

Marketing

B2B Social Media Marketing: How To Build a Strategy That Works

You don't have to be boring and corporate to connect with your audience. With creativity, authenticity, and AI, you can stand out in the feed.



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Great content doesn't usually happen by accident. The posts that go viral are often the result of days, if not weeks, of planning. [Salesforce | Aleona Pollauf]

Just because you work for a B2B company doesn't mean your social media presence has to be dry and super formal. The decision-makers you're trying to reach are human too. They're checking LinkedIn, but also scrolling through Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok for entertainment. B2B social media marketing should be engaging and fun, while still helping you get closer to closing business with your customers and prospects.

Many [B2B marketers](#) are finding success using the same social media strategies as B2C brands. Even though you're trying to speak more to executives and decision-makers instead of the general public, you don't always need to take a buttoned-up approach to your social marketing.

The goal is still the same: [connecting with your audience](#).

"B2B doesn't need to stand for 'boring to blah,'" said Kyle Legg, senior manager of social media at Salesforce. "You have to provide content that's informative and educational and positions your product appropriately for the right buyers, but they are still *people* scrolling through the feed. Your content should resonate with them on a human level."

Here's how you can build a connection with your target audience and generate revenue without coming across as inauthentic or salesy.

What you'll learn

- [What is B2B social media marketing?](#)
- [4 steps to build your B2B social marketing strategy](#)
- [What types of social media posts work best for B2B?](#)
- [How AI can help your B2B social media marketing](#)

What is B2B social media marketing?

B2B social media marketing is the process of distributing content through channels like LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, X, and YouTube to reach buyers and decision makers.

Increasingly, B2B marketers are seeing social as a vital part of their strategy. According to research by Wpromote, [60% of B2B marketers](#) polled in 2023 said that social media was the most effective channel for revenue – up from 50% in 2022.

Social marketing helps not only brand awareness, but also purchasing decisions. Wpromote's report also showed that half of B2B marketers said social was effective at capturing attention at the top of the funnel, and 46% said it contributed most to the bottom of the funnel.

A lot of that comes down to finances. While quality content often costs time and money to produce, the barriers to entry are low.

"Social media is a cost-effective entry point for B2B marketing," Legg said. "You can create an account and start broadcasting content to reach a wider audience of potential customers with a minimal investment. However, to position your brand as a thought leader and truly grow your presence, you'll likely need to invest in some initial paid promotion strategies."

It might not surprise you that LinkedIn is the B2B social platform of choice. Among B2B marketers surveyed by Content Marketing Institute, [84% said LinkedIn delivers the most value](#) among organic social media channels, with Facebook (29%) a distant second.

Something to note: TikTok is becoming a more powerful B2B social media marketing platform. Content Marketing Institute found that [19% of B2B marketers use the app](#), more than double the previous year.

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4 steps to build your B2B social marketing strategy

Now that you know a bit more about the B2B social media marketing landscape, it's time to build a strategy. I spoke with Legg, who has been on Salesforce's social media team since 2019, about how a B2B social marketer can start from scratch (or refresh a stale approach).

1. Set your goals

Social marketing isn't just a box to check off. It's a strategic, purposeful part of your overall marketing strategy. You can't just get on TikTok because your [CEO's kids love using it](#). Before you start posting, define why you're doing it, where you're doing it – and who you're doing it for.

Social media marketing can [help B2B companies](#) with:

- Brand awareness
- Growing website traffic
- Generating referrals through gated (sign-up required) whitepapers or reports
- Thought leadership
- Customer research via social listening
- [Customer loyalty](#) through engagement

2. Know your target audience

You'll need to learn more about your customer base before you post. Information like the industries your company works with, the age range of your buyers & decision makers you're targeting, and your company's strengths and weaknesses can help you brainstorm content ideas.

Look to your competitors' social accounts for some inspiration, seeing what kinds of posts get traction with their audience. Don't copy their tactics, of course, but use that information as a guide.

