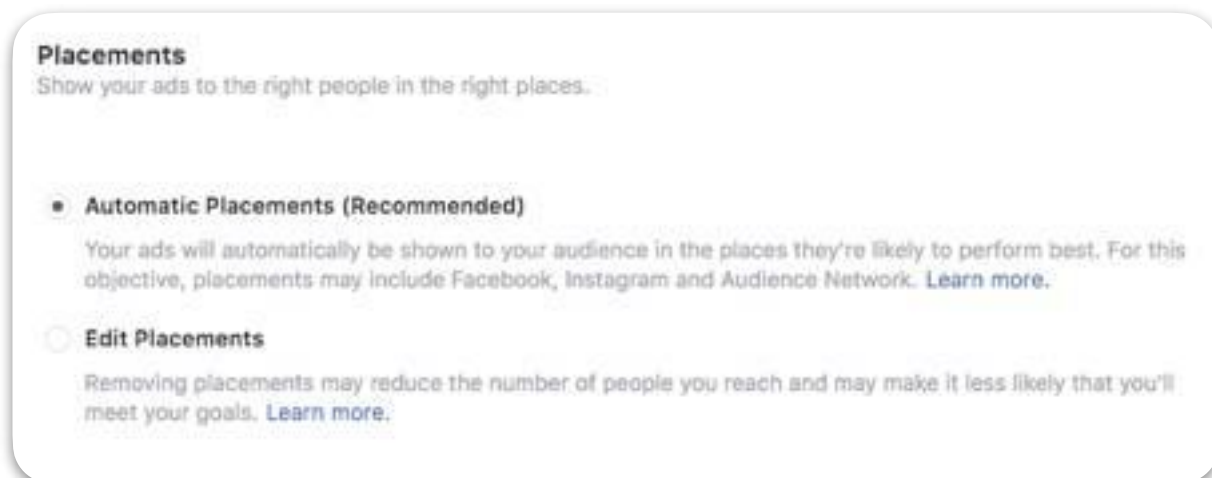
For more information on the Facebook Audience Network, refer to **this guide
published by Meta.**

Other Platforms

Display ads can be managed via a variety of third party service providers. Typically these are used for larger budgets, and for brands that are looking for more advanced features. Some of those platforms include:

- **Amazon Advertising Platform**
- **Adobe Advertising Cloud**
- **StackAdapt**
- **Basis Technologies**
- **Knorex**

For an in-depth look at display advertising platforms, read this Hubspot resource called the **Plain English Guide to Demand-Side Platforms.**

Display Advertising Formats

Static Image Ads

These can be served as a banner at the top of a page, in a box on the side of a page, or pretty much anywhere else that a publisher can imagine, but what they always have in common is that the ad is a simple image with a link in it.
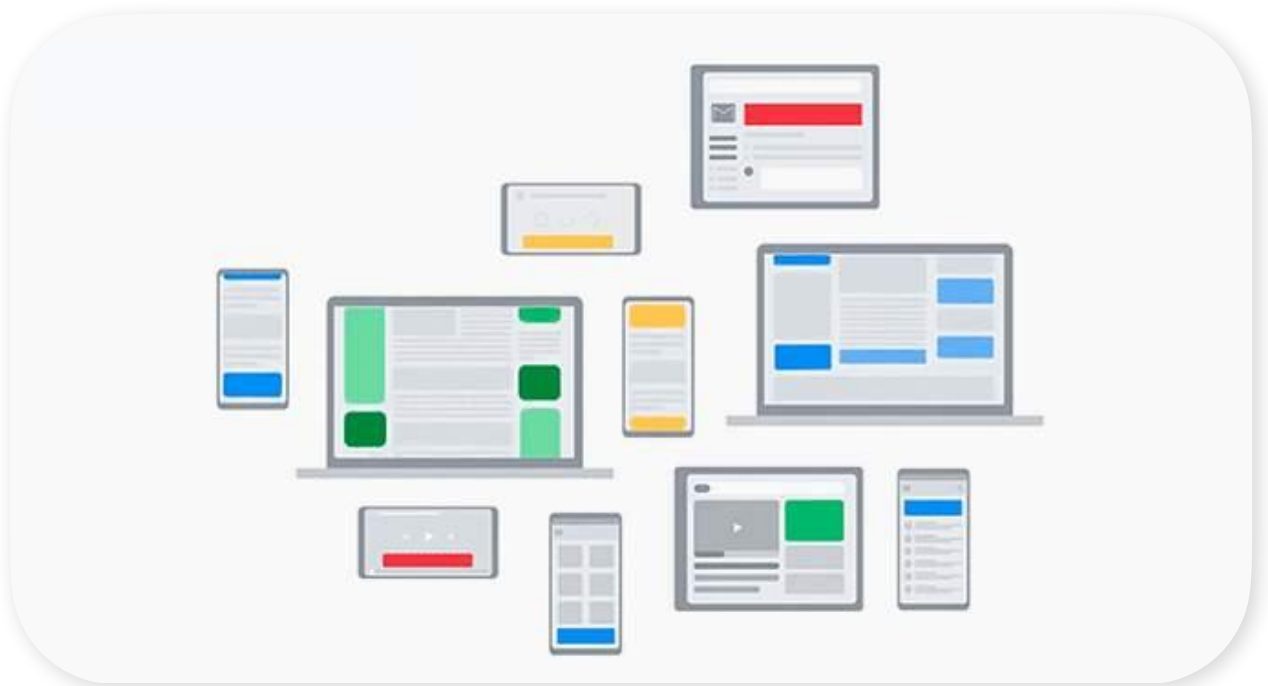
Animated Ads

These were the first innovation in display advertising, and the only major difference from Static Image Ads is that they contain a small video file, so they can be more likely to grab a user's attention and communicate a more complex message. Not all sites and ad networks will serve up Animated Ads because the file size is larger and therefore puts more strain on the network to serve. When they are available, Animated Ads typically have a higher cost associated with them.

Expandable Ads

These are interactive ad units that can be expanded beyond the original size of the original placement. Some expandable ads can be configured to expand automatically when a page loads. Others will expand following a user-initiated interaction like a mouse-over or a click.

Expandable display Ads are still relatively uncommon, although they are being increasingly used on both desktop and mobile display networks. Some digital marketers consider Expandable Ads too disruptive to the user experience, but when used well, they can grab attention and drive increased interest because interacting with them doesn't require the user to leave the website that they're on.


Lightbox Ads

Lightbox Ads start off looking just like a standard ad unit, but when a user hovers their cursor over one, it takes over some, or all of the user's screen in a way that can include video, audio, animation and other features. To reduce accidental engagements, often users must hover their mouse over a lightbox ad for up to two full seconds to trigger the expansion.

Lightbox ads get mixed reviews, but they can certainly deliver a much richer user experience and offer more creative options to the advertiser.

Interstitial Ads

The rise of mobile technology has given rise to the popularity of this ad option. Interstitial advertisements are full-screen ads that cover the interface of a host application. They appear during transition points like a click to a new page, or a scroll down the page that the user is on. The idea is that they would naturally occur while users engage with the website or app.

Interstitial ads are commonly featured in mobile games and free apps as a way for the publisher to generate revenue without charging its users. Each time a user completes a level, for example, they may sit through a loading screen before starting the next level. Interstitial ads are often presented during a variety of loading screens to take advantage of that time that would otherwise be wasted. This ad unit should be used with caution, given the negative sentiment and brand damage that they may cause, but when used creatively, and when targeted to the right audience, they can be effective.

User chooses an action   Interstitial ad   Next Page loaded
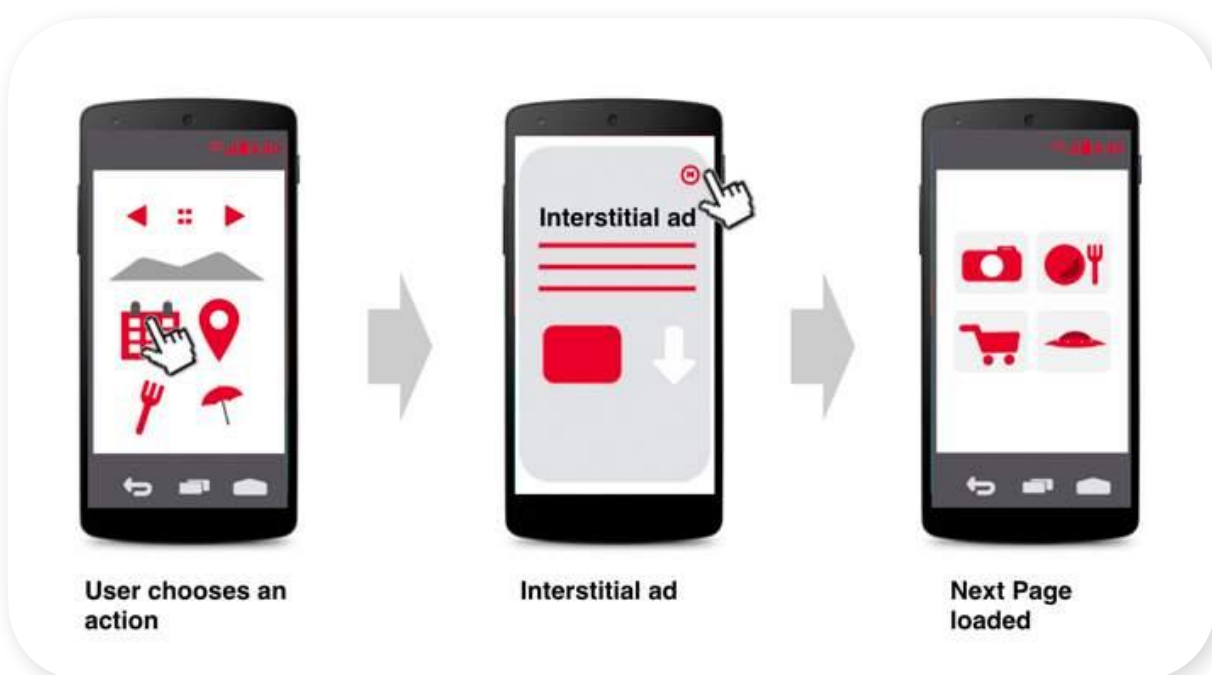
Section 4

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

What is Search Engine Optimization (SEO)?

Today's SEO has two key parts:

- **Set up our web pages to clearly communicate what they're about so that they can be found by search engines**
- **Build the reputation of our pages by attracting inbound links that signal to search engines that they are valuable and should be displayed high in search rankings**

In the following sections we'll discuss the various ways that you can take advantage of the current landscape, focusing on the behaviours that are most likely to produce results, but first let's start by building an understanding of how search engines choose which content to rank.

How SEO Works

Quoted directly from the world's #1 search engine, Google:

"Every time you search, there are thousands, sometimes millions, of webpages or other content that might be a match. Google uses its robust systems to present the most helpful information in response to your query."

The world's largest library

Google's Search index is like a library, except it contains more information than all the world's libraries put together. They are constantly adding to it and updating it with data about webpages, images, books, videos, facts and much more.

Instantly matching your search

In a fraction of a second, Google's Search automated systems sort through hundreds of billions of webpages and other information in our Search index to find the most relevant, useful results for what you're looking for.

