



Community Growth

Gathering more of the right people around your brand



**“You don’t want just fans,
you want engaged fans...”**

... engaged fans will bring other engaged fans with the word-of-mouth being in your favor.”

- MassPlanner

5 Ways to Grow a Quality Following

1. Start with who you know
2. Consider who surrounds your customers
3. Go to where they are
4. Craft growth-minded content
5. Get scrappy!

#1 Start with who you know



#1 Start with who you know

- There are a couple of key ways to build community around your brand.
 1. Go out and meet new people, hoping to move them from zero awareness to conversion in a short amount of time
 - OR
 2. Connect with the people you already know, and leverage the current relationships to build new ones
- The low-hanging fruit is #2, where you bring your “inner circle” online, build into them, and rely on their word of mouth to bring new people in.
- The point is, you don’t have to start from nothing and build one-by-one. Start with the people who already know and love you!

#1 Start with who you know

- According to a recent study, there's just a 4% overlap between a company's customers and their social media followers.
- If your customers aren't following you, then who is? Something to consider. There's likely a significant opportunity to close that gap between those who buy and those who follow.
- Luckily, email is your best friend. If you have someone's email (and even better, their name too), then you have everything you need to find them on social media.
- See the next few pages for why email is your new best friend.

For Facebook

- Facebook allows you to upload your customer/email list and target them with ads. So cool.
- You may want to target this list to invite them to follow your page, or to let them know about special events or offers.
- Once this “custom audience” is setup, you can then create a “lookalike audience” that matches the traits of the people in your email/customer list. Note: the smaller audience size you select, the more closely they will resemble your current customers.
- Visit these links to get started
 - Custom audience: <https://www.facebook.com/business/a/custom-audiences>
 - Lookalike audience: <https://www.facebook.com/business/a/lookalike-audiences>

For Twitter

- Create GMail account and upload email addresses into google.com/contacts (via Desktop)
- Log into Twitter account
- Visit - https://twitter.com/who_to_follow/import
- Import GMail contacts into Twitter
- Either select/follow all, select/follow some, or click them individually to add to a customer Twitter list

For Instagram

- Create GMail account and upload email addresses into google.com/contacts
- In your phone's settings > mail/contacts/calendars, add GMail account to sync contacts. If necessary, delete personal (temporary - can add it back later). Also, turn off iCloud sync.
- Log into Instagram account
- In Instagram settings under Follow People, add/follow contacts from GMail

For Mailchimp

- A tool called “social profiles” will show you which social media platforms are used by contacts in your list
- You’re then able to see which email contacts are most influential, based on their followers and activity level
- You can even view and connect with each of them individually
- See screenshots on the following slides and learn more at: <https://mailchimp.com/features/social-profiles/>

[Campaigns](#)[Templates](#)[Lists](#)[Reports](#)[Automation](#)

Maria
Nom Depot



Nom Depot Online Store 43,791

[Switch List](#) ▾[Stats](#) ▾[Manage subscribers](#) ▾[Add subscribers](#) ▾[Signup forms](#)[Settings](#) ▾

Social Profiles Powered by FullContact



Data collected for 15,764 (35.9%) out of 43,791 subscribers.

Facebook

[13,137 \(29.9%\) of subscribers](#)

Send To Segment ▾

Twitter

[3,941 \(8.9%\) of subscribers](#)

Send To Segment ▾

LinkedIn

[8,320 \(18.9%\) of subscribers](#)

Send To Segment ▾

[Campaigns](#)[Templates](#)[Lists](#)[Reports](#)[Automation](#)

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Nom Depot Online Store 43,791

[Stats](#) ▾[Manage subscribers](#) ▾[Add subscribers](#) ▾[Signup forms](#)[Settings](#) ▾

alex@freddiesjokes.com

Alex Cornell



Subscribed: Nov 22, 2013 08:40 am

[Unsubscribe](#)[Delete](#)

587 of 43,791



Want To Track VIPs?

