



ACCELERATE – LESSON 8 – RUNNING FACEBOOK CONTESTS

On completion of this lesson you should:

- ***Be aware of how contests can be a part of your digital marketing campaign***
- ***Be aware of the types of contests you can run***
- ***Be aware of the rules surrounding running social media contests***
- ***Be aware of tools & apps which can help you create social media contests***
- ***Understand the phases of launching a social media contest***

In this lesson, as with many lessons in the Accelerate program, we are going to assume a certain level of knowledge for this lesson, and presume that you:

- have already got a website or blog
- have already got a Facebook business page

If you haven't, we suggest you participate in the following modules:

- Website Design & Development
- Social media for Business

So why consider a social media contest as part of your digital marketing campaign?

It's one thing to have a Facebook business page, and another to have people to have likes and be getting engagement from the posts on your page. But if you want to take things to another level, and potentially achieve a wide range of goals, it's definitely worth having a look at social media contests.

So as always, the first thing to consider before running a contest is 'why am I doing this?' or what are the objectives of your campaign.

Some possible objectives of the campaign include:

- Increase awareness of a new product
- Increase the number of free trials
- Collect leads with detailed information
- Generate customer referrals

- Increase average daily visitors
- Increase newsletter subscribers
- Increase social media followers ([Facebook fans](#), [Twitter followers](#), etc.)
- Increase social media exposure (more repins, more retweets of your message, etc.)
- Increase sales
- Generate brand loyalty by delighting existing customers with a chance to win a big prize
- Increase [social media engagement](#)

EXERCISE: Consider what objective may be suitable for your digital marketing campaign, and which one you will have in mind as you do a digital marketing campaign.

So what kinds of social media contests can you run?

There are six main types of contests. They are:

- Sweepstakes (nothing required – most common on Twitter)
- Connect (like/follow the company's social account to enter)
- Like (like a particular piece of content to enter)
- Share (share a piece of content to enter)
- Vote (state preference from among multiple pieces of content to enter)
- Create (develop user-generated content and upload to enter)

There is no 'better' type of social media contest, it simply depends on what objectives you are seeking to fulfil and who your target market is, and what you think they will respond to.

How to plan to run a social media contest

There are several considerations in terms of planning before you get started with your social media contest. Here they are:

Where will you run it?

First things first, where will you run this contest? Facebook? Instagram? Twitter? Or will you run it on multiple platforms and put slightly different spins on it for each?

How will people enter?

This goes back to the type of campaign you are doing, but you'll also need to consider whether images will need to be uploaded, hashtags used or otherwise. There are hundreds of possible variations, but remember, **the more you ask your audience to do, the fewer will do it.** Remember too, that the younger your audience, the more comfortable they will be giving you information and creating content as in images, videos etc. for your contest.

Theme of the campaign

Is this a one off contest? Seasonal? Does it tie into a particular product or service launch? Remember, the theme/name of the campaign will guide the

rest of the creative, so take some time to get this right. Also, **try to keep your contest name short, as long names eat up valuable characters** in tweets and social media ads.

How long will the comp run

21-28 days is the ideal duration for a sweepstakes promotion. Two weeks is often too short and more than a month is too long.

Graphics

Unless you are planning a very simple Twitter promotion, you'll need to create professional graphics to support your contest. Fortunately we've already learnt this during the Accelerate program so you are good to go! These may include cover and profile images, logos, headers, landing pages, emails, promoted posts and other forms of advertising you may do to promote the campaign.

It's also worth noting that for Facebook, your promoted post images can't have more than 20% text in the graphics. To check if yours do go to <http://www.social-contests.com/check-image/>.

Prizes

What will winners of your social media contest receive? Is this something that would excite them and encourage them to enter? A client of ours suggested that we give away iTunes cards as the target market for their competition whose target market was 17 – 21 year olds. We suggested that this would not be an attractive prize, as people simply stream music these days, which he wasn't aware of. We ended up choosing x4 tickets to a music festival, which was definitely attractive but even in this there were logistics to consider. How would we buy the tickets, how would we transfer the names to the winners names. In short, think it right through.

Budget

You could run a social media contest for free but you'll probably get a much better result if you allocate some budget to things such as Facebook promoted posts, Twitter promoted tweets, ad opportunities on Instagram and Pinterest, amplification networks like Outbrain, Taboola and Stumble, and other options. Remember that even if your social media contest is taking place on one platform, you can use multiple platforms to amplify it. How much can you spend on this?

Editorial Calendar & Timeline

Towards a social media contest you also need to plan (on Excel, a special Google calendar and/or your social media management software) all the social media posts, EDMs and other communications you'll do to promote your contest. You also need to consider the writing of some legals. More on this soon. Also remember that your social media contest has five phases: pre-launch; launch; last chance; completion; winners. You'll need to write and plan messages for each phase.

Monitoring and measuring

Participants and prospective entrants will have questions and comments about your contest. Who will monitor and answer these? What is your plan for nights and weekends coverage? Plan for this.