You may notice that Google's search page and its search results are constantly changing. That's because Google conducts hundreds of thousands of experiments every year, resulting in thousands of improvements, all of which are tested.

Just like with email, phishing scams and other bad actors sometimes try to pose as highly-relevant content. Search works to automatically detect these threats and keep them out of its top results.

How results are automatically generated

With the vast amount of information available, finding what you need would be nearly impossible without some help sorting through it. Google's ranking systems are designed to do just that: sort through hundreds of billions of webpages and other content in their Search index to present the most relevant, useful results in a fraction of a second.

This is why the practice of <u>SEO</u> is key to getting your results found. It's about letting Google know what your content is about and how it should appear so that the right people are seeing your content for the right searches.

Key factors in your results

To give users the most useful information, Search algorithms look at many factors and signals, including the words of their query, relevance and usability of pages, expertise of sources, and your location and settings.

The weight applied to each factor varies depending on the nature of your query. For example, the freshness of the content plays a bigger role in answering queries about current news topics than it does about dictionary definitions.

💪 Key Takeaways

1. **Google, and search engines like it, are actively seeking out the most relevant and useful information for their users, so the more useful your webpages, the better they'll perform**

2. **Search engines will actively seek out and promote websites that load quickly and work well on mobile devices because those sites provide a better experience for their users**

3. **There is no single magic ranking factor, instead the best performing sites are the ones that are popular and linked to from multiple sources**

4. **Freshness plays a key role in search rankings, so websites that publish content regularly will have an advantage**

5. **Search engine ranking systems are always changing, but what doesn't change is that websites that work well, that people love to use and that get inbound links from a variety of sources will always rank well**

Setting Up Your Site to be Found

Before creating search friendly content, or starting to generate inbound links, the first thing that you'll want to do is to make sure that your website is structured in such a way that search engines will be able to find it, index it well, and display it the way that you want it to in search results.

The following section is paraphrased directly from Google because, as mentioned previously, Google is responsible for more than 90% of all search engine traffic on the internet today.

Note: If you do not feel confident making these modifications to improve SEO, reach out to a professional who can help you. If you don't have access to a website professional, you may find help on a freelancer website like **Upwork.com***.*

Getting Started: Are you on Google?

The first step is to determine whether your site is in Google's index

Use Google's regular search part and perform what they call a "site: search" for your site's home <u>URL</u>. To do so, simply type the following into the search bar on Google.com (without the quotations) "site:yourdomain.com". If you see results, your website is in the index.

To see an example, a search for "site:wikipedia.org" returns **these results**.

If your site isn't on Google

Although Google crawls billions of pages, it's inevitable that some sites will be missed. When its <u>crawlers</u> miss a site, it's frequently for one of the following reasons:

- The site isn't well connected from other sites on the web
- You've just launched a new site and Google hasn't had time to crawl it yet
- The design of the site makes it difficult for Google to crawl its content effectively
- Google received an error when trying to crawl your site
- Your policy blocks Google from crawling the site

Help Google find your content

The first step to getting your site on Google is to be sure that Google can find it. The best way to do that is to submit a *sitemap*. A <u>sitemap</u> is a file on your site that tells search engines about new or changed pages on your site.
Learn more about **how to build and submit a sitemap**.

Google also finds pages through links from other pages.
Learn how to encourage people to discover your site by **Promoting your site**.

Help Google (and users) understand your content

Let Google see your page the same way a user does

When Google crawls a page, it should **see the page the same way an average user does.** Website content should always be built for the reader first, meaning that it should make sense to people when they arrive. Once the human reader has been taken care of, then you can consider search engines - they read a web page from top to bottom, looking first at the Page Title and the Headings, then moving on to the body and other content. The best pages for search engines will include their target keywords a few times in those key areas and make it easy for search engines to understand what they're about.

> 💪 **Recommended Action**
>
> **Use the URL Inspection tool. It will allow you to see exactly how Google sees and renders your content, and it will help you identify and fix a number of indexing issues on your site.**

Create unique, accurate page titles

A <title> element tells both users and search engines what the topic of a particular page is. Place the <title> element within the <head> element of the HTML document, and create unique title text for each page on your site. If you have the ability to modify the HTML of your website, your title element should look something like this:

<html>
<head>
    <title>Yukon Hiking Tours - Book Your Outdoor Adventure</title>
    <meta name="description" content="We offer access to some of the world's most beautiful back country, and make it easy for everyone.">
</head>
<body>

Note: If you're feeling comfortable with your website content and want to move on to some more advanced techniques, then the next few sections are for you. Most content management systems (ie. Wordpress, Squarespace) will have features and plugins that simplify these process for you. If you are using a Wordpress website, we recommend the **Yoast SEO plugin.**

Control your title links and snippets in search results

If your document appears in a search results page, the contents of the <title> element may appear as the title link for the search result (if you're unfamiliar with the different parts of a Google Search result, you might want to check out **the anatomy of a search result video**).

The <title> element for your homepage can list the name of your website or business, and could include other bits of important information like the physical location of the business or maybe a few of its main focuses or offerings.

Accurately describe the page's content

Choose title text that reads naturally and effectively communicates the topic of the page's content.

Avoid:
- Using text in the <title> element that has no relation to the content on the page
- Using default or vague text like "Untitled" or "New Page 1"

Title Element Example

Create unique <title> elements for each page

Make sure each page on your site has unique text in the <title> element, which helps Google know how the page is distinct from the others on your site. If your site uses separate mobile pages, remember to use descriptive text in the <title> elements on the mobile versions too.

Avoid:
- Using a single title in all <title> elements across your site's pages or a large group of pages

Use the meta description tag

A page's <u>meta description</u> tag gives Google and other search engines a summary of what the page is about. A page's title may be a few words or a phrase, whereas a page's meta description tag might be a sentence or two or even a short paragraph. Like the <title> element, the meta description tag is placed within the <head> element of your <u>HTML document.</u>

<html>
<head>
   <title>Yukon Hiking Tours - Book Your Outdoor Adventure</title>
   <meta name="description" content="We offer access to some of the world's most beautiful back country, and make it easy for everyone.">
</head>
<body>
…

Meta Description Example

What are the merits of meta description tags?

Meta description tags are important because Google might use them as snippets for your pages in Google Search results. Adding meta description tags to each of your pages is always a good practice in case Google cannot find a good selection of text to use in the snippet. Learn more about **how to create quality meta descriptions**.

Accurately summarize the page content

Write a description that would both inform and interest users if they saw your meta description tag as a snippet in a search result. While there's no minimal or maximal length for the text in a description meta tag, we recommend making sure that it's long enough to be fully shown in Search (note that users may see different sized snippets depending on how and where they search), and contains all the relevant information users would need to determine whether the page will be useful and relevant to them.

Avoid:

- Writing a meta description tag that has no relation to the content on the page
- Using generic descriptions like "This is a web page" or "Page about baseball cards"
- Filling the description with only keywords
- Copying and pasting the entire content of the document into the meta description tag

Use unique descriptions for each page

Having a different meta description tag for each page helps both users and Google, especially in searches where users may bring up multiple pages on your domain (for example, searches using the **site: operator**). If your site has thousands or even millions of pages, hand-crafting meta description tags probably isn't feasible. In this case, you could automatically generate meta description tags based on each page's content.

Avoid:

- Using a single meta description tag across all of your site's pages or a large group of pages.

Use heading tags to emphasize important text

Use meaningful headings to indicate important topics, and help create a hierarchical structure for your content, making it easier for users to navigate through your document.

Imagine you're writing an outline

Similar to writing an outline for a large paper, put some thought into what the main points and sub-points of the content on the page will be and decide where to use heading tags appropriately.

Avoid:
- Placing text in heading tags that wouldn't be helpful in defining the structure of the page.
- Using heading tags where other tags like <em> and <strong> may be more appropriate.
- Erratically moving from one heading tag size to another.

Use headings sparingly across the page

Use heading tags where it makes sense. Too many heading tags on a page can make it hard for users to scan the content and determine where one topic ends and another begins.

Avoid:
- Excessive use of heading tags on a page.
- Very long headings.
- Using heading tags only for styling text and not presenting structure.

Make your site mobile-friendly

You may wonder - what does mobile friendliness have to do with SEO? It turns out that Google and other search engines recognize that most people are searching on their phones. Their main goal is to send users to websites that solve the problem that they were searching for in a user friendly way, so the search engines give significantly more rankings to websites that are going to deliver that positive user experience on mobile.

Check your site's mobile friendliness

Start by using the **Google's Mobile-Friendly Test** to check if pages on your site meet the criteria for being labeled mobile-friendly on Google Search result pages. You can also check out the **Search Console Mobile Usability report** to fix mobile usability issues affecting your site.

If your site serves lots of static content (like blog posts or product landing pages) across multiple pages, consider implementing it using **AMP** (Accelerated Mobile Pages). It's a special flavour of HTML that ensures your site stays fast and user friendly, and can be further accelerated by various platforms, including Google Search.

Promote your website

While most of the links to your site will be added gradually, as people discover your content through search or other ways and link to it, Google understands that you'd like to let others know about the hard work you've put into your content. Effectively promoting your new content will lead to faster discovery by those who are interested in the same subject. As with most points covered in this document, taking these recommendations to an extreme could actually harm the reputation of your site.

A blog post on your own site letting your visitor base know that you added something new is a great way to get the word out about new content or services. Other website owners who follow your site or RSS feed could pick the story up as well.

Putting effort into the offline promotion of your company or site can also be rewarding. For example, if you have a business site, make sure its URL is listed on your business cards, letterhead, posters, etc. You could also send out recurring newsletters to clients through the mail letting them know about new content on the company's website.

If you run a local business, claiming your Business Profile will help you reach customers on Google Maps and Google Search.

Analyze your search performance and user behaviour

Analyzing your search performance

Major search engines, including Google, provide tools for website owners to analyze their performance in their search engine. For Google, that tool is **Search Console**.

Search Console provides two important categories of information: Can Google find my content? How am I performing in Google Search results?

Using Search Console won't help your site get preferential treatment; however, it can help you identify issues that, if addressed, can help your site perform better in search results.

With the service, website owners can:

- See which parts of a site Googlebot had problems crawling
- Test and submit sitemaps
- Analyze or generate robots.txt files
- Remove URLs already crawled by Googlebot
- Specify your preferred domain
- Identify issues with title and description meta tags
- Understand the top searches used to reach a site

- Get a glimpse at how Google sees pages
- Receive notifications of spam policy violations and request a site reconsideration

Microsoft's **Bing Webmaster Tools** also offers tools for website owners.

💪 Additional Resources

Google Search Central blog

Get the latest information from our Google Search Central blog. You can find information about updates to Google Search, new Search Console features, and much more.

Google Search Central Help Forum

Post questions about your site's issues and find tips to create high quality sites from the product forum for website owners. There are many experienced contributors in the forum, including Product Experts and occasionally Googlers.

Google Search Central Twitter

Follow us for news and resources to help you make a great site.

Google Search Central YouTube Channel

Watch hundreds of helpful videos created for the website owner community and get your questions answered by Googlers.

How Search Works

See what happens behind the scenes as you search for something in Google Search.

Section 5

CONTENT MARKETING

What is Content Marketing?

Just about everything that we do in digital marketing these days stems from content. For instance, the blogs that we post on our websites, the videos that we upload, and the photos that we post. For the purposes of this section, Content Marketing refers to the content that we publish on our websites because those are the pieces that will get shared on social media, will appear in search results, and will ultimately be consumed by prospective guests.