[Details](#)[Activity](#)[Notes](#)[Conversations](#)[E-Commerce](#)[Goals](#)[Social Profiles](#)

Facebook

alex_c

LinkedIn

<http://www.linkedin.com/pub/8675309>

Flickr

<http://flickr.com/people/8675309>

Foursquare

http://foursquare.com/alex_c

#1 Start with who you know

- Another important avenue for growing your following is to invite people who you interface with through other channels, including online and offline.
- The key is to give them a good reason to connect with you on social media - in other words, “like us on Facebook” or displaying a Facebook icon is no longer enough.
- Some ideas:
 - Have the links with a clear call-to-action in your e-mail signature
 - Cross-promote on all of your social platforms
 - Include your social media account (and content!) on your business card or other print pieces, in your local store, banner ads, forums and events.

#2 Consider who surrounds your customers



#2 Consider who surrounds your customers

- No one follows a brand they've never bought from.
- BUT if you give customers reasons to share about their experience, these potential customers will hear about it.
- Think about that difference - you going at new people directly, or instead going through your customers to get to them.
- The best way to reach new customers is through your current ones, which is why it's so important to invite them to connect and then give them reasons (great content) to stick around.

#2 Consider who surrounds your customers

- It's also important to consider who your customers talk to, where they go for information, and who they place their trust in. Dig deep to understand how they spend their time - what they read, watch, listen to, attend.
- Then, depending on what you find, hand over the mic to those influencers who hold your target audience captive.
- A great example of this is when the Wynn Hotel opened in Las Vegas. They could have marketed directly to potential customers, but instead they invited local cab drivers to stay and eat for free before the hotel opened to the public. The result was significant word of mouth from cab drivers all over the city who are constantly asked by tourists to recommend the best places to eat, shop and gamble.

#2 Consider who surrounds your customers

- Finally, influencer marketing holds a lot of potential for brands both big and small.
- While the big brands typically seek out “social media celebrities” with giant followings and pay hundreds (and sometimes thousands) of dollars for access to their network, the strategy for smaller brands should involve identifying and nurturing “micro-influencers.”
- Scan your email and follower lists to spot people who have a good following and solid engagement. Look for people who are a good fit for your business, including what they talk about and how often they respond to your brand’s social media posts. Invite them to an exclusive experience, then regularly hook them up and watch the word of mouth pour in.

A few “micro-influencer” examples

- **Maker’s Mark** - a classic example whereby anyone can sign up and get their name on a barrel of bourbon. The “ambassadors” also receive personal emails from the CEO to meet up in person, invites to private parties, bar glasses, and holiday cards to send to friends.
- **Overlook Lodge** - this “The Shining”-inspired bar asks patrons via their menu to “ask about Room 237.” Bartenders then choose their favorite regular once/month, who gets a special keychain that says Room 237 and their name, which they present for 10% off for a lifetime. They also plan special experiences throughout the year to continue to engage these regulars.
- **Taste of Belgium** - a hand-selected group of “Tastemakers” was specially invited to dine at the newest restaurant location before it opened to the public. Each month, they’re nurtured with free meals, bottomless drinks and even the opportunity to walk in the Cincinnati Reds Opening Day Parade. The company now benefits from ongoing word of mouth from this growing army of connected brand-builders.

Micro-influencers = long-lasting relationships



A few “micro-influencer” examples

- **Potbelly**- when Potbelly first started going national, they sent a letter to people who had moved from Chicago to that city. So people who had moved from Chicago to Austin, when they were opening up their Austin stores, they sent handwritten letters that said, "Hey Matthew, I bet you miss us from when you lived in Chicago. Well, guess what? We're bringing Potbelly Restaurants to Austin, and here's a coupon for 10 free sandwiches." This is genius, partly because it's so simple, but with 10 coupons for free sandwiches, you'd go yourself and eat the 10 sandwiches. But with one coupon for 10 sandwiches, it means you have to run around your dorm or run around your office and tell everybody in the place how great Potbelly is and how much you love it, and you're going to buy everybody lunch, and you're going to talk to 25 people to get nine friends together so you can go and get your 10 free sandwiches. They turn you into an instant evangelist with that one simple offer.

