

Retail

Making Sense
of Online Marketing

The



DOWN LOAD

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Introduction

Should your small business be online?

To put it simply, people are looking for businesses online all the time.

69%

of people search for a local business at least one time per month



Businesses that are online are seeing growth.

2,400

business owners were polled



That means that there's potential for people to find your business when they go looking.



If you're considering getting started with online marketing, you may already be overwhelmed by too many tools, never-ending expert advice, and the many marketing myths presented as fact. If you're doing online marketing, you may be frustrated to find that it's not as easy as many claim it to be.

You're not alone.

If you're like many Constant Contact customers, we know you're busy trying to run and grow your business. From purchasing to merchandising to managing and more, you're wearing many hats and don't have the luxury of time to figure out how to navigate the cluttered and noisy world of online marketing.

What if there were a way to make sense of online marketing?

Here's the thing, it's not just about the tools available to you. You also need to understand the fundamentals of marketing so you can get the most out of those tools. Again, not easy when you're a business owner by trade and a marketer by necessity.

This guide is designed to give you practical advice.

Our goal is to show you how to connect the dots in online marketing. To point out what you should pay attention to so you have a strong foundation in place.

Then you'll have the knowledge, understanding, and confidence to take advantage of the new opportunities online marketing opens for you.



There's something else that's important to note.

As a small business, you have a huge advantage over big businesses because you actually know your customers. Many times you interact with them in a way big businesses cannot. It's that intimate knowledge that can keep your business top of mind and give you an edge.

Ultimately, we're talking about engaging with people. The location has changed to a digital format but at the other end of those devices are people. And people do business with businesses they know, like, and trust.



TIP

Here's a good rule of thumb as you navigate the digital landscape: If you wouldn't do it face-to-face with someone, don't do it online.

Keep this in mind about online marketing.

If you were asked where most of your business comes from today, what would you say? Many small businesses tell us, "word of mouth." When done correctly, online marketing provides more opportunities to extend the word of mouth that's already so important to your business.

As you know, business is built on relationships. As a marketer, it is your goal to establish a rapport and drive repeat business through brand loyalty. Online marketing also allows you to strengthen existing relationships with current customers and build new ones.



Here's what we're going to cover:

Chapter 1: How people find you online

Chapter 2: How to set yourself up for success

Chapter 3: How it all comes together

Chapter 4: How online marketing can work for you

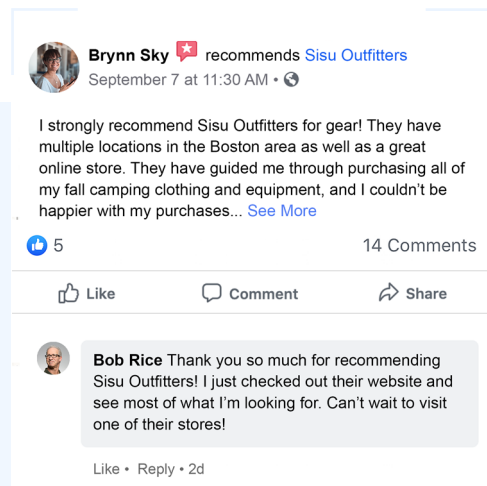
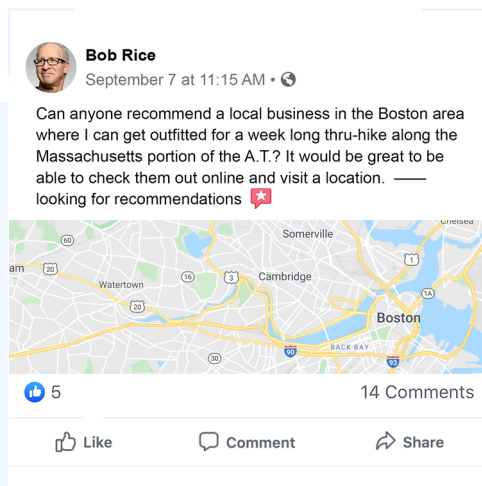
Now let's get to it!