One of the main reasons to publish content to our sites, and the reason that we'll focus on in this section, is because it gives us an opportunity to earn <u>inbound links</u>, which push our web pages up in search rankings, and earn clicks and traffic long after we hit publish.

Content marketing, and the resulting search engine rankings, is not a new practice, but it is still one of the most effective ways to create that pull-based experience for an audience.

In the following sections we'll discuss the various ways that you can take advantage of the current landscape, focusing on the behaviours that are most likely to produce results. It's important to view each of these recommendations as **cumulative investments** that pay off over time. While it is likely that some of your content will have spikes here and there, the business will benefit from the steady growth of traffic, and the share of search that it will achieve through systematic application of the following principles.

Content Formats

The most important part of any content marketing plan is, of course, the content. Search rankings in 2022 are heavily weighted towards content that has strong reader behaviours, meaning that when people arrive they stay, they scroll, they click, and they share. For that reason, no matter what tactics we employ to gain inbound links and other ranking factors, none will be as effective as they can be without strong content.

We recommend creating two types of content on a regular basis. It is possible, or even advisable, that you may create additional formats to serve as social media content, or other purposes, but these two will be built specifically for search engines:

Topical — 500-800 words

These are **simple** pieces that solve very **specific** problems. The pieces should be created first by identifying a need, a problem or a job to be done by a prospective customer. Only then will you conduct keyword research to determine the highest value keywords, and finally build a piece of content that is crafted to solve that need, problem or job for the reader.

Topical pieces should include images with effective alt tags, diagrams whenever possible and plenty of formatting in the form of headings, subheadings, block quotes and lists. Each of those formatting elements gives the creator an opportunity to insert key words and phrases to reinforce the subject of the piece.

Some standard technical requirements apply to the Topical content, which can be found in the checklist on the next page.

Credit: Patrick Fore on Unsplash

Topical Content Checklist

- Identify a need, problem or job to be done by a cohort of prospective customers
- Perform keyword research by testing various phrasing of the solution using one of the following tools:
  - Google Trends
    - Free, least accurate
  - SEMRush
    - Mid-range pricing, very effective
  - Moz
    - Mid-range pricing, very effective
  - AHrefs
    - Mid-range pricing, very effective
- When doing keyword research, look for phrases with moderate search volumes and very low competition
- Also consider the search intent of the keywords - when people are searching this phrase, are they likely to be a future customer
- Create a piece of content with a subject line that is as close to a perfect match of your target phrase as possible
- Build the content for the reader, solving their problem so well that they'll want to share the piece with their friends
- Then, go back and find opportunities to incorporate the target phrase into your content:
  - 1-3 times in subheadings
  - 3-5 times in body content
  - Note: Subheadings and body content can vary somewhat from the exact phrase match

- Next, look for opportunities to integrate collaborators, contributors or to feature potential partners' content in your piece
  - This is not out of the goodness of your heart - this is because later you'll be asking them for an <u>inbound link</u>
- When adding non-text media, look to minimize the file size as much as possible
  - Always use <u>.jpg</u> image files rather than <u>.tiff</u>
  - Keep image files under 1200px wide and 500kb
  - Use **compressor.io** to minimize the size of all image files
  - When adding video, embed a Vimeo or Youtube video rather than uploading directly
- Add links to 3-5 other relevant posts on your website
  - Internal linking is a moderately important ranking factor
- Add <u>alt text</u> to all non-text content both for search engines, and for accessibility
- Customize the <u>URL</u> to create an easy to read and shareable web address
- Ensure that the Page Title has the key phrase in it
  - Most sites use the post H1 as the Page Title by default
- Modify the post's meta data in the following ways:
  - Meta Title - use the target key phrase in a reader-friendly way
  - <u>Meta Description</u> - write to entice the searcher to click. This section has no bearing on search engines.
  - Meta Keywords - always leave blank.
- Once the post is published, submit the URL to the search engines:
  - Google Inspect URL via Search Console
  - Bing URL submission
- Once the above is complete, move on to link building & distribution

Authoritative — 2000+ words

These pieces are a high investment, long-term reward. They give us an opportunity to go after shorter tail <u>keywords,</u> and to continue to develop them for many months or years into the future.

An authoritative post should be the definitive resource for a need, problem or job to be done, and the subject should be one that the audience would be interested in reading for 10 minutes or more about.

Some authoritative content include: "The Ultimate Guide To…", or "Everything You Need to Know About…".

Note: Each of the resources that we've included at the end of this section are very effective examples of Authoritative content.

The process for creating Authoritative content will be similar to Topical, with the following additions:

Authoritative Content Checklist
- Incorporate 3-5 high value collaborators
    - Use existing quotes, content and research
    - Reach out first for permission, then to request that they link to your work
    - Look for:
        - Academic sources with high value URLs
        - Experts with opinions or data to share
        - People with real world experiences
- Add a set of <u>hash links</u> at the top of the content to serve as a clickable table of contents
- Create a Google AMP page and submit your content when published
- Find 10+ pieces of older content that are relevant and add links from those pieces to your Authoritative Content

💡 Additional Resources

- **[Hubspot's Blog SEO Guide](#) — simple, easy to implement**

- **[AHref's Blog SEO Guide](#) — authoritative, moderate difficulty, comprehensive**

- **[Moz's Link Building & Establishing Authority](#) — high quality section of a much larger guide**

- **[Yoast's Writing an SEO-Friendly Blog Post](#) — a bit of a listicle, but valuable nonetheless from one of the authorities on simple SEO tactics**

- **[SEMRush's 9 Steps to Help Your SEO Writing](#) — longer read, tons of specific, actionable tactics, high value content**

Link Building & Distribution

Once you've created great content, your next task is to get it the distribution that it deserves. One of the main reasons to publish content is to attract links and the resulting search traffic that can come from them, so in this section you'll learn how the content that you publish can be your greatest asset in your SEO effort.

While much has changed in the world of Content Marketing and SEO, the #1 ranking factor is still the volume, relevance, and quality of the inbound links to a particular piece.

Some individual-post link building tactics have been recommended above. The following should be practiced on a regular basis, and for as many pieces of content as possible.

Link Building Checklist

- Use your Google Analytics account to find every website that's currently driving traffic to your site - those websites will be found under Source: Referral Traffic
  - Once you've identified your current referrers, you can reach out to each one to let them know about your new content and ask for additional links, or higher priority links
- Find every industry directory, association or group that has a directory and make sure that it has an updated inbound link.
- Reach out directly to every source that's been quoted, cited or otherwise contributed to each piece of content, and ask for a link from their website and a social share
- Offer to contribute your own findings, experiences and quotes to academic, industry, and other sources of online content, ask only for an inbound link in return
- Support University groups, especially in your industry and areas of interest. Offer to speak at their events, contribute to their studies and support their groups, ask only for an inbound link in return.

- Seek out articles written on topics that are highly relevant to your business then reach out to the writer of those articles offering to contribute to a follow-up article where you can shed light on an important aspect that they didn't cover.

- Use your SEO tool (ie. AHrefs) to find the most valuable inbound links to your competitors. Reach out to those sites that are providing those links and ask for the same.

While most common SEO efforts are going to help the ranking of your website, these may actually end up hurting your site's rankings:

- Spamming link requests out to all sites related to your topic area

- Purchasing links from another site with the aim of getting **PageRank**

Section 6

WEBSITE MANAGEMENT

What makes a great website?

Great websites answer questions, solve problems, and create opportunities for visitors.

They are built to answer questions for visitors such as:

- Where do I want to go? (Top of funnel)
- What's good there? (Middle of funnel)
- Is this the right place for me? (Middle of funnel)
- Where is it? (Middle of funnel)
- How can I take advantage of this offering? (Bottom of funnel)

They are also built to provide brands an opportunity to:

- Gain exposure
- Establish credibility
- Deliver product education
- Distribute content
- Generate sales

When designing websites, start from a place of **helping** your visitors. People may be landing on your site (or any given page) for the first time or the 12th time, so consider the information and layout they will see from all perspectives.

If it's their first time being exposed to your brand, what do they need to know right off the bat? What information do they need to find in order to make a decision about whether your offering is the right one for them?

If they're a returning visitor, how can you make it easy for them to quickly get the most relevant information at that moment? Are they ready to book/buy/sign up? Is that button easily accessible? Do they check in regularly to read your blog? Do they come back seasonally – if so, what would be new and interesting to them?

When determining the website design/structure/content, use the following framework:

1. Let people know immediately who you are and what you do

   ◦ Use an inspirational, intriguing statement about what you're offering (Value proposition)

   ◦ Note: This applies to all pages within the site, not just the homepage. In those cases, rather than introducing the brand, let them know what the page is about and what they can expect to find there.

2. Guide them to the most commonly accessed information

   ◦ Make your navigation clear and efficient

3. Create useful content

   ◦ Paint a picture of the experience your organization provides

   ◦ Use strong imagery and copy

4. Share proof

   ◦ Reviews, testimonials, social media content

5. Always give them an "offramp"

   ◦ Visitors may be ready to convert at any time during their visit, on any page — ensure they're able to find the CTA quickly and easily

6. Make it easy (and Fast)

   ◦ Limit the amount of information you're sharing to only what visitors need to know, and only what you need to share to get them to convert.

Example

User Experience (UX) Principles

User Experience encompasses all aspects of the end-user's interaction with the company, its services, and its products. In this section, we'll apply that notion specifically to website design.

Creating a strong user experience boils down to making your website **simple** to understand, **easy** to operate, and **pleasant** to look at. All of these things together build a picture for the user of the total experience – and a great website not only addresses the needs of users, but makes it a joy to use.

Fundamentals

Remarkable design

- Overall design is memorable

- Graphics, layout, text, and interactive elements work together to present the user with an experience, not just information

- Modern websites contain more visual and interactive qualities to guide people's eyes and evoke emotional responses to help them stand out

Websites are scanned, not read

- Most people will scan the content for something that strikes them and then they switch to reading in more detail when they want to find out more

Users want clarity and simplicity

- Don't make it difficult to find action buttons (CTAs). Visually focus attention on the primary action versus a bunch of competing buttons (especially on the homepage)

- Make it highly usable for the majority of users and allow for extra functionality to be hidden and made discoverable as it is needed, not shown all at once

- Be consistent with design styles (the colour and shape of buttons, the placement of text). When users are familiar with elements of the design, it makes it easier to use.

There's a thin line between creativity and confusion

- Modern web design conventions have essentially trained users to seek information in common locations. Deviating too far from these standards creates work for visitors, which could lead to them not finding what they need. Some of these common standards include:
  - Primary menu items at the top of the page
  - Primary <u>CTAs</u> at the top right (or left in fewer cases)
  - Contact links at the top of the page
- Having CTAs is highly visible locations reinforces the action and directs visitors there when they're ready
- It's OK — in fact, encouraged — to stand out, but creativity and usability must balance each other, with usability always taking priority

Know your audience

- An extremely advanced, high-tech website may be great for those who grew up with the Internet (ie. Gen Z) or those who have used and worked with it for a number of years (ie. Millennials) but it may be ineffective if your audience is primarily above 45 years old. Similarly, a design that only appeals to older visitors may turn off younger generations who see it as irrelevant to their needs and preferences.
- Seek inspiration from your successful competitors or similar businesses and take note of how they're addressing the needs of their audience.

