

It's All about the Plan

Take charge of your marketing by creating a schedule

Do you have a few favorite TV shows you like to watch regularly? Chances are good that even though you don't need to watch them at the time they originally air (thank you, DVR!), you're aware of the shows' schedules. You know exactly when they're on and when you should look for them in the queue.

There's a funny thing about a regularly scheduled activity, whether it's a TV show, a regular food or supply delivery, or even a regular meal, where every course has its place. When you know when to expect the things you like or need, you actually start to look forward to them. And when they're not there, you take notice. You may even miss them!

What does this have to do with marketing, you may be asking? Well, if you've been haphazardly creating content without a regular schedule, you could be missing out on this very powerful phenomenon. After all, wouldn't it be great to have people looking forward to the marketing content you create? And better still to have them disappointed if they missed it?

When you make the decision to create a schedule, and remain consistent with it, you'll start to see the benefits much quicker than if you were to continue down the path without one. You'll start to notice more of everything within your online marketing plan: more subscribers, more readers, more fans, and more followers. You'll finally be in charge of your social media marketing.

Why is a regular schedule so powerful?

Again, just like a TV show, you're able to promote something specifically. For example, you can tease across social networks about what's coming up in your latest blog post or email newsletter. Just like the commercials do this for your favorite show or the nightly news. This allows you to generate interest and warm people up for the bigger conversation you're planning.

When you think in this way, based off a regular schedule, your marketing becomes more focused and engaging by nature, which is exactly what works in the social media space.



Let's take a look at the top four social media marketing platforms and the bare minimum you should post to them, and then adjust to achieve more from your marketing.

The key is to choose schedules you can stick with. If the below suggestions don't work for you, that's fine. Adjust as necessary. But be sure to commit to whatever schedule you choose.

Use the following suggestions as a starting guide for your communication plan:

1. Blog.

Plan on posting to your blog at least once a week. Same day, same time, every week. You may want to experiment at first with the exact times to see how your audience responds.

2. Email.

Plan on sending an email to your list at least once a month. Again, experiment with days and times. Then stick with what works best.

3. Facebook.

Update your Facebook Page status at least once a day. Experiment with different times to find out when you get the most engagement. Be sure to review your Page Insights to see what content people are interacting with the most.

4. Twitter.

Update your Twitter status at least three times a day. Remember, you don't always need to create the content you share. Find interesting links from those within your industry, and include a comment with your point of view.

Isn't this going to take a lot of time you don't have? Yes and no. At first you may need to allot yourself a bit more time. But once you have your schedule outlined, it's faster and easier to plug in the content where it's needed.

Thanks to tools like [HootSuite](#) you can schedule updates in advance to both Twitter and Facebook. That's great if you can only grab a few minutes here or there. Also, [NutshellMail](#) makes it easy for you to monitor and respond to questions and comments from an email that gets sent to you on a schedule you choose (kind of like your beloved DVR).

And of course, you're able to schedule your [email marketing](#) and blog posts to go live whenever you want them to.

So start thinking about a regular schedule for your marketing. Then you'll be on your way to creating fresh content that helps you get and keep more subscribers, more readers, more fans, and more followers! And just maybe your marketing will become as popular as your favorite show.

For more email marketing insights or to sign up for a free trial account, visit <http://sysco.constantcontact.com>.

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