How people find you online

We've mentioned that word of mouth now happens online.

People are talking up their favorite businesses directly on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram; they are consuming and sharing content they find useful or entertaining from those businesses; and they are asking connections for recommendations. Your business has an opportunity to be part of more of these conversations.



The more you can do to keep your business top of mind and make it easy for others to talk about you, the more you increase the chances of people recommending or seeking you out when they need what you offer.

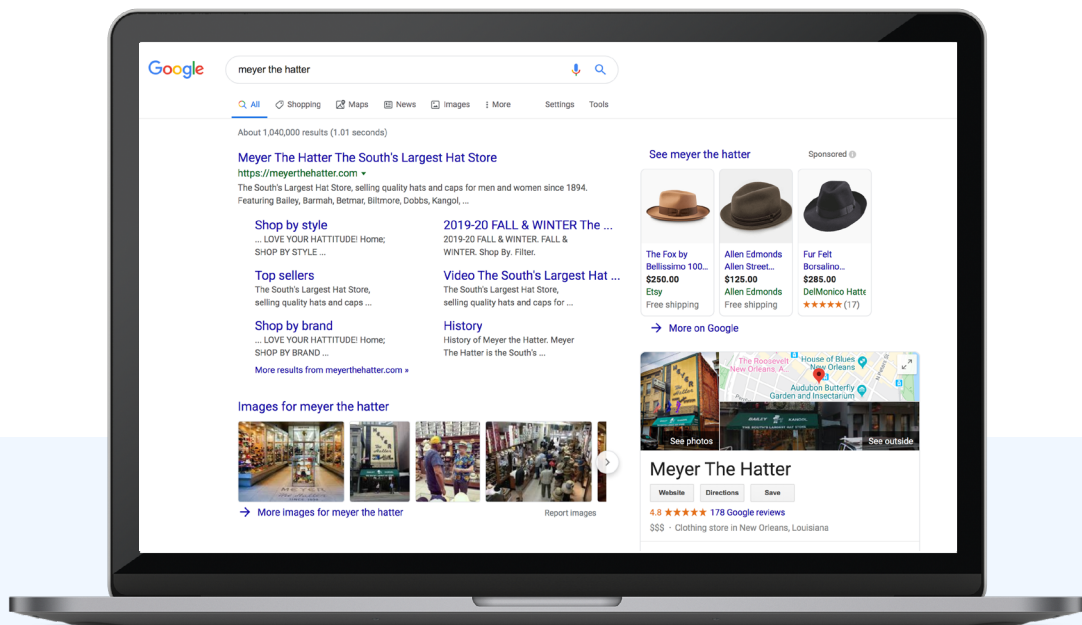
Beyond being part of the conversation, you must understand what people may find when they go looking for your business specifically by name, or a product that your business offers.

And, of course, be aware that if they don't find your business when they go looking online, it begs the question, "Does your business even exist?"

What do people find when they go looking online for your business?