Establish a visual hierarchy

- Highlight the most important elements of the interface so that they draw attention
- A simple way to create a hierarchy is using size and colour
  - Larger and brighter text, buttons, and other elements will automatically dominate the page.
  - Be careful – too big and bright and it will look out of place and distracting.

A strong User Experience focuses on 6 critical factors:

1.	**Useful**	Content should be original and fulfill a need
2.	**Usable**	Site must be easy to use
3.	**Desirable**	Image, identity, brand, and other design elements are used to evoke emotion and appreciation
4.	**Findable**	Content needs to be navigable and locatable onsite and offsite
5.	**Accessible**	Content needs to be accessible to people with disabilities
6.	**Credible**	Users must trust and believe what you tell them

All of these combined help to determine how **valuable** the experience is for the user.
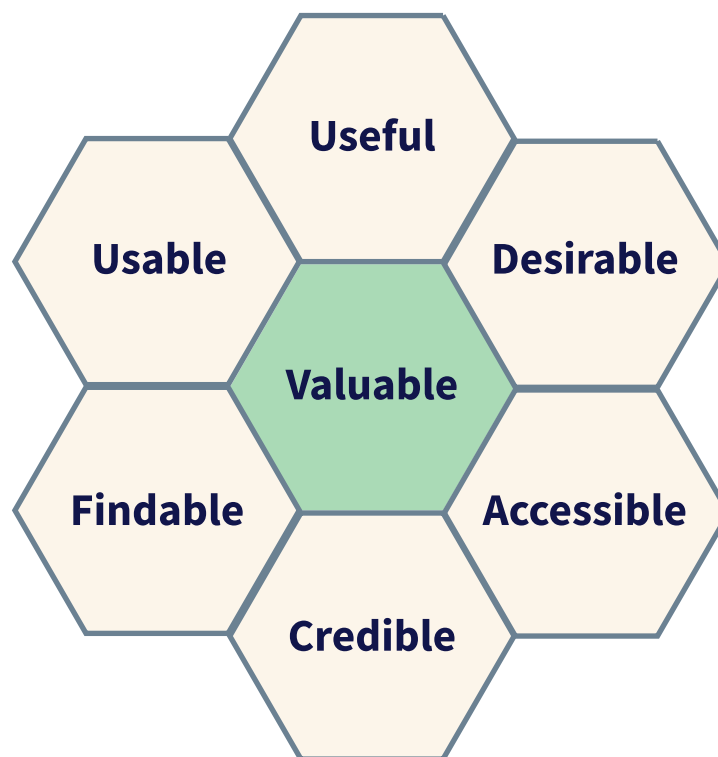
💡 UX Tips

- **Be human**
  Be trustworthy, transparent, and approachable.

- **Be discoverable**
  Ensure users can accomplish their tasks the first time they visit.

- **Be learnable**
  Ensure that interaction is easy and moving through the site is seamless and ensure that on subsequent visits users can accomplish their goals even quicker.

- **Be efficient**
  On repeat visits can they accomplish repetitive tasks quickly and easily?

- **Be delightful**
  Ensure that the experience delights users so that they have an emotional connection to it and champion your business.

- **Be a performer**
  Ensure that the system performs well at all times.

Choosing a Content Management System (CMS)

A <u>CMS</u> is the tool/platform that a website is built on/managed with. Simply put: It's the backend system where you can design pages and elements, add and edit <u>copy</u> & images, create and publish content (ie. blogs), etc.

There are many tools available — each with its own pros and cons — and finding the one that's right for you typically boils down to what the site's objectives are, and what technology you and your team are comfortable managing on an ongoing basis.

Consider the following criteria:

- What do I need my site to do?
- Are there people who can help me?
- Can this CMS scale up to match my goals?
- Does it provide the maximum output with the minimum input?
- Is it within my budget?

Popular CMS Options

Wordpress
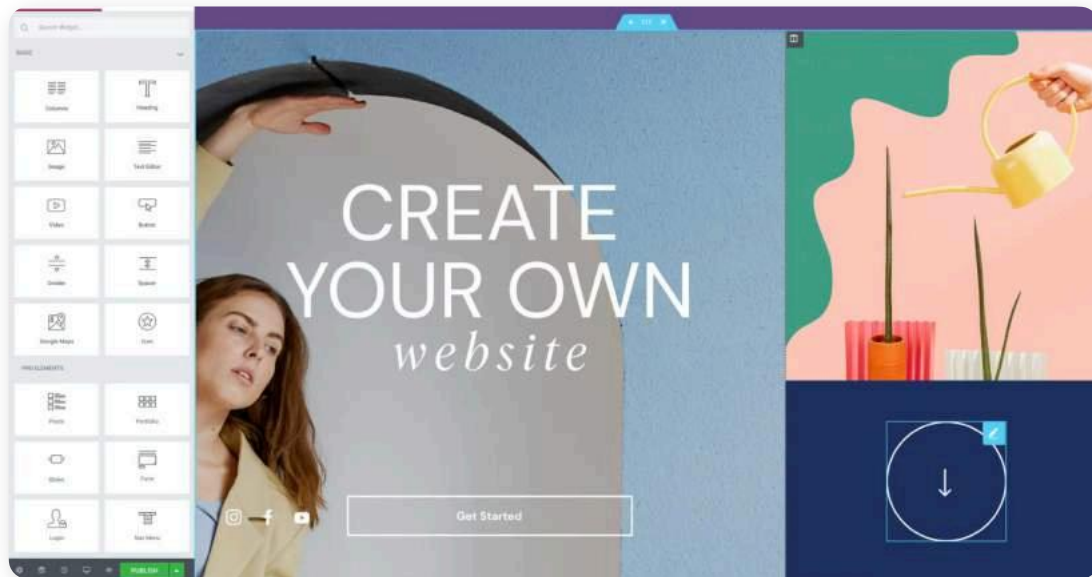
Overview:

- Most commonly used
- Out-of-the-box templates
- Highly customizable
- Cost grows with features/ functionality
- Skill Level = Moderate

Best for:

Small-medium sized businesses that need control over function, design & code

Pros	Cons
- Free to use - Plug-ins for just about anything - SEO-friendly features - Try **Yoast plug-in** - Large developer support	- Learning curve 3rd party plug-ins can fail (and/or become unsupported) - Security vulnerabilities - Cost to develop - Cost to manage (if using outside contractors/agencies)

Squarespace
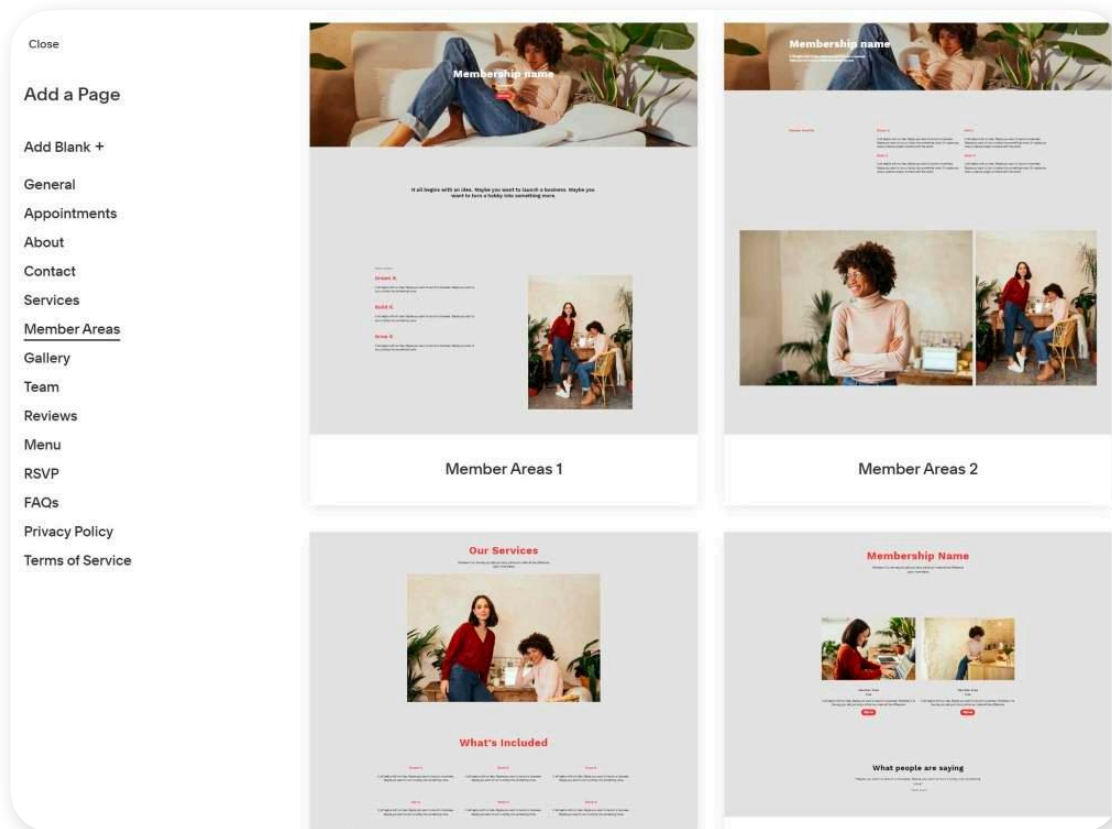
Overview:

- User-friendly
- Out-of-the-box templates
- Limited customization
- Skill Level = Low

Best for:

Small-medium sized businesses that favour ease-of-use over customization; Simple e-commerce

Pros	Cons
• Get up and running in a weekend • SEO-friendly features • Built-in e-commerce features	• Monthly fee • Limited features & customization

Wix
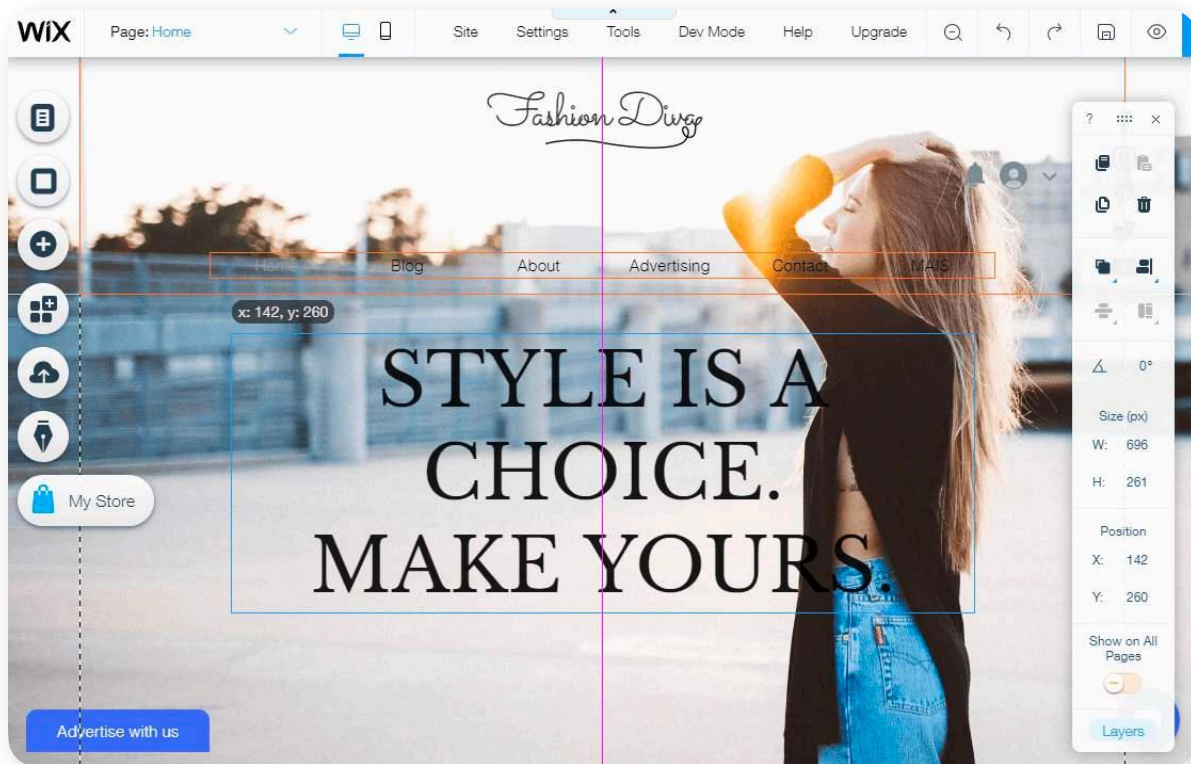
Overview:

- User-friendly
- Drag-and-drop design
- Out-of-the-box templates
- Limited customization
- Skill Level = Low

Best for:

Small businesses/ solo entrepreneurs

Pros	Cons
• Get up and running in a weekend	• Monthly fee
• Easy to learn/use	• Template modifications can be a hassle
• Support	• Limited features & customization

Shopify
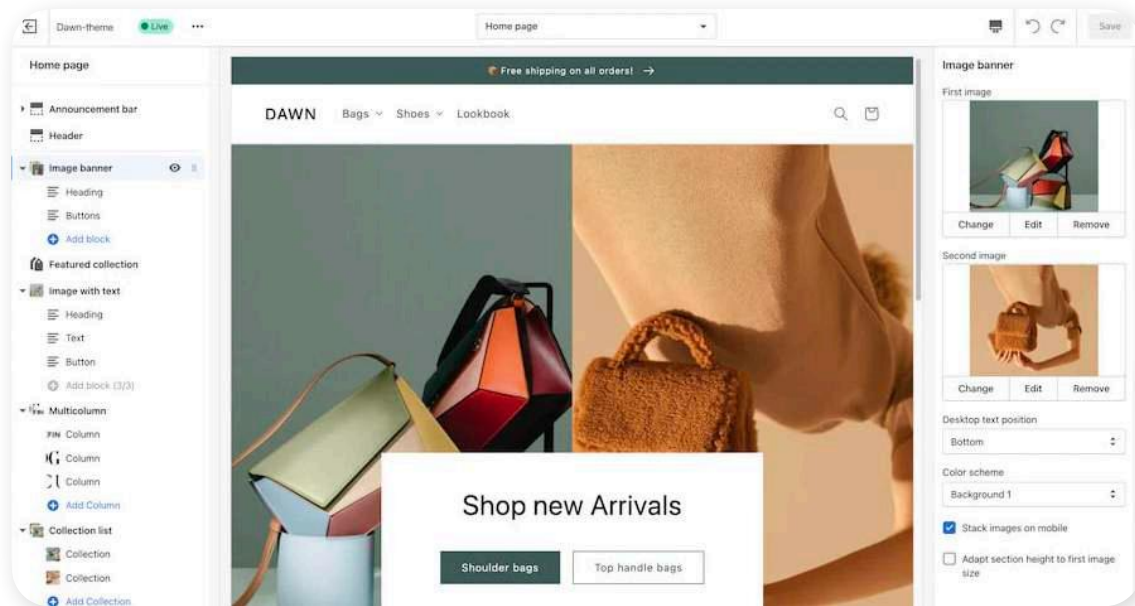
Overview:

- Rapidly growing
- User-friendly
- Out-of-the-box templates
- Built for e-commerce
- Skill Level = Moderate

Best for:

E-commerce businesses

Pros	Cons
• Easy to learn/use • Plug-ins ("apps") for added functionality • Support • Social integration • Retail (POS) integration • Canadian-owned 🍁	• Pay to play • Subscription, apps, themes, etc. • Limited templates

How do I maintain/manage my website?

Software updates

Many content management systems will issue regular updates to the platform, oftentimes to patch security issues or otherwise improve usability and functionality.

In the case of platforms like Squarespace and Wix, you may not ever notice when these updates happen, but with others like Wordpress, you will need to take an active role in monitoring and updating when prompted.

> 💡 **Important Note**
>
> **These updates may not always work seamlessly with <u>plugins</u> that you've installed, so read the documentation that the company includes, and seek help from a skilled developer if you're ever uncertain.**

Content updates

A great website is **current** and **interesting.** This means that you're constantly reviewing and updating information such as hours of operation, contact info, team members, and anything else that could provide a seamless experience for visitors. If any information is incorrect or obviously outdated, it risks losing out on business.

Great websites also regularly look for opportunities to add new, helpful information, such as blogs, itineraries, and FAQs. Not only does this provide additional decision-making criteria for visitors, it benefits <u>SEO</u>, and search engines evaluate how frequently websites are updated and reward those that are active.

Testing

When you're happy that your site looks great and provides all of the information that your customers need, it's important to confirm that in the real world.

Focus on the following tests to ensure that your site loads quickly and works well for users:

- **Speed Test**
  - Paste your <u>URL</u> to test how quickly your site loads
- **SEO Analysis**
  - Paste your URL to determine how well your site addresses critical <u>SEO</u> structure
- User Testing
  - Having real people use your site provides invaluable insight into how it functions. It's easy for those of us who design and build it to overlook or take for granted how people will use them in the wild.
    - Ask a friend or colleague to take a specific action on your site (ie. Book a 2-bed hotel room for March 28) and have them report any issues they encounter along the way.
    - There are also companies (ie. **usertesting.com**) that will provide this service, including recordings of the people who are navigating your site so you can see exactly where they encounter issues. Note: These typically cost a bit of money, but they provide a detailed and unbiased perspective that can be invaluable.

Make a plan to address any problem areas and prioritize those that will have the greatest impact, then work your way through the lower priorities. Make it a practice to regularly test and improve your site – many businesses do this quarterly or even monthly.

Tip: If you run a local business, claiming your Business Profile will help your website to reach customers on Google Maps and Google Search.

Section 7

ONLINE BOOKING & ECOMMERCE

Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO)

Conversion rate optimization is the practice of increasing the percentage of visitors who perform a specific action on a website.

💡 **Conversion Rate =**
[Number of conversions (actions) / total number of visitors] x 100

These actions are commonly directly related to the sales funnel (ie. making a purchase, adding an item to a shopping cart, subscribing to an email newsletter), though they also include simple actions like filling out a contact form or clicking to read a blog post. It is up to a business to decide what action is most valuable, and it will typically vary depending on which page a user visits.

CRO is ultimately about understanding what is driving decisions, what might interrupt or stop people from taking action, and how to create the best user interface/user experience to remove barriers and increase the likelihood that someone takes a desired action.

There are no one-size-fits-all CRO recommendations. What's most important is understanding the audience and the desired action at a specific point in the user journey. There are a few practices that tend to improve rates on average:

- Focus on one primary CTA per page or content block
- Make your offer clear and focused on value
- Use strong contrast and/or colour for CTAs (copy, buttons, links)
- Place CTAs in easy to spot locations on the page
- Keep design attractive, simple, and easy to understand & navigate
- Keep copy simple, concise, engaging, value-driven and action-oriented
- Add social proof (ie. testimonials, reviews) to build credibility and trust
- Minimize the number of clicks and page loads required to convert
- Ensure pages load quickly
  - Slow load speeds are associated with a significant decrease in conversions

Choosing a Booking Engine

If your business offers bookings/reservations, you may choose to use specialized third-party software to facilitate the process. Automated software creates many opportunities and streamlines operations. Some benefits include:

- Relieve staffing pressures by managing simple, repetitive tasks, such as:
  ◦ Answering questions by phone call or email
  ◦ Manually creating bookings
  ◦ Taking verbal payment information
- Receive and process requests 24 hours a day
- Automatically process payments and issue receipts
- Automate confirmation and follow-up emails

Ultimately, these tools create efficiency, freeing up staff to focus on other parts of the guest experience that can not be automated as easily.

There are hundreds of booking tools available, and many are tailored to specific industries or business types, so there is no one-size-fits-all solution, but there are some key criteria to consider when deciding which one may be right for your organization:

1. **Quick & simple process for the customer (and staff)**

   If it is difficult to navigate on either side, visitors may give up, and staff may take more time than necessary to manage it

2. **Inventory control**

   Live inventory is essential to ensure bookings are accurate

   ◦ This is especially critical when inventory is also offered via Online Travel Agents (OTAs) such as Google, Booking.com, Expedia, etc.

   ◦ For more information visit the **Tourism Yukon Training Page**

3. **Upsell / cross-sell functionality**

   Increase order values by providing additional services and packages

4. **Promotion system**

   Offer campaign or seasonal promotions to increase <u>conversions</u>

5. **Website integration**

   ◦ Embed booking widgets on your site to make the process seamless

   ◦ Customize the design to match your brand, as much as possible

6. **Multi-currency / multi-language**

   Live toggles that convert and translate depending on a visitor's preference minimizes friction

7. **Third-party compatibility**

   Offer bookings on third-party <u>OTAs</u> to increase exposure and conversions

8. **Email automation**

   Send *Thank You* emails, pre-visit welcome emails, and post-visit surveys

9. **Mobile friendly**

   Ensure it operates smoothly on every device

10. **Analytics**

    Monitor and gather information on conversion rates, average order value, customer location, etc.

11. **Support**

    Unfortunately, sometimes things don't go perfectly smoothly – when something comes up, the ability to resolve the issue quickly with great support can be the difference between making and losing money

12. **Price**

    ◦ Identify a price you're comfortable with

    ◦ Does it charge per month, flat rate per booking, percentage of booking total?

    ◦ Consider passing on the cost of booking to the consumer

Use the above criteria to compare booking tools, and identify the one that meets as many of your needs as possible. A great booking engine can be the difference between a sale and even loyal guest or a permanently lost customer.

Section 8

EMAIL MARKETING

What is Email Marketing?

Perhaps the **most valuable** and **least expensive** of all digital marketing tactics, email marketing serves a variety of functional roles for businesses. It is the most **direct** and targeted way that a brand can communicate with its audience, but the right to send that communication must be earned, and then retained.

The practice of email marketing involves 4 basic steps, each one essential - they are as follows:

1. **List Building**

   The practice of attracting people to subscribe to your email list.

2. **List Segmentation**

   One of the main advantages of email marketing is the ability to segment our messages by a variety of different parameters. Segmentation starts in the setup process, before you begin attracting subscribers.

3. **Email Automation**

   Every list should have a few automations, including a welcome email that goes out when people sign up for your list, and a lapsed reader email that brings people back. Automation creates a better subscriber experience and delivers value to the business without any continuous input.

