

## 6 Keys to Mastering Social Media Marketing



**By Craig Wagner**

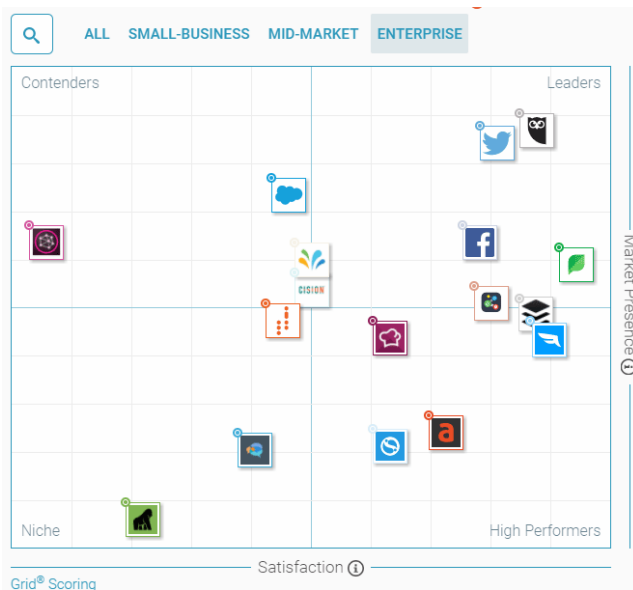
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*Are you interested in getting serious about social media marketing, but aren't sure where to start? If so, look no further. Here are 6 keys to mastering social media marketing.*

## 1. Use a Leading Social Media Management Tool.

Managing a robust social media presence takes time and discipline. Social Media Management tools help you do it right, by giving you one platform that can manage all your social media networks in one place. In fact, consider a Social Media Management tool mandatory. Here are some of the important tasks they make easier:

- Publish, schedule/calendar your posts
- Enforce a workflow process so posts have proper pre-approval
- Respond to customer queries
- Analyze your social activity
- Store and archive your social posts



Realistically, all tools provide the same core functions, and some are even free. However, I recommend going with one of the market leaders: [Hootsuite](#), [Sprout Social](#), [Falcon.io](#), or [Buffer](#).

They are all well-established enterprise class systems that can do everything you need, making it easier to find people familiar with them. Hootsuite has the largest market penetration, sporting 79 of the Fortune 100 companies.

All tools have pricing plans that scale: offering increasing capabilities for increased monthly costs. [G2 crowd](#) has a helpful grid that shows the market presence and user satisfaction of

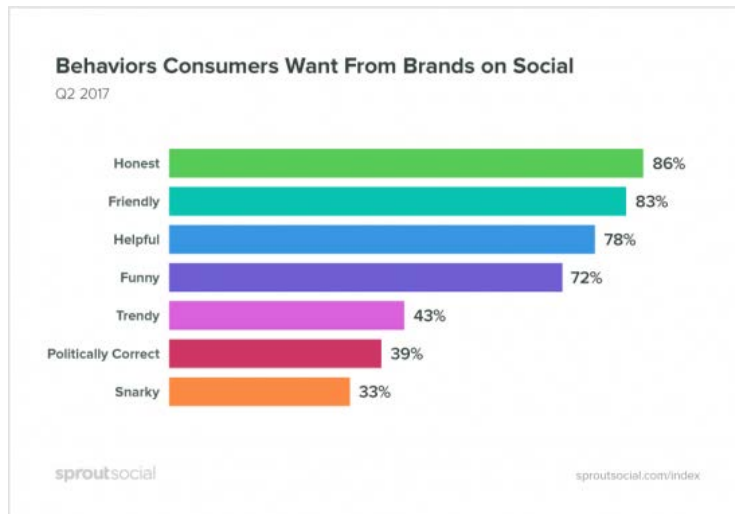
many tools.

Especially important for newbies to social media marketing, these tools nudge you to organize effectively to get social media ROI (“oh, that posting calendar is cool, I need something like that!”)

## 2. Determine and showcase your organization's personality.

They call it “social” media for a reason. People use them to be sociable and engage, not to be told. People want to feel they are authentically interacting with real people, not some marketing robots

(egads!) trying to push them through a sales funnel. These are networks where we can and should be personable.



To be personable, clearly define your organization's personality and reflect it in all your posts.

There are some core traits you want in your social media personality. They are the same things people want friends to be: honest, friendly, helpful, and funny. Project these in your social personality.

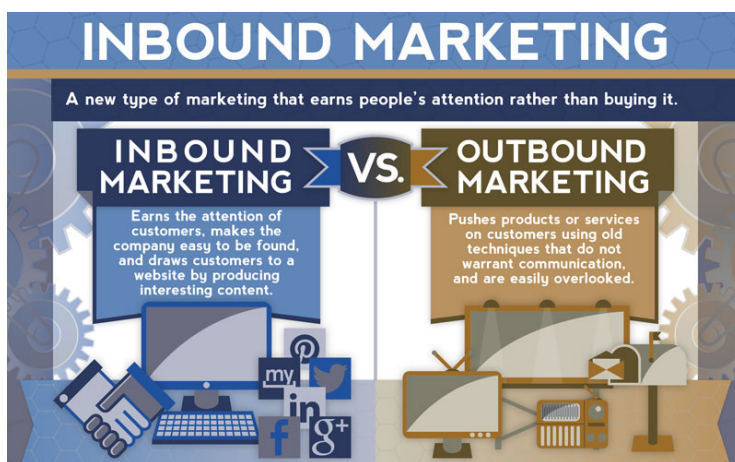
Although these traits are very important and the starting point of your personality, they are a bit generic. A social media landscape where everyone projected only these four

characteristics would be boring. What else defines your personality? Are you edgy? High-energy? Able to turn a phrase? A no-nonsense straight-talker? The smartest kid in the room? A hard-scrabble street fighter?