- via Andy Sernovitz in *Word of Mouth Marketing*

#3 Go to where they are



#3 Go to where they are

- Would you sit at home and expect to make connections at a networking event? Of course not - you'd go to the event! The same holds true for building your audience on social media - you can't just hang out on your page. You have to interact with people on their turf.
- Amazing things can happen when you focus on giving attention, rather than getting it.
- Some quick examples:
 - Comment on a client's blog post
 - Favorite and re-share a photo you're tagged in
 - Pull your customer emails to Instagram or LinkedIn and connect with them
 - Set up a saved search for common interest topics by keyword or hashtag and spend time each day engaging in conversation

#4 Craft growth-minded content



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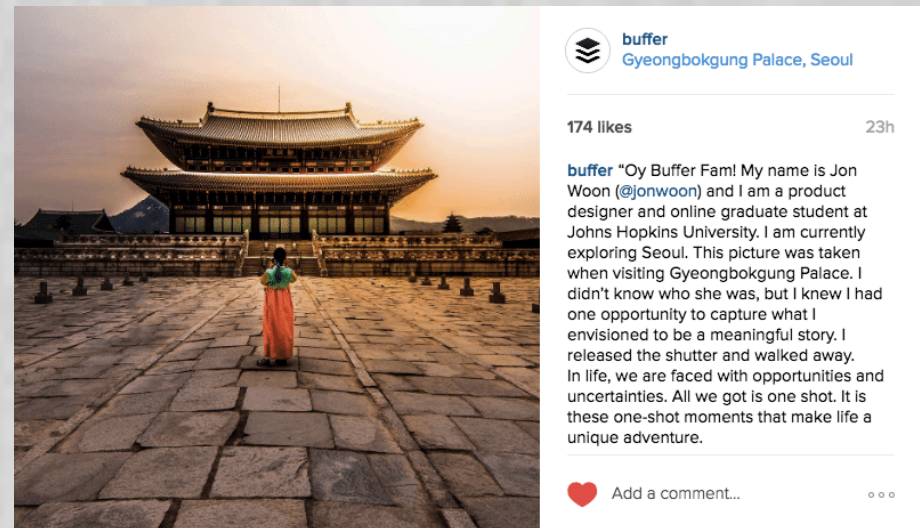
- You can do yourself a lot of favors by being very strategic with the content you create - particularly, content that's not just meant for consumption but for sharing.
- Some quick tips:
 - Consider the optimal time to post based on the social media platform but also consider context for when people will be most receptive.
 - Be consistent with your hashtag list to improve discoverability of your posts, especially on Instagram. Save the list in Evernote and copy/paste each time.
 - Tag and mention other users as appropriate.
 - In your status updates, ask users to like, comment and/or share. "Tag your friend in the comment" works well if the reward matches the effort.
 - Freshen up your page on each social media platform so that people feel compelled to follow when they visit.
 - Post consistently so that you retain current followers

#4 Craft growth-minded content

- Another key aspect of growth-minded content is putting just as much attention into distributing the content as you do with creating it.
- Some examples:
 - Display tweets on a menu
 - Include favorited tweets as customer testimonials/reviews on your website
 - Display Instagram photos from your business on a physical wall or a printed photo book
- A branded hashtag campaign is a great way to drive user-generated content, which is a beautiful one-two punch: people share about you to their networks, and you get a large supply of authentic content to share with your followers. See a couple of examples on the next few slides.

A couple of branded hashtag campaigns

- The company Buffer started the hashtags #BufferStories and #BufferCommunity to showcase the unique stories of their users. These hashtags have opened up a huge variety of content options from curated stories of digital nomads to social media tips from marketers. Each time they share a new UGC photo on Instagram, they're sure to include these hashtags. Every once in a while they include a CTA along the lines of: "share your story using #BufferStories" to keep the campaign alive.