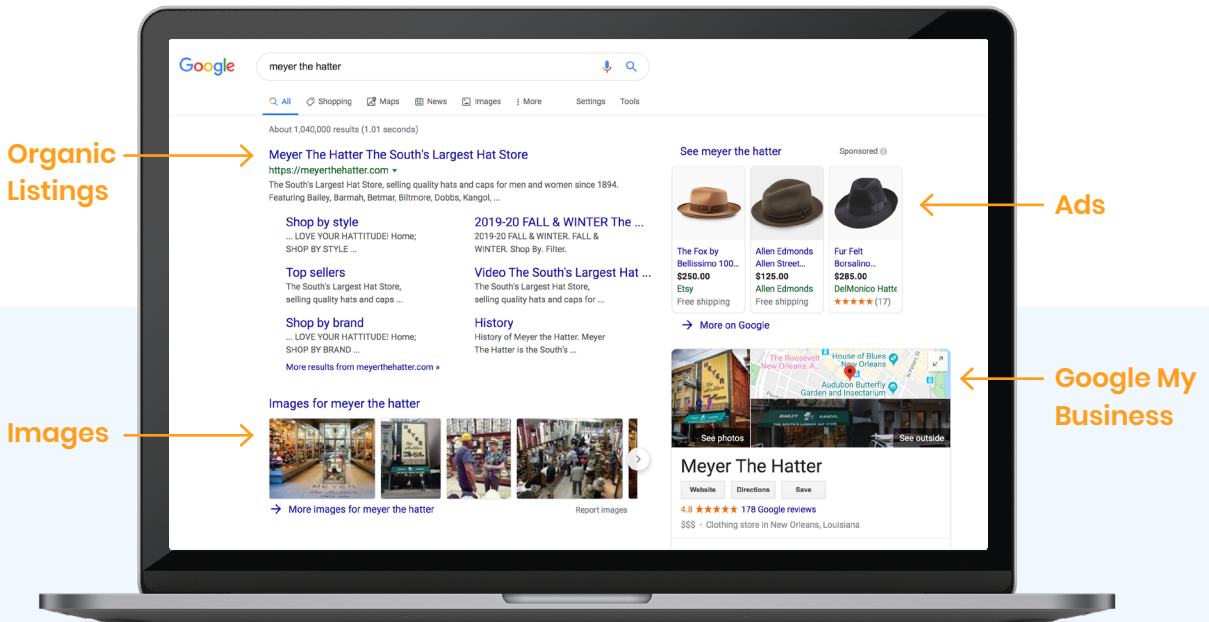
It's no secret that people are turning to search engines like Google to get more information about the businesses they're investigating. Let's take a look at some of the things that may show up on a search engine results page, or SERP when someone searches for a business by name:

- Paid ads
- Organic (non-paid) search results
- Google My Business listing
- Social media accounts
- Reviews
- Info from other sites



Here's an example using "Meyer the Hatter" as the search term

As you can see, there are four different sections in this SERP.



Organic Listings

Organic listings are natural listings of web pages that Google has crawled and deemed valuable for the specific search term. These listings do not require payment of any kind to show up on the search engine results page.

Images

The images appear in an “image pack” — several images in a horizontal row. Clicking on the images will take a searcher to Google Images search.

Ads

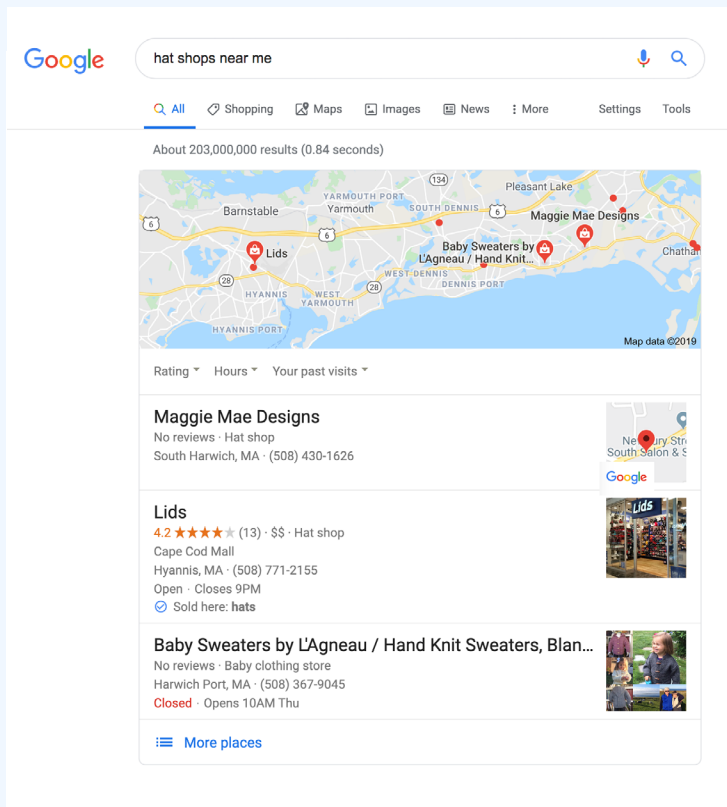
Ads or Paid Ads are paid listings on the search engine results page. Businesses will pay to showcase their products for this specific search topic, and they only pay if someone clicks on the ad.

