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Social Media Marketing for 2021

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Hi, I'm Giselle Aguiar and I've been doing Internet marketing since 1995 – yes, since before the Internet was a household word. My company is AZ Social Media Wiz and I've helped business owners, like yourself, get started online since 2011. Whether you're a brand new startup or an established business who is pivoting and making adjustments to better compete in today's crazy economy, this will give you an idea of what's happening in digital marketing in 2021.



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What 2020 has taught us is that we need to be ready for change. You need to be flexible. Moreover, you need to be able to pivot in a short amount of time if you want to stay in business. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March, most advertisers halted their campaigns. This affected the social media networks with a loss of income. However, with people staying at home and having to connect online, their membership and usage went up tremendously. Hence, as companies re-imagined their advertising, the social media networks are back and growing.

Keeping Up with Tech



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Now, remember, when it comes to technology and the digital world, we really don't know who's going to come up with the next great idea or who's going to fail. So, the best thing to do is to keep up with all this stuff. Clearly, you have to in order to be successful with your marketing efforts.



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Here are 13 Major Social Media Marketing Trends to Look for in 2021

Video Marketing



- ◆ Storytelling
- ◆ Explain your benefits in the 1st 15 seconds
- ◆ Eye-catching
- ◆ Nostalgia & comfort
- ◆ Customer testimonials
- ◆ Upload them everywhere


Videos and any animations are more eye-catching than still photographs and graphics. Have fun. First, not all videos need to be professionally done. Use your phone or tablet to record impromptu, casual videos with greetings and messages. It's all about storytelling. But you want to explain your benefits in the 1st 15 seconds, use eye-catching images, go for nostalgia & comfort. And you can never go wrong with happy camper customer testimonials.

Finally, upload them everywhere: YouTube, Instagram Reels, IGTV, Facebook, Twitter & LinkedIn. In addition, embed them in your blog.



Instagram Reels & IGTV

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Instagram Reels -- if you're trying to reach the average consumer, then Instagram is where you want to be. Reels are short videos -- under 30 seconds -- uploaded directly into Instagram from a mobile device. For longer videos, Instagram has a separate app, IGTV which connects to your Instagram account.

Stories



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Stories -- Everybody, including LinkedIn and Twitter -- now have a stories feature. Stories are short videos which appear at the top of a user's feed. So, they get more visibility. The only thing about stories -- which makes them different from Reels is that they disappear in 24 hours. The strategy here is -- so you don't think that the videos, which take time to prepare, record and edit, are wasted -- is to reuse them. What this entails is having several different videos prerecorded, and alternate posting them. Don't post the same ones over and over again. That's a sure way to lose followers fast.

Animated Gifs

Competiton is Fierce



4MPerformance.com

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Animated gifs are fun and eye catching -- When it comes to visuals, nothing beats an animation. They catch people's attention. The free online graphics tool, Canva.com now has the ability to easily create animations. A client of mine made this one on Canva.

Live Broadcasting



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Live Broadcasting -- Everybody's doing it! Should you? The question is: will this help reach your audience? It will help if you already have a social media following. Next, check your analytics and insights to see when your following is most likely to be on a network. At first, it might be a lot of hit or miss tries. Promote your live broadcast ahead of time. If you have an email list, promote it to them. A Live Q&A session with the expert usually attracts people with questions in your industry. What's cool, is that your Live session records and you can use it in other networks. Many platforms allow you to live stream to say, on Facebook and YouTube at the same time.

Plan ahead what you're going to cover, but be prepared for participant questions that may take you off topic.

Strategize what you'll say. You may want to script the intro or a short presentation then open it up for questions.

Podcasting



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Podcasting -- Podcasts are easier to produce than video, podcasting is also a popular way to reach your target audience. Personally, I prefer them to videos. You don't have to worry about lighting, if your hair looks good or what you're wearing. You also don't need fancy, expensive equipment. I have a personal daily podcast that I record through my headphones. I write a blog article first and that serves as my script. It sounds more professional that way. I have an in-depth article on my website on podcasting that will help get you started.