Whatever you do, make your personality honest. Your personality is a key component of your brand, so use each of your social media posts as an opportunity to let your brand-based personality shine through.

### 3. Don't be pushy.

People are jaded. They put themselves on no-call lists. They unsubscribe at a fast clip. They shunt things to their spam folder. To be successful with social media, we need to respect the fact that people DO NOT want things pushed at them. They want to dive into the ocean of social media content and pull out what interests them. People don't want to be influenced, they want to be informed on their own terms.



The social media marketer therefore walks a tightrope. Their job is to influence. They must develop leads and ensure that potential buyers progress through a sales funnel. But they must do it by engaging and enticing people into dialog. They want to draw people into the tent instead of opening the flap and shoving them in.

This change of perspective is at the crux of a paradigm shift in marketing. It is

often characterized as a change from more traditional outbound marketing to inbound marketing.

### 4. Understand the demise of organic (free) reach.

Facebook was once a free source of market visibility. What marketing maven doesn't like that? However, freebies are rapidly becoming a thing of the past. Facebook may finally end organic reach on the News Feed. Later this year, they will roll-out "Explore Feed," a form of second-class feed just for business information. Testing is underway in some countries to end all company social posts from the increasingly crowded News Feed.

It is important to recognize that Facebook is now a paid platform for companies, just like traditional pay-to-play advertising channels like TV, radio, and print. To reach an audience in the News Feed is going to require expending advertising dollars. 51% of companies currently feel they have inadequate social media budgets today, so Facebook's move compounds the problem.

But, there is good news. Facebook has some of the most precise ad targeting tools available, being able to slice and dice by geography, personal interests, age, career and more.

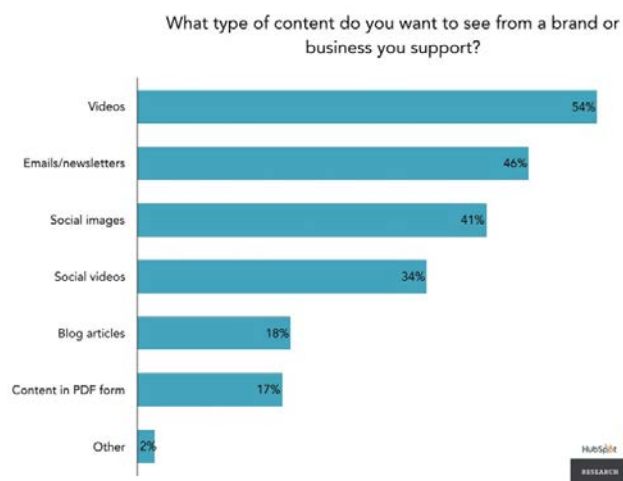
## 5. Find a Passionate Social Media Marketer.

All marketing is communication, but you need a particular type of communicator to help your organization excel at social media. You need someone who believes in the engagement and dialog that social media offers. Someone who finds value in their own personal use of social media. Someone steeped in the character of each social platform you use.

You need a communicator with passion since success often follows passion in social media. An effective social media strategy results in pumping out a lot of valuable content across several networks, so finding content you are passionate about is also important.

## 6. Start Shifting Toward Visual Media.

Social media users have spoken (see the [Hubspot](#) chart below): they want to see video from the businesses and brands they support. So that's where you should be headed. To keep pace with your competition and to appeal to your audience, consider developing in-house talent for videos, animation, and infographics.



That can seem a bit daunting. After all, most marketers are comfortable with the written word, and can create text all day long. Many also have an eye for graphic design and can select good images from vast libraries of pictures.

But most of us know very little about how to create a good-looking video or animated segment. We can do PowerPoint-level graphics but haven't created artistic infographics.

Luckily, a growing set of tools and resources make creating visual media much easier. Professional stock videos (see [Pexels](#), [Videvo](#)) and interesting sound clips help you avoid too much heavy lifting. Intuitive video editing software (simple versions for free) help with the video, cut/paste, cross-fades, and title overlays. Animation software with pre-built

scenes (consider [Powtoon](#), [Animatron](#), and [Moovly](#)) makes animation a process of stitching template ideas together more than creating them from whole cloth. Even high-quality vlogging gear can be purchased for under \$1000.

The best way to begin is to look at what your competition is doing. Start small and focus on quality more than quantity (a poor-quality video can give a ding to your brand that you don't need). As you develop your video talents and sensibilities, you can increase their complexity and volume.

*Consider these 6 keys to mastering social media for turbo-charging your marketing in 2018!*

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