4. **Content Creation**

   The practice of building and sending content to your readers. Content includes not just the copy and images that go into the body of your email, but also the Subject Line, Preview Text and in some cases the blog posts, landing pages, or social media content that your email will be linking to.

Those 4 steps apply to any type of email marketing program that you're going to run. There are many different options, but the most common forms of email marketing include:

- **Newsletter**
The most common form of email marketing. Typically gives updates, shares news or offers recommendations on a regular, recurring basis.

- **Functional**
These emails are typically individualized and serve a specific purpose such as: booking reminders, invoices/receipts, post-purchase feedback and abandoned shopping carts. They are automated and require little or no input.

- **Drip**
Sales and marketing emails that are sent according to a sequence. Typically, drip campaigns are set to match, or anticipate key moments in a guest journey. For example, a hotel may set up a drip campaign that emails its guests 3, 6 and 9 months after a stay to remind them to book their next visit. Alternatively, drip campaigns can be used to provide education and value to new list subscribers. For example, a fishing tour company may send a series of useful tips and tricks about fishing in that area to its new subscribers over several emails that are spaced out over several weeks. The primary benefit of a drip campaign is that subscribers will each receive messages according to their own behaviour, which can create a feeling of personalization.

Build your list

Attracting email subscribers is similar to driving any other online conversion. You can apply many of the same principles that you would use to attract online purchases or booking to the practice of list building. Specifically, consider the following principles:

1. Make it as easy as possible to sign up
2. Give them a compelling reason to subscribe
3. Use your various marketing channels to drive traffic

Let's start with a few of the ways that we can have people sign up:

Static Form Fields

Place a prominent sign-up form on your website. Include a brief summary of what to expect from the email to encourage signups. A form entry without context will not generate as many entries as those that focus on benefits (ie. Sign-up to receive expert advice from our guides, and be the first to know when we release new offers).

Form fields can typically be embedded using code that's generated by your email marketing software provider (see page 117 for provider examples.)

Newsletter Signup – Almost There

You're just a few clicks away from getting a monthly dose of awesome sent straight to your email. Don't stop now. Sign your inbox up for a monthly vacation.

FIRST NAME *

EMAIL *

LAST NAME *

SUBMIT

Modals (AKA Pop-ups)

Pop-ups are not always a bad thing. In many cases they can be used to alert website visitors to an offer or opportunity that they may have missed, or it can be placed strategically within a site to capture attention at just the right time. Most modals are time activated and managed using third party software (see below for examples). These can range from a full screen-takeover, to an unobtrusive corner pop-up.
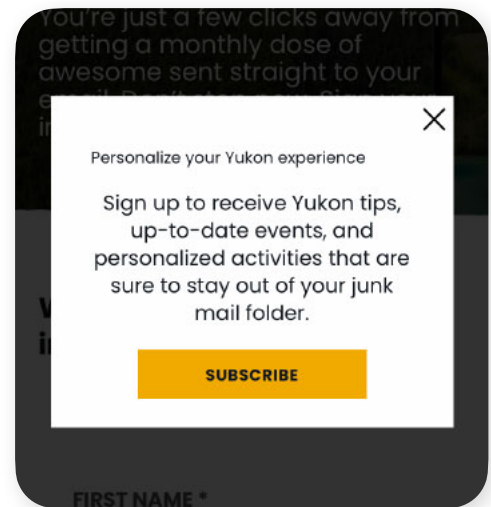
When constructing your modal, keep the following principles in mind:

- Offer something worthwhile
  - What are the benefits of the newsletter?
  - What incentives or discounts might they receive for signing up?
- Keep your brand voice consistent
  - If you're typically warm and friendly, make sure that your modal is the same
- If you're brand is funny and sarcastic, then have some fun with your copy

When to show your Pop-up

Display on a timer. Rather than loading a pop-up immediately when the page loads, give the visitor some time to read through your website and establish interest & trust.

- **5 seconds:** Best for sites with an average visit length of 10-45 seconds
- **10 seconds:** Best for sites with an average visit length of 45-90 seconds
- **Conditional display:** Show once per visitor per week. Stop displaying after a visitor has signed up.
- **Behaviour-based display:** Some software will give you the option to display only once a visitor has viewed a certain number of pages, has scrolled a certain depth, or when their mouse moves up off the screen, indicating that they're about to leave your site

✉️ **Third-Party Software Providers**

Note: most have free options for smaller lists:

- Mailchimp
- Constant Contact
- ActiveCampaign
- ConvertKit
- MailerLite

Build Through Social Media

Attract your social media audience to deepen their relationship with your brands by creating posts that drive traffic to the website signups. Focus on the value that they'll receive when they subscribe to your email list.

- On Instagram, use links in your Stories and the link in your bio
- On Facebook, Linkedin and Twitter, share links that take users directly to the easiest place to sign up for your list
- Use subscriber testimonials and sample content to attract interest
- Drive additional traffic using media budget to promote posts (Primarily on Facebook)
- **Create Lead Ads on Facebook**

What to Collect

- Email
- First Name (Whenever possible)
- Last Name (Optional)
- Postal Code or City (Optional)

*Subscriber names and locations allow for greater personalization in email campaigns

Segment your list

List segmentation is the key to delivering highly relevant emails to the right audience at the right time. Each email software provider will have slightly different ways to set up your segments. Some will call them groups, or use tags - consult your service provider's help section to sort out how to build your email segments.

As you build your list, you'll typically segment your subscribers by one or more of the following criteria:

- Geography
- Product/services purchased
- Sign-up source - website, trade show, social media, etc.
- Travel type - business, family, couple, etc.
- Price point

To gather that information you will either reference your sales data, or add a field to your sign-up form that asks for what you need.

Once segmented you'll be able to craft messages that are appropriate for the right audience. To give one example, your guests may include locals, Canadian travelers, and international travelers. Each of those groups is going to have much different timing for their trip planning and information gathering, so you'll want to send them emails at different times throughout the year.
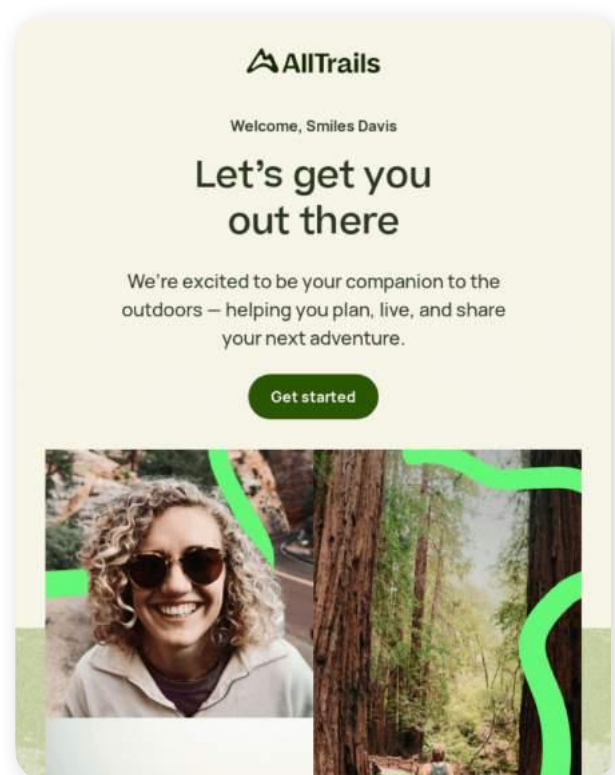
Automate your Emails

There are two basic email automations every marketing program should have:

Welcome Email

When people fill out your sign up form it's important to let them know that their sign up has been successful, and what they should expect from you. The job of your Welcome Email is to do exactly that, make them feel good about the decision that they've just made and setting their expectations for future communications.

There is also a good chance that people who sign up for your email are considering a booking decision at that moment, so use your Welcome Email to make it easy for them to make that decision. Include a call to action to a simple booking engine or other method of <u>conversion.</u>
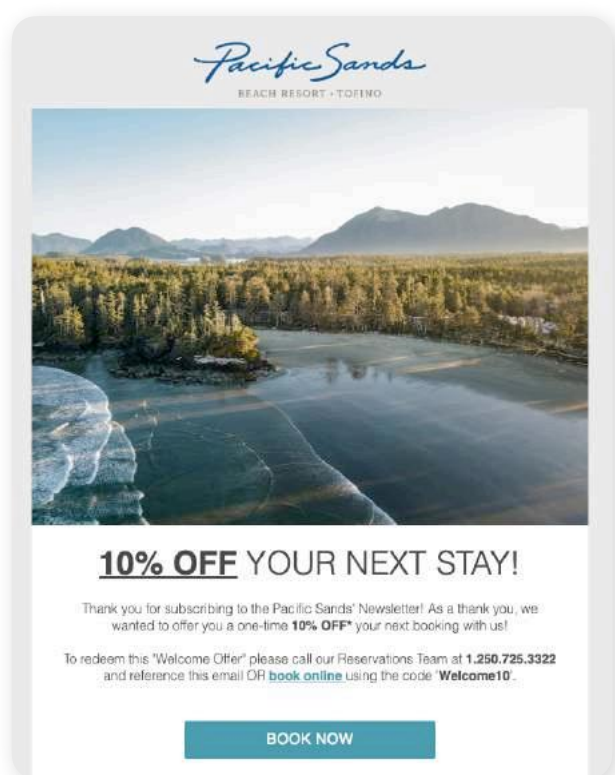
Lapsed Subscriber Email

Often, subscribers will stop opening your emails for a while, and there can be a variety of reasons for this, only one of them is that they're no longer interested. A Lapsed Subscriber email is automated to go out to subscribers who haven't opened one of your emails for a period of time. That period is up to you, and will depend on the frequency that you send emails, but is typically set to be somewhere in the range of 60-120 days.

Subject lines appeal to people directly, asking them if they've lost interest, or encourage them to come back. Body content typically is friendly, welcoming and lets people know that you value them as a reader. Often a Lapsed Subscriber Email will include an ask for feedback or a link to a survey to collect suggestions from these readers.

Note: If a lapsed subscriber doesn't re-engage by opening any emails, you may set a cut off period when you remove them from your list. It may seem counterintuitive, but removing subscribers is a positive practice because it ensures that everyone on your list is active, wants to receive your content, and it keeps your open rate high.
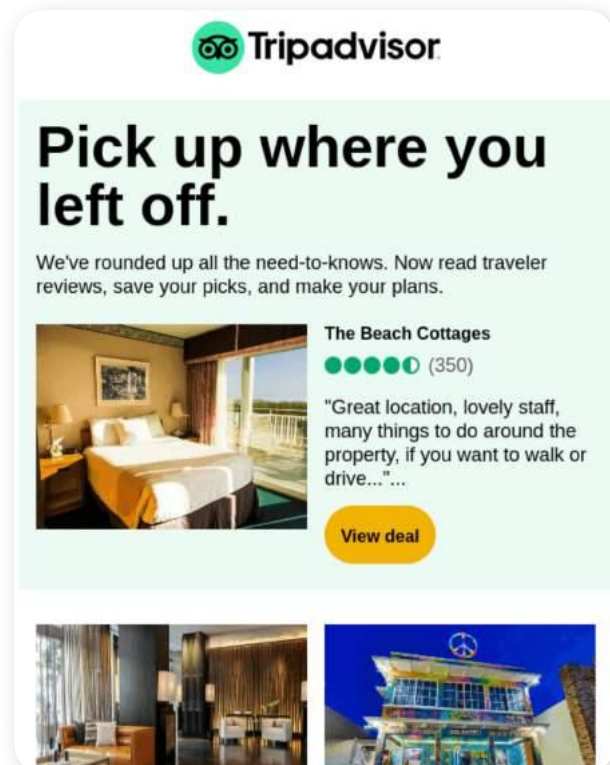
Create your Content

Subject Lines & Preview Text

Emails are all but useless if they're not opened, so this is the first opportunity to encourage **action.** The average person receives dozens – if not more – emails each day, so it is critical that your subject lines stand out.