Google My Business

Google My Business is a free tool from Google where a business can create a profile. We'll talk more about Google My Business later in the book.

What if they're looking for something your business offers?

In the example above, we searched for a specific business — Meyer the Hatter — by name. But people don't always search by name. Sometimes they know they want to buy a product or a service, but they don't know who offers it. Then they type in a more generic search term, like “hats near me” or “sun protection.”



Let's look at an example.

Imagine you are leaving for vacation the next day, and you realize you don't have a good hat for traveling. You don't have time to order one online, so you jump on your computer or mobile device and search “hat shops near me.” Here's an example of what may come up — of course, your actual results will differ.

Notice that “hat shops near me” brings up the listings in Google Maps first. This information comes from Google My Business profiles (more on that later.)

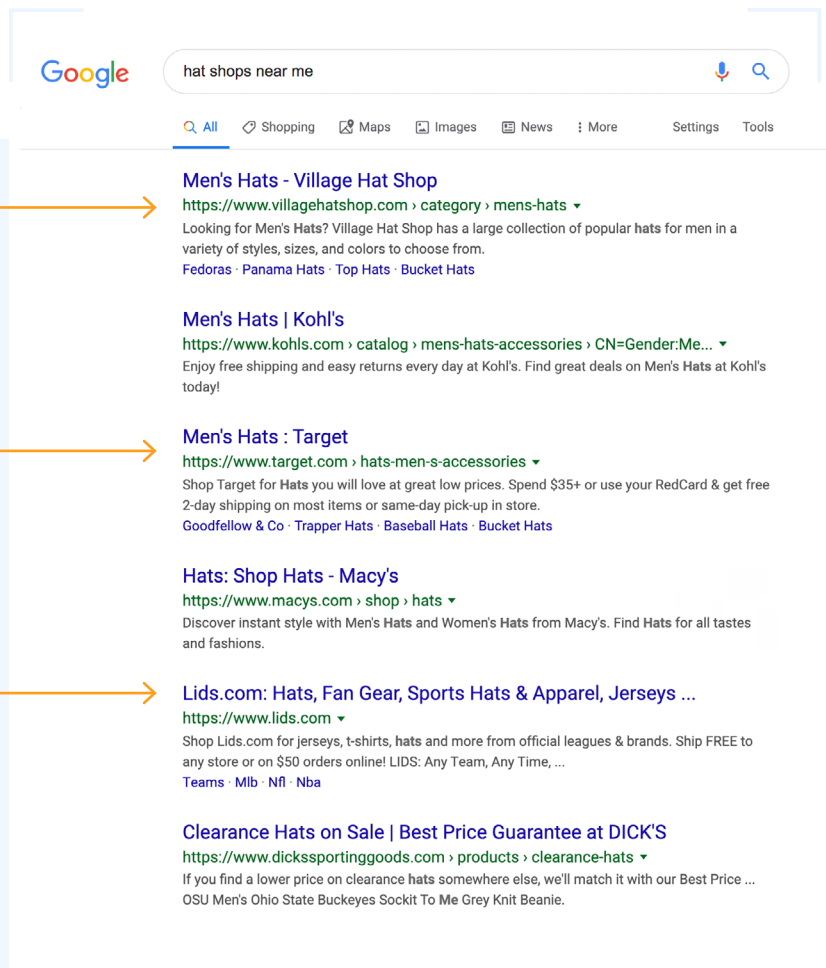
Beyond the map listings, you may also find websites, social media accounts, reviews, and listings of the places that sell hats near your location in the search results.

