



Social Media

Social media has become the most widely used avenue for advertising. Social media works because you reach an ever-growing audience (through sharing), the ads can be free (more on this later) and you can instantly change, update, remove, etc. your ad. Keep your ad fresh. Update your ad(s) at least once a week. Your update does not mean a whole new creative approach, but freshen with a different photo, tweak the wording, make it relevant for that week. Recipe of the week, kitchen tip of the day/week, etc. Special offers and incentives

There are many social media platforms, with a new one showing up every 6 months it seems. Keeping up with trends via words on this sheet are certain to become dated quickly. A Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc. search should pull up a wealth of ideas, how-to's and examples. Just search for items such as: what makes an effective facebook ad, or how to utilize social media advertising? And since you've probably been exposed to countless ads on your own device you may already have some ideas. A memorable ad with color and intrigue should make someone at least pause and evaluate.

Social media is free, and free advertising is about as good as it gets. Whether you have a following or not, regardless of the platform, you can most certainly craft your message and send out – also asking folks to both “like” you, and to share your message. You could be lucky and find positive results. Be consistent with new material and post no less than once a week with fresh material, even if you've just changed a photo and/or a few words. Don't expect overnight success. This method takes time, and you need to be seen by a lot of eyes, hoping to be seen by the right eyes. And while this may sound crazy, enlist some teens where social media is where they shine. They could provide some useful insight and ideas.

If you struggle to see any return for your invested time and efforts, perhaps turn to a social media expert who can definitely help you reach your ideal target audience. There will be a fee associated with the initial construction of the demographics you want to see your ad(s). This approach demands that you have a lot of material (ad content) to offer fresh, new messages/materials three times a week. In almost every platform, you will be charged each time someone clicks on a link – ideally taking them to your website. Be careful to use the right keywords, otherwise someone who isn't quite sure what you are offering, will click to learn more. And each click will cost you a small amount. Don't invite unwanted visitors. The developer can assist with all of this – but doing your research before that first meeting will make life easier on everyone and speed up the process. You need to identify who you want to see your ad. What age range. What income level. What geographic location. And there may be more filters you can have in place. In theory, your ads/messages will be seen by potential clients. If you direct the “click” to a unique page on your website, that allows you to frequently update that page. Maybe kitchen tip of the day, recipe of the week, etc. Having a unique “landing page” on your website also allows you to get reports about how many people have visited that page. Check with your webmaster or website hosting company. This data is readily available for free. Monitor those reports – if one ad is generating far more traffic than previous ads – decide what made that ad so popular (if possible).



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If you elect the paid ad approach, begin with a phone call or in-person meeting with whomever you want to check out to learn how they can help you. These companies would not be in business if their clients (you) don't see tangible results. When you decide to use a company to place ads focused on the demographic you want, get a sense of how long and how much money will be needed for you to start seeing results. Nobody can make guarantees, but you need to know your expenses and a general timetable before committing. And commitment should be open ended – where you can pull the plug whenever you want without penalties. This may sound a bit scary – it's not, but have a handle on what this whole process will be like.

There is also a middle area – where you will administer your self-created account. You make not need to pay anyone for the start-up, but you will need all the same demographic information you believe to be correct to attract people who are within your targeted market. An internet search for "how to advertise on facebook" for example, should provide you with several options, which may include companies as discussed earlier. Whatever you decide, you first need to do your homework to arrive at specifics for who you want to reach.

Finally – we all feel stupid when we get a new device. Take a cell phone as an example: you just became comfortable with how your phone works and you know a lot of the cool gadgets and tools you can use. Get a new cell phone and it's like starting over. New ways to arrive at the same destination – but there will be a learning curve to some degree.