Write a subject line that is clear first, and catchy second. In marketing copy, **clarity** should always be your first priority. If, after you've drafted a clear subject line, you can also make it catchy, funny, cute, whatever, then go for it. But never sacrifice clarity for the entertainment value.

- Write multiple subject lines, then choose the best
- Align the Subject Line with the Headline and Call to Action. These shouldn't be copies of each other, but the messaging should be clearly connected
- Use inviting, exciting language that piques curiosity
- What's your tone? Most good email subject lines rely on a conversationalist tone to attract readers. Sites like BuzzFeed and Upworthy take advantage of a casual, conversational tone
- Know your audience. Your best bet for creating good email subject lines will be understanding your audience and catering to what they like. This is a major rule for pretty much all aspects of online marketing, and while it can be a bit tougher in a limited character field like a subject line, matching your audience's interests and mannerisms is essential if you really want solid open rates
- Keep it under 50 characters. Subject lines with less than 50 characters have higher open rates and click-through-rates than those with 50+. Go over and you risk being cut off
- MORE CAPS ≠ MORE OPENS. Covering your subject line in capital letters doesn't result in increased open rates.
- Call to action. Testing out a call to action in your email subject line may improve open rates
- Leave the reader hanging (encouraging them to open to read the rest)

Body Content

Regardless of the category of email that you're creating, the outcome is the same: An email message that lands in your reader's inbox. So when it's time to create content the same basic principles apply.

1. **Maintain subject line continuity** — once you've earned people's attention with your subject line and convinced them to open your email, it's important that you keep the message consistent. Use headlines and the first sentence of your email to reinforce the message from your subject line.

2. **Imagine that you're talking to a friend** — keep it simple and conversational, but intentional. Maintain the same brand voice and personality that you use in all other channels, but this is the time to be most familiar and most friendly.

3. **Get to the point** — we all have more than enough emails in our inboxes, so the most effective emails are the ones that manage to grab the reader's attention and deliver value within the first few sentences. If you have big news, or an announcement, put that right up front.

4. **Break up your content** — paragraphs should be no more than 5 lines, and sentences should be similarly direct and concise. Use bullet points, bold and italics wherever appropriate as ways to draw attention to key pieces of information.

5. **Be clear with your ask** — this is not the time for subtlety. Instead, if you have an offer, a call to action, or a piece of content that you want people to click to, be direct. Let them know what's in it for them and urge them to take that action. No one likes a pushy salesperson, but in this case, the reader has opted in to receive your emails, they are busy, and want know what it is that you're asking or offering them. Make it easy for them to understand and they'll appreciate it.

6. **Personalize when possible** — most email software providers have a feature known as **merge tags**, which allow you to add individual names, or other data that you have from your subscribers to each email.

Design

Email is meant to be a simple, straightforward medium. Many of the most effective email marketing campaigns have some of the most basic, easy to understand designs. In general, avoid large images and attachments that may create oversized email files, and too many messages that could overwhelm, or confuse a reader.

Most email software providers will come with well designed templates that you can use as your starting point.

Questions to ask of your email design:

- What's the main story?

- Is it clear to the reader what you're asking them to do?

- How will this appear on mobile? On tablets?

- Can this be consumed in a reasonable amount of time?

For email design ideas, inspiration and other resources, check out **ReallyGoodEmails.com**

Section 9

ANALYTICS & REPORTING

In the world of digital marketing, Analytics and Reporting can be seen as the scoreboard. They are where we see the results of our hard work and check in on our progress, but they're also much more than that. Because modern technology allows us real-time access to data about how our audience is interacting with our content and our various digital properties, we can also use analytics to test, **adjust** and **optimize** just about everything that we do.

There are a variety of analytics tools available, but the most powerful and widely used tool by far is Google Analytics, so that's the one that we'll focus on in this section. You'll also find a resources section where we have recommended a series of additional tools that can be used for specific purposes.

What is Google Analytics?

For over a decade, Google has provided a way for website and app owners to collect and visualize their user data for free, and that tool is known simply as Google Analytics, or GA for short.

GA doesn't create anything new or pull any previously unavailable data from your site's visitors. Instead, it simply collects the data that already exists on your website's server and presents them in a series of useful ways.

The features and functionality of GA are extensive, which is why the primary challenge of using it starts with understanding what to look for, and which questions that we should be asking of it.

Questions that can be answered

When you keep in mind that GA is a tool that can serve you information or answer your questions, that framing can alleviate the overwhelming feeling that some people get when they open up their dashboards.

So instead of asking what all of the various data and reports are that we could potentially access through GA, it's best to start with the most relevant questions that it can answer about your website and your audience. The following is a set of questions that many tourism operators start out with and use GA to answer on a regular basis:

- How many people visit my website?
- Where in the world do my website visitors come from?
- How do people get to my website?
- Which page(s) on my website do people like most?
- Which page(s) on my website do people like least?
- Which devices are people using?
- What percentage of people buy/sign up/book?
- Which traffic source is most valuable?

As you become familiar with GA you will most likely remove some questions that are less important to you, and add on some that are more helpful.

What's New with G4?

Since its inception, GA has operated using a system that they called Universal Analytics. If you've previously installed a tracking code in your site you'll recognize it because the tag begins with the letters UA. In 2022, Google began to introduce a new system that they're calling GA4. It is a fundamentally different way of collecting and organizing your data, but the technical details aren't important. Here are the important points that you will need to know about the shift to GA4:

- You will be required to install a new tracking code in your website and/or app
- The new analytics dashboard will not include historical data from your old UA-based Google Analytics account
- The legacy UA-based system will continue to operate until July 1st 2023
- After that data, only GA4 will collect and display data

Given those points, if you haven't already installed the GA4 tracking code in your website, you'll want to get it installed as soon as possible so that you begin to collect data.

Fortunately, Google has made their part of the setup and installation process very simple. To get started, go to analytics.google.com. If you already have an account, then navigate to the Admin section and go to GA4 Setup Assistant.
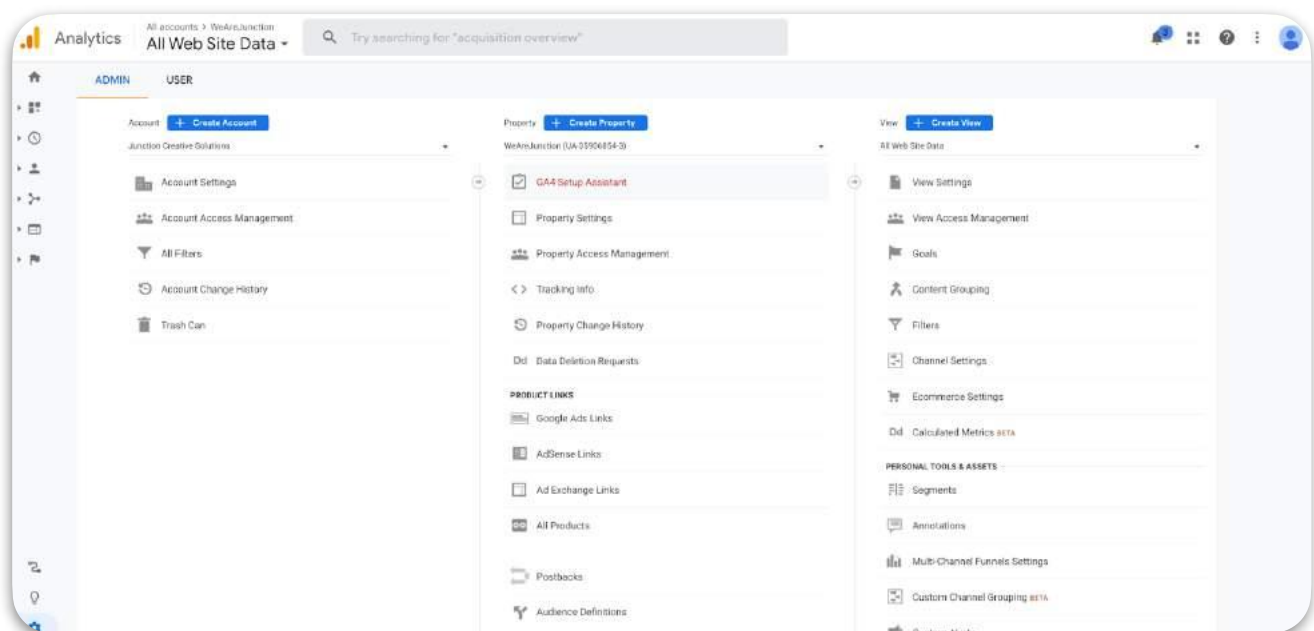
If this is your first time setting up an Analytics account, then you will see a Welcome screen where Google will walk you through the process.
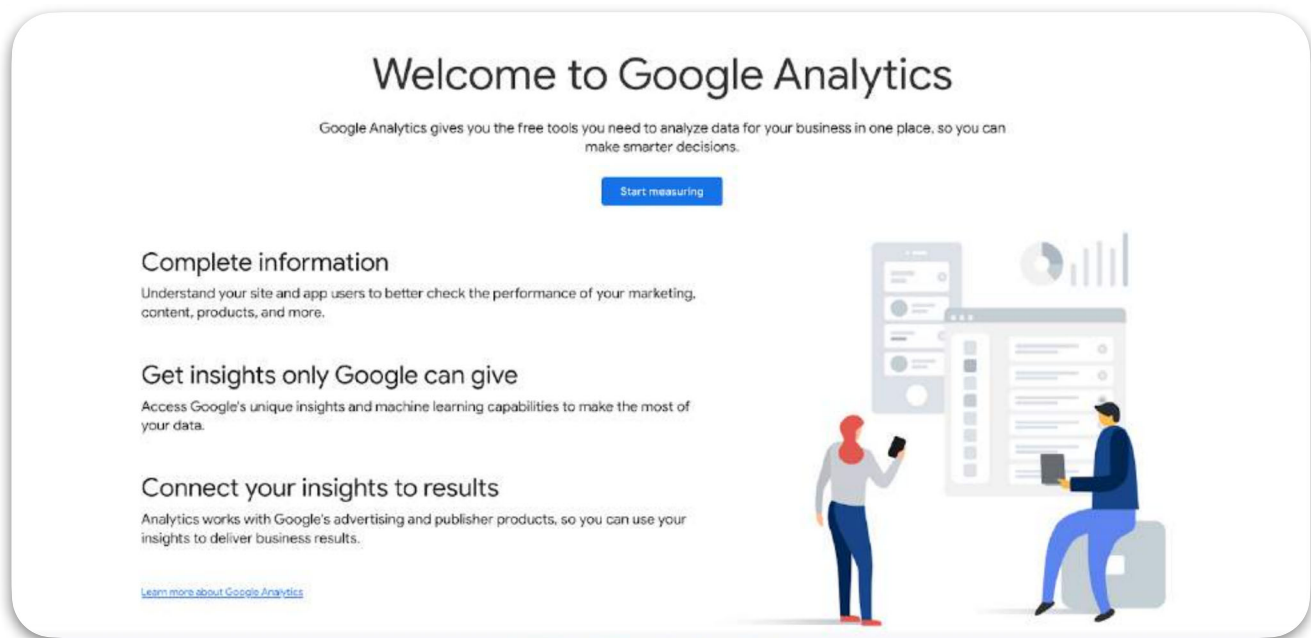
In either case, you will need to paste a line of code into a specific part of your website, which may require assistance from your website programmer. It is possible to do it yourself, so if you are interested in trying, begin with the following steps:

1. Identify your website's Content Management System (Wordpress, Squarespace, etc.)

2. Go to that system's support section, or Google "How to install Google Analytics in <*your CMS name here*>"

3. Make sure that you find a reputable source, ideally support documentation from that Content Management System

Note: If for any reason you do not feel confident making these changes to your website, reach out to a professional who can help you, especially if your website requires you to access its header or footer code. If you don't have access to a website professional, you may find help on a freelancer website like **Upwork.com***.*

Google Analytics Categories

Once you are set up and have access to your dashboard, you will notice that all of your data is organized into reports. These reports are the various screens that you can view and they each display your data in a different way. There are hundreds of reports that you can potentially view, and they are organized by the following categories:

Acquisition

How people got to your website, where they came from, and how they interacted with your site once they got there

Engagement

What people did on your website, and how your various pages are performing relative to each other

Monetization

What is driving sales or bookings on your site, and compares the various paths that people take to convert

Retention

Who is coming back to your site, how often and when they come back, what they do on your site

Demographics

Information about your website visitors including where they are in the world, the language that their browser is set to and estimates about their interests and ages

Tech

Which devices and browsers your visitors are using to access your website

Creating a 15 minute Analytics Practice

Data is only useful when it serves to inform real business decisions, so effective use of Google Analytics comes from accessing it regularly to answer a consistent set of questions. For most people that will mean a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly practice of checking in to see what's going on with your website's visitors. The frequency will depend on your website's volume of traffic.

High traffic websites should be checked more frequently, because even small changes or errors can have big implications.

Lower traffic websites may leave longer times between checks to allow for enough data to accumulate to be meaningful.

In order to create your own practice, apply the following steps:

- Decide on your reporting frequency (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly)
- Determine a set of 5+ questions that are going to be relevant to your business (see the Questions section above)
- Create a place to track and report the answers to those questions - a simple spreadsheet, or even a Word document will work well
- Look for variances in your data and get curious

What to do with your GA Data

Once we've implemented our analytics practice, then we've laid a foundation to start gathering some really interesting insights. At its core, nearly all digital marketing tactics exist to change the reports that we see in Google Analytics. Here are a few examples:

- Blog content exists to attract more traffic and keep people on your website, which should be seen in your Engagement category
- Digital advertising exists to drive high value visitors to our website, which should impact your Monetization category
- SEO exists to attract more organic traffic, which will show up in our Acquisition category
- Updates to our website should keep more people there longer, which can be seen in our Engagement category

Given that, we should always be looking for variances in your GA reports. What changed this period? Was it a good change or a bad change? If we made investments in marketing during this period, did those investments show up in our dashboard? If not, was it a worthwhile investment?

Of course, not every marketing tactic exists to drive website traffic. Some exist solely for the benefit of our social media presence, or our online reviews, but when executed well, all digital marketing strategies should ultimately lead to measurable results, which we can see in our Google Analytics dashboards.

Other Analytics Tags

In addition to Google Analytics, there are many other ways to track and analyze your website data. Each provides it own utility, and for most tourism businesses, the following two are most likely to be valuable.

Google Tag Manager

Google Tag Manager is a central place to store your tracking codes from Facebook, Twitter, the Travel Yukon website or any other source you use to track web traffic. These tracking codes are also referred to as tags. This free and secure system is convenient as it does not require you to modify your website code (no developers required) and stores all your tags in one place.

Learn more about the benefits of using Google Tag Manager for your business.

How to Install
1. Create an account via Google Tag Manager
2. A container will be created by default. You will be prompted with a web container code snippet to install on your chosen platform.

Note: The container installation process can be tricky if you are inexperienced in using website code. For additional support check out this **Quick Start Guide**.

The Meta Pixel

Meta Pixel is a small piece of code you install on your website to track customers who click from any Meta property, and is specifically built to track your ads performance on Facebook , Instagram and their ads network to your site (see: Social Advertising). It collects data to help you track conversions and build audiences for successful marketing ad campaigns.

If you regularly use Facebook ads, or plan to in the future, this is a tool you should leverage to help you get the most out of your ad budget. A Facebook Pixel can be integrated into your Google Tag Manager account as another means for measuring and tracking customer data. **Read more** here about the benefits of using a Facebook Pixel.

How to Install

Begin by **setting up your Facebook Pixel**

1. Login into your Google Tag Manager and select **Add A New Tag**
2. Click **Custom HTML Tag** and enter a name for your tag
3. Go to your **Facebook Pixel page**
4. Under **Actions** click **View Pixel Code**
5. Copy & paste the entire code
6. Paste code in HTML container in GTM
7. Under **Advanced Settings** select **Once Per Page** within **Tag Firing Options**
8. Under **Fire On** select **All Pages**
9. Click Create Tag

Learn more about using Google Tag Manager with your Meta Pixel, and creating action-specific tags and leveraging your data.

Additional Resources

As mentioned above, there are a wide variety of analytics and reporting tools to match every need and budget. Below are a few of the most commonly used tools:

Heatmapping

These tools track where your website visitors go within your website, what they click and even the path of their cursors.

- **CrazyEgg**
- **HotJar**
- **Mouseflow**

Search Engine Performance

These tools help to track the keywords that your website is ranking for, and how it's moving up or down in the various rankings.

- **SEM Rush**
- **Moz**
- **AHrefs**

Reporting

These tools will pull together data from social media, ad platforms, Google Analytics, Mailchimp and more to create well designed, easy to read reports.

- **DashThis**
- **Supermetrics**
- **Reportgarden**

Section 10

GLOSSARY & INDEX

A

Ad Auction - the process in which Google decides which ads appear in each search query based on bid, ad quality, and ranking

Ad Campaign - a series of ad sets that aim to accomplish a single objective

Ad Set - groups of ads that share settings how, when, and where to run

Ad Unit - individual pieces of creative

Alt Tag/Text/Attribute - alternative text that describes an image or visual on a webpage in the event the image is not properly displayed, or if the user is using a screen reader. Sometimes also referred to as an "alt attribute" or "alt description."

AMP - Accelerated Mobile Pages - HTML that ensures your site stays fast and user friendly.

Audience Network - a series of websites and apps managed by Meta where publisher ads can appear

C

CTA (Call to Action) - a piece of contact intended to encourage people to perform an action, i.e. Buy Now, Click Here

Copy - another word for text content

Channel/platform - A social media website or application where people share and consume content i.e. Facebook is a social media channel

CMS (Content Management System) - a tool or platform that a website is built or managed

Conversion - the point at which a customer responds to a Call to action or performs a desired action

CPA (Cost per Acquisition) - pricing structure where the buyer is charged when a user performs a defined conversion action

CPC (Cost per Click) - pricing structure where the buyer is charged when their ads receive a click

CPM - pricing structure where the buyer is charged per thousand impressions

CRO (Conversion Rate Optimization) - the practice of increasing the percentage of visitors who perform a specific action on a website

D

DM (Direct Message) - a private message between people, most commonly on social media

E

Engagement - the measurement of interaction with your content; likes, comments, shares, etc.

F

Feed/Newsfeed - the section of a social media platform where user updates and advertisements are displayed

G

GA (Google Analytics) - platform that allows website and app owners to collect and visualize their data

Geotag - a specific location assigned to images and posts on social media

GOST Table - a simple way to organize your digital marketing goals, objectives, strategies and tactics

H

Handle - social media username, often preceded by an @ symbol as a way for others to identify and communicate with you on different platforms

Hash links - A bookmark link that directs a user to a specific part of a page or website when clicked. Also known as an Anchor links.

Hashtags - a word or key phrase preceded by a # symbol to sort content for users looking for posts around a certain topic, event, or idea

Hook - an angle or idea used to grab and retain audience attention

HTML - Hypertext Markup Language - the standard coding language most commonly used to create webpages

HTML document - a file containing Hypertext Markup Language which give the instructions on how to configure a webpage

I

Inbound links - links coming to your website from another website or domain name. Also known as backlinks.

K

Keywords - a word or phrase in the content of webpages that matches the words and phrases users are entering into search engines

M

Marketing funnel - a visual describing the customer journey, from awareness to conversion

Meta description - an HTML element that provides a brief summary of a webpage which is then displayed in search

O

OTA (Online Travel Agent) - web-based marketplaces that allow users to book travel products and services i.e Booking.com, Expedia, etc.

P

Pixel - a piece of code for your website that lets you measure, optimize and build audiences for your ad campaigns

Playlist - a set of videos meant to be viewed together or for a specific topic, specifically for YouTube

Plug-in - a piece of software that adds new features to an existing content manage

POS (Point of Sale) - a point of purchase where a customer pays for their goods and/or services

Q

Quality Score - an estimate by Google meant to aggregate the quality of your ads, keywords and landing pages together

Quote Tweet - Retweeting another user's tweet onto your own timeline with the option to include your own comments

R

Reels - Instagram's version of short-form video content

Retargeting - the process of targeting users who have previously interacted with a specific piece of content

Retweet - Reposting another users tweet on your own timeline

Robots.txt - a file created to instruct search engines on how to crawl their website

RSS Feed - Really Simple Syndication - a current list of information or notifications that a website delivers to its subscribers

S

SEM (Search Engine Marketing) - paid advertising involving the promotion of content in search engines

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) - the practice of improving a website to increase visibility in search engine results

SERP (Search Engine Results Page) - the page a search engine returns after a user submits a query

Site crawler - An internet bot that browses the internet to index content, also sometimes called a web crawler, spider, or spiderbot

Sitemap - a list of pages reflecting a website's content designed to help users and search engines navigate the site

Storyboards - a sequence of games representing shots planned for a video

Shorts - YouTube's version of short-form video content

T

Tagging - A method of mentioning and communicating with other users on a social media platform

Threading - A string of replies that make up a conversation on social media

Traffic source - The origin through which users made their way to a website

Troll - A user who leaves comments harassing, attacking or instigating others on social media

U

UA - Universal Analytics - the original version of Google Analytics that set the standard for how user data is collected and organized

UGC (User-Generated Content) - any content produced by individuals, as opposed to brands

URL - Uniform Resource Locator - the address of a webpage

UI (User Interface) - the means by which the user and a computer system interact, in particular the use of input devices and software.

UX (User Experience) - all aspects of the end-user's interaction and experience with a product or service

V

Value proposition - a statement that clearly identifies the benefits of an offering

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.jpg / .jpeg / .png / .webp - digital image formats commonly used for web publishing

.tiff - image file format commonly used in print publishing and graphic design