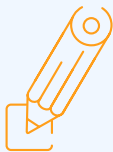
If we apply these results to what may show up for your business, that may mean:

- Your website
- Your social media accounts
- Review sites
- Business listings
- Competitor listings

Competitor Listing

Business Listings





ACTION STEPS



Search for your business.

What information shows up? Is it what you were expecting? Is there anything there that surprises you? Is there something missing?



Search for generic terms your business should be found for.

Is your business there in either an organic or paid perspective?



Make a list of results that show up on the first page in both scenarios.

Here's the reality: If you're not online, prospects can't find you.

Whether people search for your business by name or something related to your business, your customers and prospects should be able to find you. You'll want to make sure your business can be found, the information is accurate, and that you're answering the questions your potential customers may have.

As people visit your website and click through from various search results they're starting to form opinions about your business. Ultimately, they're asking themselves, "Is this the right business for me?"

If your business is present, engaging and interacting, and providing resources you'll increase the chances of people finding your business and choosing you.



The questions is, what tools should you use to build a strong foundation for your online marketing efforts? Let's take a look at how to set your business up for success.



How to set your business up for online marketing success

With an understanding of how people may find you online, what should you do to make sure you have a strong foundation in place?

Let's talk about the tools you should use and some tips to get you started.

Here's what you need to get online:

1

A mobile-responsive website



2

An email marketing tool



3

A primary social channel



4

Up-to-date business listings



5

A way to easily create content



Let's take a closer look at each.



A mobile-responsive website: Your online hub.

Yes, your business should have a mobile-responsive website. Your website is at the center of all your online activities. It's the hub you'll want to point people to in order to drive business. You shouldn't rely solely on social media sites. You'll want to have a place you own.

Think about the first thing you do when you want to investigate a business or find more information about a specific product. Typically, you'll go looking online to learn more. Your potential customers are doing the same, and they're clicking to your website to see what you are all about. According to Statista, nearly half of them are doing it only on a mobile device making a mobile-responsive website important for today's consumers.

A mobile-responsive website provides a great experience for visitors regardless of how they're viewing it because it adapts to the device being used to access it.



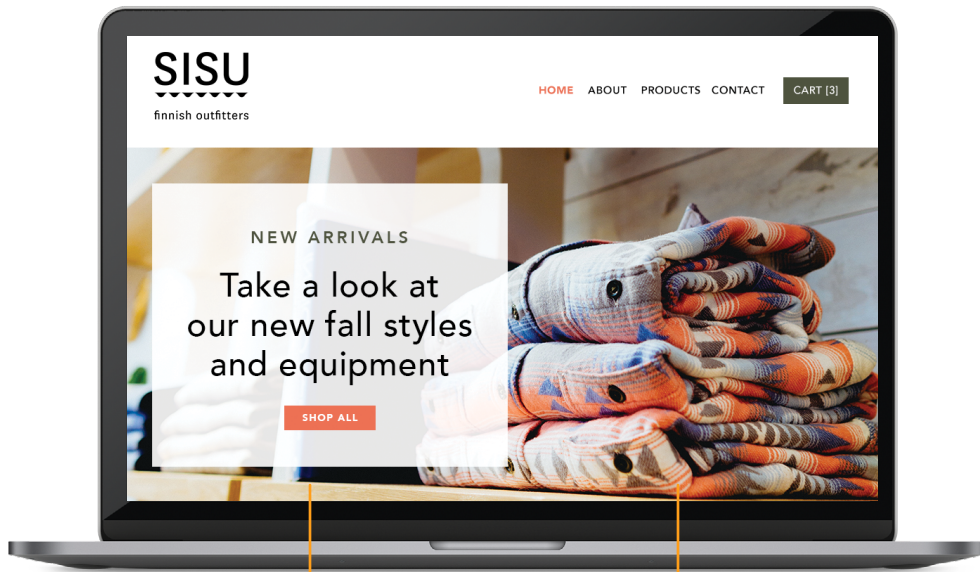
TIP

Buy a domain name for your website to match your business name.