Influencer Marketing



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Influencer Marketing -- This will be vital for B2B as well as B2C. This is where you find someone with a lot of followers on a given network and hire them as a spokesperson. You could get lucky and an influencer may love your product so much that they'll talk about it for free. I have a recent article on my blog on an excellent example of how influencer marketing works. For B2B, the best place to network and find influencers is on LinkedIn.

Facebook

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Page Inbox Notifications Insights Publishing Tools Promotions Settings Help

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Home
Services
Reviews
Photos
Videos

Write a post... | Photo Album | Live Video

Business Service in Phoenix, Arizona
5.0 ★★★★★

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Facebook hasn't changed its mind on the algorithm change that happened back in March of 2018, so don't expect to get much organic exposure of your business page's posts unless you pay for the reach. Nevertheless, share your blog articles and post regular organic (non-paid) content -- this helps with search engine optimization (SEO). But, be aware that they won't get as much reach as the paid posts.

Know Your Competition?



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Know Your Competition -- If your competition is not using social media regularly or are blogging less than weekly, you can bump them off the first page of Google and put yourself there by posting on social daily and blogging more often. Any competitive research you may have done before 2020, needs to be redone. Don't underestimate the tech-savviness of your competition. Most have been forced to embrace technology this year.

Diversity



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Diversity -- Yes, showing cultural diversity is a good idea in your marketing, however, it's more important that your marketing reflect your target audience. If you determine your target market is over 40, then use pictures that show diverse older folks, not youngsters.

User-Generated Content (UGC)



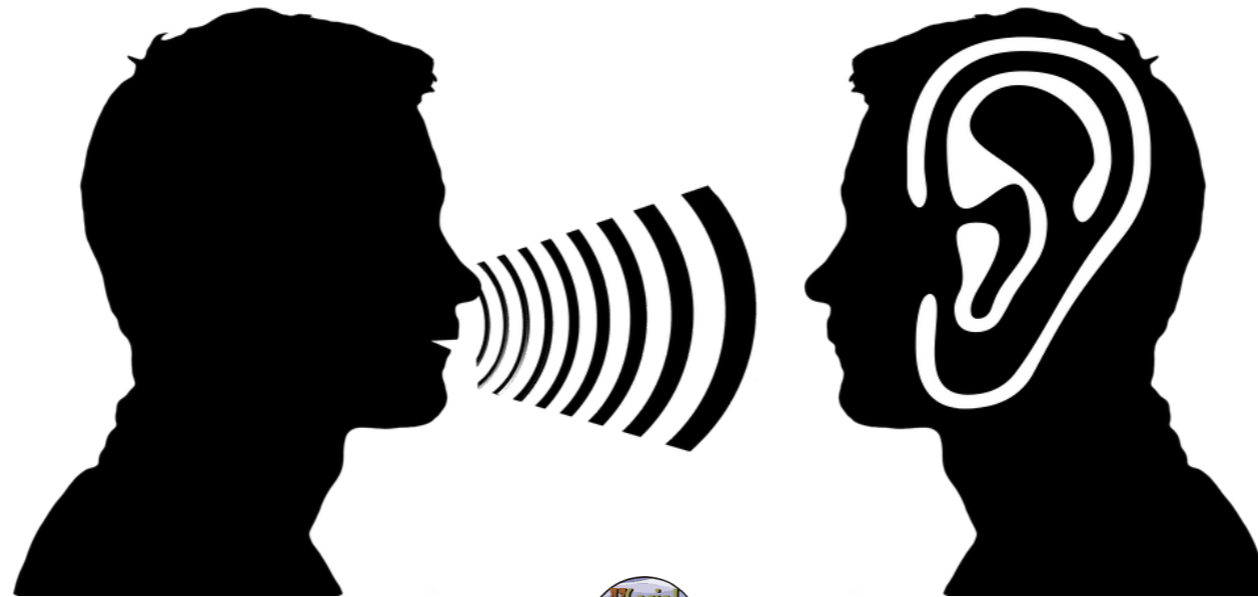
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User-Generated Content (UGC) -- One of the best advertisements you could ever get is a happy-camper customer using your product or service. Encourage them to send you pictures or videos of themselves, but let them know that it will be used in marketing and ask for permission.