A couple of branded hashtag campaigns

- Most of us don't know anything about Estonia and probably don't know where it is on the map. When your job is to promote travel to a country most people aren't acquainted with, you have to be really really creative to be successful.
- Enter, **Epic Estonia!** Unlike the typical bureaucratic travel ministry approach, when Estonia's travel ministry wanted to increase tourism, they simply took to social media and let the millennials do the talking (and the SnapChatting, and the blogging, and the Instagramming and the Facebooking, you name it)
- In a series of 90+ short and catchy videos tagged #EpicEstonia, they showcased everything from scuba diving in an underwater prison to spectacular rooftop tours given by an area chimney sweep.
- Each video ran around 30 seconds and is presented in a playlist, making it easy for those dreaming about exotic travel to go into virtual free-fall.
- The campaign had all the makings of a well-followed travel blog, including blogs based on real experiences, real and high quality images and videos, a memorable hashtag, and a nifty Instagram-meets-Tumblr-like website.



EPIC ESTONIA

HALSA & SKÖNHET

#24

UPPVÄRMNING INFÖR MARATHON
MED PREMIARMINISTERN

UPPLEVT AV
HANS ÖRTEGREN



NATUR & ÄVENTYR

#82

CYKLA MED I GRAN FONDO

UPPLEVT AV
ANNA KORBUTIAK



NATUR & ÄVENTYR

#43

SEGELTÄVLING! PROVA LIVET SOM
SEGLARE I ETT TEAM

UPPLEVT AV
ALEXANDRA S HAVIK



NATUR & ÄVENTYR

#91

ÅK MED SOM KARTLÄSARE

UPPLEVT AV
NIKLAS LARSSON



NATUR & ÄVENTYR

#50

FRITT FALL I 25 SEKUNDER

UPPLEVT AV
ANDRÉ FERREIRA BARBOSA

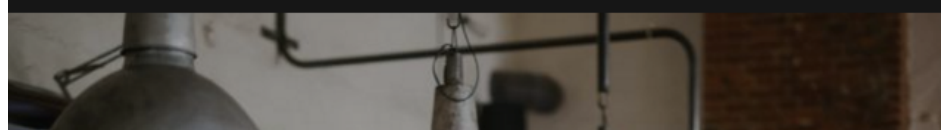


MUSIK & UNDERHÅLLNING

#45

DELTA OCH UPPTÄD I EN
ELDSHOW!

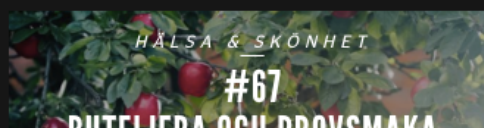
UPPLEVT AV
CARITA IVANOVA



HALSA & SKÖNHET

#67

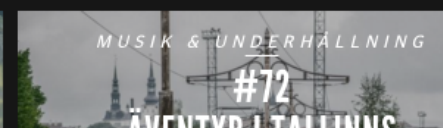
RUHELIGA OCH PROVSMAKA



MUSIK & UNDERHÅLLNING

#72

ÄVENTYR I TALLINN



Some quick tips for using hashtags

- **Make it visible** - figure out where your customers are when they would ideally use the hashtag, and find a way to put it in front of them in that moment.
- **Reward people who use it** - finding, recognizing and rewarding users who have joined the conversation.
- **Employ a live feed** - a one-two punch for recognizing people and promoting your hashtag's use
- **Leverage influencers** - come out of the gate strong by leveraging a group of people who can push the hashtag out early and often.
- **Pick a hashtag people will use** - it's helpful if your hashtag does NOT include your company name.
- **Learn from the best** - #TweetFromTheSeat (Charmin), #LikeAGirl (Always), #PutACanOnIt (Red Bull) and #RuleYourself / #IWILL (Under Armour)

#5 Get scrappy!



#5 Get scrappy!

- Good things come to those who...get after it. Work hard for your community, lean in with a “give first” mentality, and the benefits will come.
- Some examples:
 - As people engage with your Facebook posts, click to open up the post and then invite them via your personal account to follow your business page.
 - Check out some social media automation tools (like Instagress and IFTTT) so that you’re showing up without any unnecessary repetition.
 - On more public platforms like Instagram and Twitter, pull your followers from those who follow your top competitors
 - Pin top content to the top of your business pages so that people are convinced you’re worth following. First impressions mean a lot!
 - For long-form content, gather and include quotes from people with influence and then send them the article for sharing
 - Use a free tool like Hellobar to invite website visitors to follow you