Learning more about your audience takes time, but the more you learn, the more engagement you'll get in the future. For example, you can use [polls on LinkedIn](#) to find out about customers' pain points, helping you craft relevant content.

3. Start a 90-day content calendar

Great content doesn't usually happen by accident. The posts that go viral are often the result of days, if not weeks, of planning.

Legg recommends starting with a 90-day content calendar. That doesn't necessarily mean you have to post something every day. But this will give you a stable framework, as consistency is king for B2B social media marketing. If you only post sporadically, you'll then be working against the channel's algorithm, which surfaces new and engaging content to viewers.

He also noted that you should also have a budget for ad campaigns that introduce your brand to new people, building your followers. This could mean partnering with a relevant influencer to grow your account or promoting your social presence via ads or other channels like email marketing.

It's an uncomfortable truth that you'll have to invest some money into targeted promotional campaigns to get your accounts off the ground (or recharge a stagnant channel). "If you build it, they will come," is a great movie quote, but a bad social marketing strategy.

Examine what content distribution channels your company already has, and look for ways to repurpose it for social. Content like blog posts, whitepapers, videos, and podcasts can set you up for success on social media.

"Does your company have a blog? Do they have a newsroom? Is there a PR team?" Legg said. "Leverage existing content within your organization. Find those internal stakeholders

who are creating content already that you can distribute on social."

4. Get legal clearance for content

Your legal team is one of the most important stakeholders for the marketing department. Especially if you plan to post memes or more fun content in addition to your more serious stuff.

Contributing to trends is one of the biggest ways to grow your social media presence – but it can also get your brand in trouble if done irresponsibly.

One thing Legg recommends is to put your own spin on a trending meme or video without using the original intellectual property. If you're unsure about whether or not you can post something going around, check with your legal department to see what flexibility you have.

"We 'Salesforce-ify' memes, so we're actually recreating memes from scratch and working closely with our legal team to get those approved," Legg said. "We're also cautious with trending audio, especially on platforms like TikTok. For brands, there are significant legal risks associated with using copyrighted music without proper licensing."



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What types of social media posts work best for B2B?

When it comes to capturing your audience's attention, keep it simple. Legg notes that social media posts don't need to tell every message. You can focus on one message per post.

When you're positioning your product in front of buyers, lead with their pain point, then clearly and quickly explain how you can solve it. Focus on how your product's features and benefits will improve your customer's outcome. You can do this with [quick video demos](#) of your product (ideally shorter than 30 seconds), and highlight individual features with GIFs.

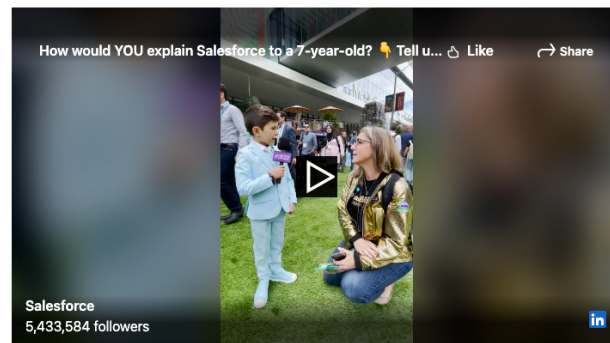
However, your product is only one piece of the puzzle. Your target audience scrolls through social media just like the rest of us, looking to be entertained. Here are some examples of what works well.

Lo-fi vertical video

Even outside of apps like TikTok, vertical video is a winning B2B social media marketing technique. You don't need to invest in a production crew, either.

Legg said that lo-fi vertical video (often just shot on a smartphone) outperforms standard hi-fi on LinkedIn. For Salesforce, this style of video gets 2-3X more engagements and video views than the average.

Going lo-fi builds authenticity for your brand, as your followers want something real, not another overly produced ad. Also, LinkedIn is [testing a vertical video feed](#) similar to what you see on other social media apps.



