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# bulletin

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# Creating A Winning Social Media Strategy in Trying Times

BY KIM KELLEY, FRBMA

**COVID-19 has been wreaking havoc on everything it touches.** What remains of your pre-existing social media strategy may look like a pile of rubble. Pick it up, dust it off, and get ready to build something new, different, better, and stronger.

Those who are most successful in social media marketing connect with their audience with forethought, understand who the audience is, and give them content that they care about. During a worldwide crisis, social media success requires all of that and more. In challenging times, many let their goals and their online activity slip due to budget constraints. Seize this opportunity to add value, offer solutions, and be a leader.

## Identify opportunities

Social media thrives on supply and demand. If no one were looking, there would be no reason to post. Right now, demand is way up with so many people still working and schooling children from home. The problem with the current content largely available, is that most is polarizing, and will continue to be so for another couple of months, at least, due to the election year.

While many are chewing on a content diet of stress and worry, you can identify gaps that your business can fill. Look at these tips for ways build a stronger social media presence.

## Be human

So many brands are missing the boat when it comes to the true intent of social media marketing. Be human. Content should be less about sales and more about how you can connect with your audience. Be relatable. Content that fits with the humanized definition may not be particularly relevant to your brand. It may not include any branding at all. And it definitely doesn't seek to sell. Try a bit of humor, an appropriate meme, a relatable quote, or a gif. Better yet, snap a photo or a quick video with your phone of your staff and connect your audience with faces and names. Connecting with your target audience means being one among them.

## Create content

If you've tuned in to previous RBMA Bulletin marketing articles, you will know that writing fresh content is one of my top recommendations. Content in the form of blogs aides in cementing brand authority. Blogs become an editorial platform for content that you can break down into multiple social media posts with links back to your website. There is a strong tie between people who read your content and remain a customer over those who just visit your website. Sync your blog writing with your services so that you have content for the service focused post-type. Create a healthy balance and pay attention to the timing of your promotional posts.



### Discover influencers

That 5-star review sure looks good on your page. The person who gave the review was the ideal customer. They came to your business with a problem or a need, your team solved it beautifully, and provided a positive experience. You now have a possible brand enthusiast, and what you do next to seize the opportunity makes a difference.

Brand enthusiasts can be anyone in contact with your brand, even your employees, and can easily become brand ambassadors—people who are willing to speak positively on behalf of your brand. People who post positive online reviews also like to be discovered or featured. Use their comment for the benefit of your marketing and give them a mention at the same time.


Community involvement is another sure-fire way to cultivate mentions and influencers. Follow and comment other community business pages. Get involved, participate, and be recognized for your community minded presence.

### Campaign consistency

Organic reach has become more challenging over the years. Facebook intentionally made organic success more difficult to achieve in order to drive more use of promoted posts. But you can round out your marketing

aesthetic without breaking the bank. Create collateral with messaging and images that can be repurposed on your website, folded into graphics used in local media ad buys, added to your blogs, and, of course, turned into social media posts.

Further solidify your unified brand message and appearance by being consistent with hashtags. Develop a few that will be used repeatedly. It is ok to show personality with hashtags on occasion, but remember, their intent is to create searchable content streams and hashtags are the root of social listening.

Social media marketing is one of the most important ways to give your business a voice and a personality. We may never go back to what it was; but you can position your business for a new reality. 



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