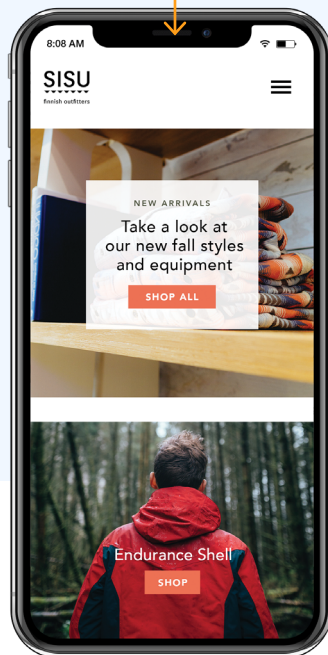
In the early stages of your business you may use free tools to get online. Eventually, you'll want to use your own domain (for example, YourBusinessName.com) to look professional and add credibility to your business.



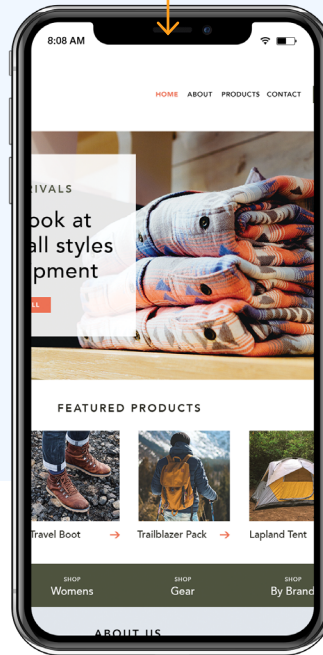
With a mobile-responsive website, visitors won't struggle to find the information they need about your products. They'll be able to read and navigate your site with ease regardless of the device they're using.



Responsive
website
on mobile



Non-responsive
website
on mobile



The good news is that you no longer need to be a web designer to build an effective website.



DID YOU KNOW?

Want a custom designed site?

Get a custom-designed, mobile-optimized site in just minutes with [Constant Contact's intelligent website builder](#) including an [online store](#).

Need a logo?

A logo and colors form the basis for the visual representation of your brand. Need a logo? Make one with the [Constant Contact logo maker](#).

Your website should have at least four pages.

When people visit your website, they're looking for answers to their questions. Use the following pages to answer them.



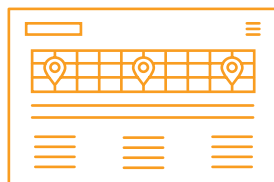
← **HOMEPAGE**
Your front door



← **ABOUT PAGE**
Your story



← **PRODUCTS PAGE**
Your online storefront



← **CONTACT PAGE**
Your chance to connect

What should you put on those four core pages?
Let's take a look.



HOMEPAGE

What questions should you answer on your Homepage?

What are your products?

You don't have a lot of time.
Be clear. Be specific.

Who are they for?