Social Listening



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Social Listening – Monitor social media using tools like HootSuite or TweetDeck and watch when and how your competition posts online, as well as how your target market and industry influencers use the networks. On Twitter you can create Private Lists – the people you add to it won't see that you've added them – and you can watch what they post. Another place to do social listening is in groups. LinkedIn and Facebook both have groups. What's important is to search for and join groups where your target audience is as well as potential referral sources. On Facebook, some groups may let you join as your business page. Check the group's rules and respect them. Make sure your profiles are updated and accurate before you start requesting to join groups. The group owners will check you out to make sure you're not going to spam them.

Know Your Audience



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Know Your Audience -- If you try to reach everybody, you'll reach no one. Clearly define your target marketing niche(s). Then do some research to learn all you can about them.

User Experience (UX)



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Focus on User Experience (UX) -- The UX is everything a potential customer touches from their initial website visit to the conversion -- whatever you want them to do. Check your website and UX in all web browser and mobile devices to make sure everything looks and works well. A bad UX will cost you sales!

Empathy & Emotional Marketing



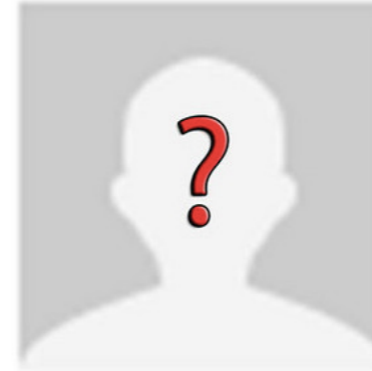
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Empathy and emotional marketing -- Be aware on how your target market's pain points may have changed and how you can help them. Show people that you empathize with what they're going through. However, see how your target audience views the world — put yourself in their shoes. And keep your biases and political leanings aside. Keep personal and business separate.

Trust & Credibility



Trust and Credibility – with all the deception still going on, people want to know who the real person is behind the brand or the company name. Authenticity, credibility, honesty, disclosure, transparency and trust are very important to consumers. As a small business owner, establishing your expertise and knowledge is key to gaining respectability and sales. People buy from whom they know and trust.

The screenshot shows the LinkedIn mobile app interface. At the top, the LinkedIn logo is displayed in blue on a yellow background. Below the logo, the time is 3:58 PM on Wednesday, February 19, and the battery level is 89%. A search bar contains the name 'Giselle Aguiar'. The navigation bar includes icons for Home, My Network, Jobs, Messaging, Notifications, Me, Work, and Advertise. A blue banner indicates 'You are viewing this page as a member' with a 'View as admin' button. An advertisement for 'Community Maintenance' is visible. The main content area shows the profile of 'SCORE Mentors Greater Phoenix', featuring a headshot of a woman, the company logo, and the tagline 'Mentors to America's Small Business'. The profile includes a 'Following' button and a link to 'See all 10 employees on LinkedIn'. At the bottom, there is a footer with the copyright notice '© 2021 Giselle Aguiar', a logo for 'Social Media Wiz', and the website 'AZSocialMediaWiz.com | @AZSocialNetWiz 21'.

Where to start is with your LinkedIn personal profile. You need to have a nice headshot with your full name. Your company logo should be on your company page and that should be listed in your personal experience. Never create a personal LinkedIn profile in the name of your company or use anything but your professional-looking picture on your profile. Keep the animals, party, travel and family shots on Facebook. However, I heard an expert say that with the new LinkedIn stories, it's OK to get a little "behind the scenes" personal. Since most folks are working from home, it's become a bit more casual. And because no one is networking in person, LinkedIn has become THE place to make new connections and show off your expertise. Post relevant industry related articles on your Company. Make sure everything is filled out and your branding is consistent. Your company page should be an extension of your website. Did you know that you can invite your connections to like your company page?