Showing your speciality

B2B customers want to know what makes you different from other options. While you may offer similar products or services to your competitors, you can showcase what makes you stand out.

This doesn't always have to be about your products. Show your company making a difference in the community, or winning an industry award, and it'll leave an impression on someone scrolling through.

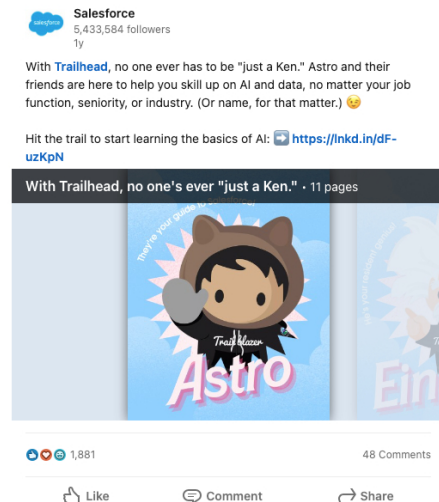
Polls

Posting polls on LinkedIn, Facebook, or X serves a couple of key purposes. First, you'll gain valuable insights into your community. Second, engagement generates impressions. As more people take action on your posts, it'll be seen by more people in their networks (especially on LinkedIn).

Memes

This one might surprise you, but B2B brands are finding success connecting with followers over memes. So long as you have legal clearance, try adapting a trending, relevant meme for your social channels. Just make sure it clearly ties back to your business' messaging.

"They quickly and easily communicate complex ideas and help your brand feel less 'corporate' and more real, approachable, and trustworthy," Legg said. "Their shareable nature can also exponentially increase your reach."



LinkedIn Newsletters

Having a great LinkedIn Newsletter can turn company followers into subscribers (at a rate of 10% to 25%, Legg said).

When you launch your newsletter, your company's followers receive an invite to subscribe, and new followers get an invitation when they follow you. They'll see this content in their notifications, feeds, and email inbox. Legg noted that within three months of launching our [Ask More of AI newsletter](#), we hit 1 million subscribers.

Use these newsletters to give an inside scoop into your business' expertise, building thought leadership.

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How AI can help your B2B social media marketing

Artificial intelligence (AI) can help marketers do more, especially on social media. According to our latest [State of Marketing report](#), 75% of marketers we surveyed are at least experimenting with AI. We also found that high-performing marketers are 2.5X more likely than underperformers to have fully implemented AI into their operations.

Here are a few ways AI helps B2B social media marketing.

Generating content ideas

Even the most creative marketers [get stuck sometimes](#). Using a generative AI tool like ChatGPT can help you break through that writer's block. With a [well-worded prompt](#) and a click, generative AI can produce rough ideas for copy on your social media posts. You can take that output and personalize it for your audience.

While using AI to generate copy sounds easy, your audience (and the algorithm) will catch on quickly. Use AI in the idea stage, but make sure the finished product comes from a human.

Surfacing timely insights

If you have a customer data platform fueled by AI, such as [Marketing Cloud Account Engagement](#), you'll gain vital insights into your customers. When you can see that your customers are interested in a certain product, or have distinct pain points, you can craft content that speaks to their needs.

AI can also show how well your social marketing campaigns are performing, allowing you to make decisions [based on up-to-date data](#).

Chatbots


You can't always monitor your DMs around the clock – but AI can. [Chatbots](#) can use AI to quickly answer basic questions from your social media channels and route leads to your sales team.

Scheduling posts

AI can determine the best times to post, based on your channels' engagement history. You can then have AI schedule your posts when your audience wants to see them most.

B2B social media marketing doesn't have to be boring or labor intensive. You can build relationships with buyers with just a good smartphone camera, smart planning, and creativity.

Have fun with your B2B social marketing efforts, but don't forget to make the customer the hero of your story.



Automate, then celebrate

Marketing Cloud Account Engagement can help you generate leads and grow revenue. See for yourself what AI and automation can do for your B2B marketing efforts.

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