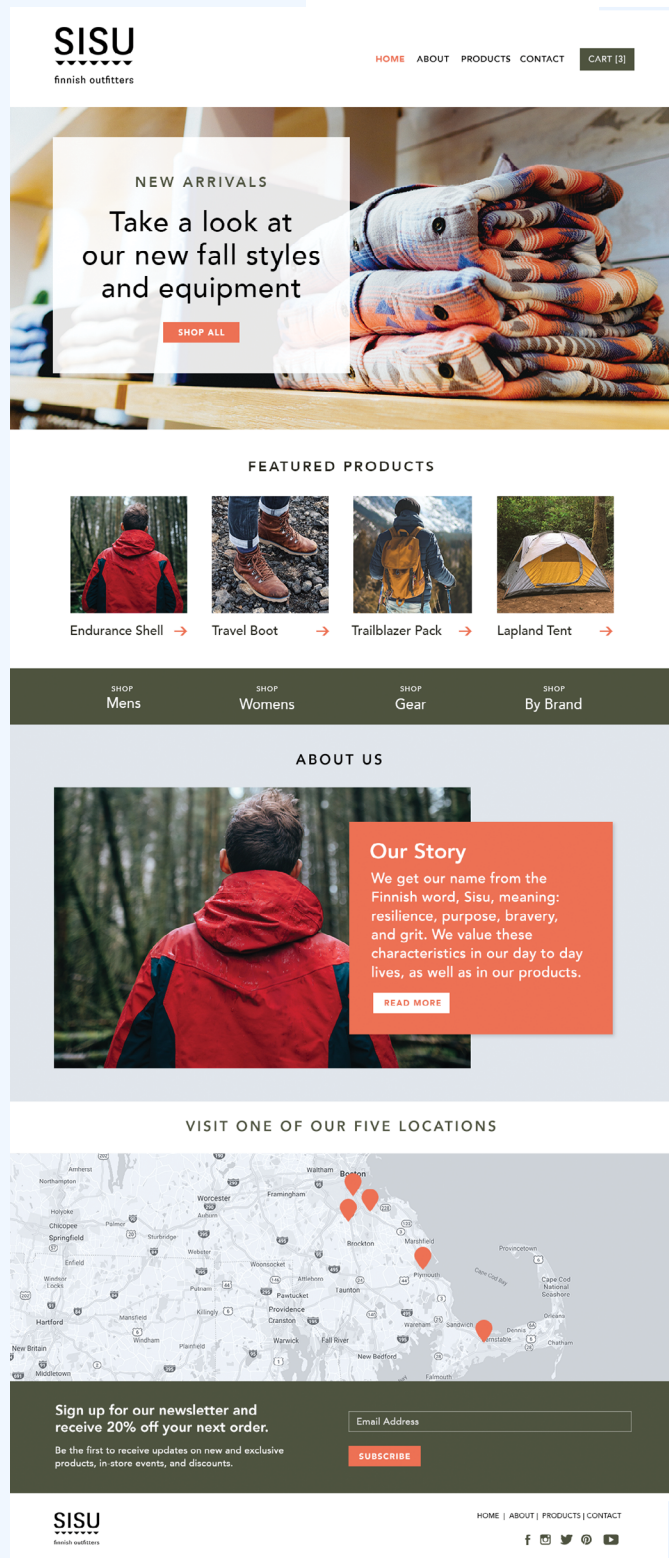
The visitor is asking, "Is this for me?" Who is your ideal customer? Make it clear who your product or service is for.

So what?

Why would your potential customer care? Why should they choose you? Is there something about your products or overall experience that makes it unique?

What should visitors do next?

Should they get directions to your store? Contact you? Watch a demo video? Give an email address for resources? Make it clear what action they should take as their next step in order to move to the next step in the sales process.





ABOUT PAGE

What questions should you answer on your About page?

What is your story?

What problem are you trying to solve for your customers? What obstacles did you face and overcome trying to solve this problem? Why is your work important to you?

Why should people care?

How will potential customers benefit from working with you? How will you solve their problem and give them peace of mind? Do you have testimonials to support?

What makes you or your business different?

What in-store experience do you provide that stands out from the rest? Why is your product better than anything else? How will your product help them?



About page example

What questions should you answer on your Products page?

What is available? How can they purchase it?

What are the dimensions of the product? What are the care instructions? How should they prepare to pick up the product or have it delivered?

What other products will enhance their experience?
Do you offer bundles in-store?

What will they have to pay to purchase your goods?





CONTACT PAGE

What questions should you answer on your Contact page?

Where can people find you?