Don't break the rules

At the end of 2013 Facebook updated their guidelines in to make it easier for businesses of all sizes to create and administer promotions on Facebook. The key updates were:

Now, promotions may be administered on Page Timelines *and* in apps on Facebook. For example, businesses can now:

- Collect entries by having users post on the Page or comment/like a Page post
- Collect entries by having users message the Page
- Utilize likes as a voting mechanism

As before, however, businesses cannot administer promotions on personal Timelines.

In order to maintain the accuracy of Page content, our Pages Terms now prohibit Pages from tagging or encouraging people to tag themselves in content that they are not actually depicted in. So, for instance:

- It's OK to ask people to submit names of a new product in exchange for a chance to win a prize
- It's not OK to ask people tag themselves in pictures of a new product in exchange for a chance to win a prize

For more information regarding Facebook's promotions policies, check out their downloadable [Promotion Guidelines](#), which include FAQs and best practices for running promotions through Facebook.

APPS/SOFTWARE TO CREATE FACEBOOK CONTESTS

Once again there are many great tools to help you create Facebook contests quickly and easily. These include:

1. Woobox Sweepstakes: Contest Tool to create sweepstakes that ask users to like or follow you on Facebook, pinterest and twitter.
WEBSITE: <http://woobox.com/sweepstakes>
2. OfferPop Offerpop is an engagement marketing software-as-a-service platform transforming how global brands engage and convert today's mobile and social consumers.
WEBSITE: www.offerpop.com/
3. ShortStack Tool to drive traffic to your ShortStack Campaigns and Facebook apps from anywhere on the web
WEBSITE: <http://www.shortstack.com/>
4. ExactTarget Marketing Cloud (formerly Buddy Media)) Helps you make the most of every customer interaction, creating personalised, cross-channel customer journeys that deliver exceptional brand experiences.
WEBSITE: <http://www.exacttarget.com/au/>

5. Google Wildfire: a social media marketing company that helps advertisers manage their pages on Facebook
WEBSITE: <http://www.google.com/intl/fr/doubleclick/>
6. Iconosquare: Get your total number of likes received, your most liked photos ever, your average number of likes and comments per photo, your follower growth charts and more advanced analytics
WEBSITE: <http://iconosquare.com/contests-open.php>
7. Piqora - Piqora (previously Pinfluencer) is the enterprise marketing and analytics suite for visual, interest-based networks such as Pinterest, Instagram and Tumblr. The leaders in Pinterest-specific contest oversight – and metrics)
WEBSITE: <http://www.piqora.com/>

EXERCISE: Explore the above apps and work out which one you might like to use if you are going to run a social media contest. Or go ahead and actually set up a Facebook contest! Tell us how you go in the Hangout!

BEFORE YOU LAUNCH

So you have confirmed your objectives, know your budget, have designed your graphics and written your posts and are ready to hit the go button. What else do you need to do. Here's a few things to consider:

1. Do a test run

Before you hit launch make sure you conduct a test run. Do it yourself, ask a few of your friends and colleagues to enter and perform all the actions. Get feedback on anything that didn't make sense, was tricky. Check that you see their entry in the contest entry. Check the messages that they receive are professional, accurate, and basically what you want them to see.

2. Contact influencers to help get the word out

Reach out to relevant influencers you know and ask them if they will promote your contest. If the prize will appeal to their readers and there is some synergy between your business is and theirs, the higher the chance of them promoting it.

3. Determine which day you want to launch

Timing is everything! Consider what public holidays, or other events might affect the launch of your campaign.

DURING THE LAUNCH PHASE

So you've launched and the entries are rolling in. But it's not time to sit back and relax. Things you should do during the contest include:

- 1) Keep tabs on entries - are you getting too little, many? Is the marketing working? What else can you do?

- 2) Send emails to entrants and encourage them to share the contest with their friends.
- 3) Keep doing your social media posting

ENDING THE CONTEST

So even as the contest comes to an end you still have work to do:

- 1) Send final reminders: Send out final reminders via email and social media about when the contest will end. Remind them of the prize and how easy it is to win!
- 2) Select a winner: If you're using a sweepstakes tool, it should make the winner selection process very simple. Otherwise, export the contestant data into an Excel spreadsheet and upload it to Random.org to help you select a winner.
- 3) Remove the tool: When the contest is over, remove the widget from your website and or your social media pages.
- 4) Send the winner a personal email or call them to tell them the good news.
- 4) Make the big announcement of the winner on all channels - emails, blogs, social media, website. Tag the winner in where possible.
- 5) Send the prize and let the winner know of the estimated date of arrival
- 6) Review the success of the contest - did you achieve your objectives? Was it a good investment of your budget? What would you do different next time? This is a critical piece in the process so you can improve as you go.

CONCLUSION

Your awesome contest should have driven a new tribe of interested, engaged fans to your social media platforms – which on its own is rather cool... but you can take it one step further.

Making use of the hype and excitement surrounding your contest, begin to build your community. We've talked about the power of an online community in previous lessons, but in the context of this you should have a larger community for future digital marketing campaigns.

In short, running social media contests will help position your brand, or the brand you are working with as generous, fun, and someone they'd like to be in touch with. so make the most of it!

RESOURCES

- <http://unbounce.com/conversion-rate-optimization/hidden-power-of-giveaways/>
- <http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/facebook-contests/>
- <http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/social-media-sweepstakes/>