Transparency

- ◆ On Facebook, in the “About” section, add yourself and any other pertinent people of your team.
- ◆ On Twitter and Instagram, share pictures or videos of yourself in action.
- ◆ Blog regularly and use your full name. Have your bio on your website. Take credit for your expertise. Share articles on social media and repurpose them on LinkedIn.



Evolution



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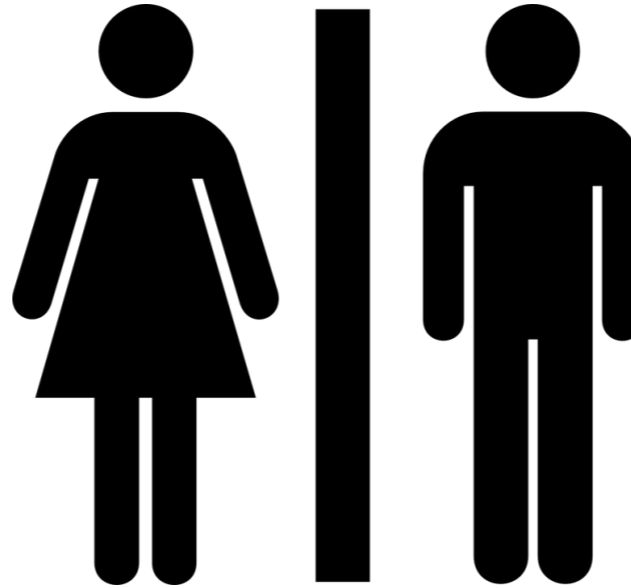


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Social media networks evolve with the times – and your marketing should, too!

If your budget is tight and you can't afford to hire someone to manage your social media for you, here are some tips to help you handle it all and keep your sanity! If you do decide to hire someone, make sure the person has experience in **MARKETING** on social media, not just posting on it. This is an essential function of your business, don't give this job to someone with no marketing knowledge or expertise.

Who's your Target?



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Before you start doing anything, you have to clearly define your target market niche. You can have more than one target audience.

SMART Goal Setting



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Plan out your marketing in monthly campaigns and be prepared to change them if needed. Be sensitive to what your target audience is going through. Make sure you set SMART Goals: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound. Set goals each month and adjust the goals for next month based on your analytics.

Focus



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Focus on one objective at time each month. Don't try to do everything at once. If you try to juggle too many things at once, you are liable to drop some through a crack.

Get Creative



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Create eye-catching graphics and/or videos with your marketing message and calls-to-action (CTAs). There are a lot of free tools that you can use. If you find you're not very creative — and not everyone is — it's right-brain, left-brain thing — hire someone. Don't be afraid to admit that you can't do it all yourself!

Schedule

Timetable

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						



Don't post erratically on social media. Have a posting schedule and your analytics and insights will tell you when the optimum time to post is for each network. There are several free tools to help you do this like HootSuite, Buffer and TweetDeck.

Monitor Everything



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Respond to comments and queries within a reasonable amount of time. People who message you on social media expect a response in a few hours if not faster. Watch and respond quickly to bad reviews. You can use a tool like HootSuite to monitor all your social accounts in one place.

Analytics



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Review your analytics and insights at the end of the month to see if you reached your goals. Take note of what worked and what didn't work. But don't get bogged down or over-think the data.

Plan For the Next Month



Plan out the next month's marketing and implement it.

Don't be Overwhelmed!



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All-in-all, no one knows what the "new normal" will be in 2021. We don't know how having a vaccine will affect people's social interactions. My best advice is to monitor the networks, do that social listening and watch your analytics and insights to stay abreast of your target audience's changing needs, wants, pain points and problems. You then must be ready to pivot and change in order to better meet them. I have a lot of articles on my website on everything digital marketing.