

# The don'ts of social media marketing

By  Jessica Barrella

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Ah, social media marketing - the buzz words of today. When a customer searches the internet and finds you, not only do they expect to find an engaging website but they also look for you on social media.



Image credit: DESIGNECOLOGIST on Unsplash.

Social media is an awesome marketing tool that can help to expand your customer base, which translates into leads, conversions and, ultimately, sales.

This is all good news but if used incorrectly, social media can damage a company's image – which will cost them dearly. With this in mind let's look at a few of the don'ts of social media marketing so that you can avoid the pitfalls.



## 5 Common mistakes we all make on social media

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### Don't be a fake

This cannot be stressed enough. People quickly spot a fake and your reputation will be in tatters before you even start. Also, think about all the effort you will have to expend to keep up appearances!

### Don't post without proofreading

A post with spelling and grammar errors will make you look very unprofessional and tacky. Someone who cares about their business and customers will always proofread and spell check to deliver the best possible content.



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## Don't ignore negative comments or complaints

You can't please everyone – get used to it. Some negativity is inevitable and the way you handle it will make all the difference. Negative comments need to be prioritised and resolved.

It can be very discouraging receiving a complaint and your first instinct might be to delete it. **Don't!** Tackle the issue and you might be surprised to find that a negative can be turned into a positive.

## Don't push sales

Social media is just that, social. So, apply the 80/20 rule and keep sales to 20%. We are bombarded with sales messages online and wherever we go.



### How does social media support sales?

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You can keep your customers informed about your products, specials, etc. but don't make every post about your offerings. There are other facets to your business than sell, sell, sell, so make sure your customers know that.

## Don't ignore your audience

There is no quicker way to lose followers than by ignoring their questions, comments and messages. Nobody likes to be ignored – not even you!

So, keep a close eye on your social media pages and respond promptly to your followers. If this is not a priority you could very well not only lose followers but create hard feelings that will damage your brand.



### Nando's has hilarious response to Pick n Pay's new 'iNkukhu' advert

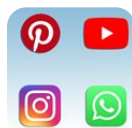
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Engage with your customers, create community and you won't be missing those opportunities to turn followers into loyal customers that will boost sales. Get the order right and you'll see the results you want.

## Don't complain

We all have our ups and downs and business is no different but don't use social media to pass on your sadness or vent about another company or customer.



Don't share everything on social media

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This is very important as it is a sure way of driving away potential customers. Rise above your competitors with positive and encouraging posts that inspire and inform your audience.

## Don't be a know-it-all

Being a know-it-all is easily translated as arrogance, a trait that I think we all resent. Humility is attractive and builds relationships.

Encourage your followers to share their opinions and comments and engage with them. Always be open to learning something new.

## Don't stress about number

Don't get caught up in the numbers game. Remember, quality tops quantity! Increasing your brand awareness and social network takes time so be patient.

Concentrate more on delivering thoughtful, inspiring, useful and relevant content to your growing audience.



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## DON'T write in all caps

Yes, this comes across obnoxious. You will leave your customers wondering if you are angry or if they have done something wrong. I'm sure we all agree that this is not the message you are wanting to project to your audience.

Employing these few tips and a good dose of common sense will help you build a loyal customer base. Remember your followers want to hear from you so don't disappoint. Roll out those great posts and see your business become more profitable.

## ABOUT JESSICA BARRELLA

Jessica Barrella is passionate about helping other small businesses and entrepreneurs reach the next level with solid marketing.

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