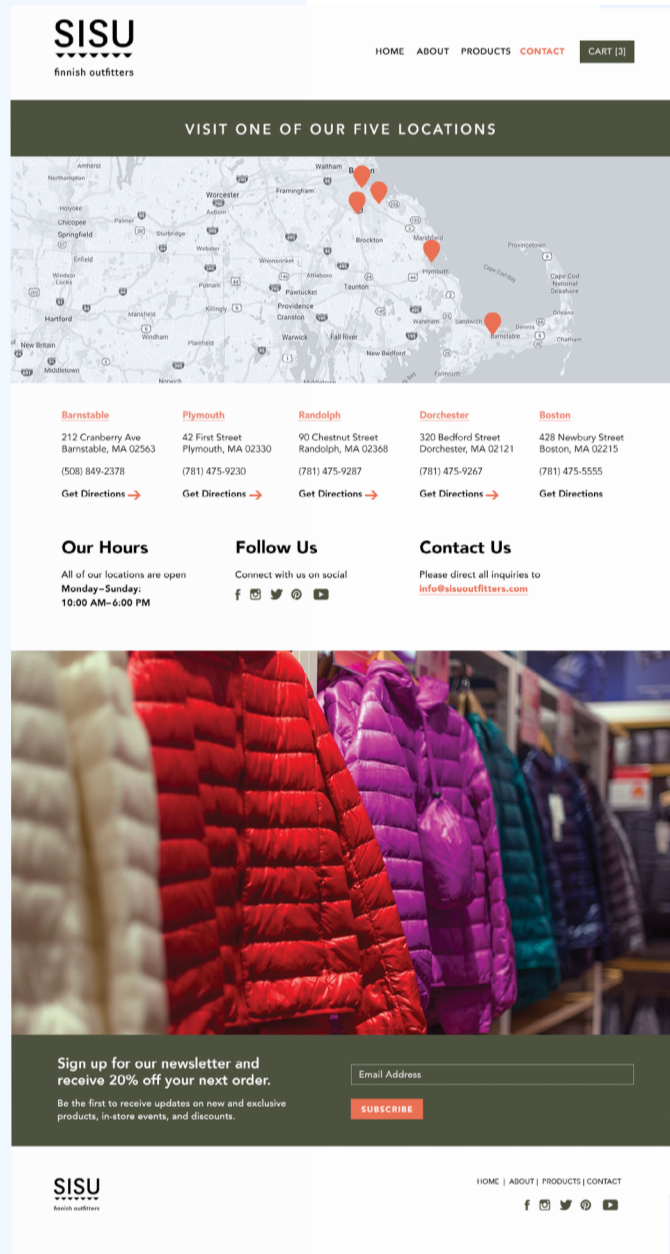
Where are you located, and how can I get there? Are you accessible by public transport, too?

When can people find you?

What are your hours of operation? Are all locations the same? Are there different hours for support (both online and offline)? Other functions?

How can people contact you?

Besides calling or visiting in-store, are there other ways to ask questions? Start with your preferred method. What should they expect in terms of a reply?



Contact page example



Tips for using images on your website.

Overall, use high-quality images on your website whenever possible. If you don't have your own images, sites like Unsplash or Pexels offer free, high-quality stock images. Of course, the more photos you can share of your actual products, the more interest you'll create.



HOMEPAGE

Show happy customers using your products. Paint a picture of how life gets better once they buy from you.



ABOUT PAGE

Use professional images of yourself that show your personality, including your staff. Give people a way to get to know you before they visit your store. Show action shots of the product being made or used to give more background on the product and why they should buy. Ultimately, you want people to start to imagine what it would be like to buy from you.



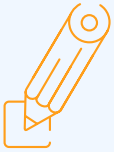
PRODUCT PAGE

Use high-quality images of your products. Show colors, sizes, and other details to help shoppers make a choice.



CONTACT PAGE

Show your physical location. Include a map with a link for customers to request directions to your store. If you also have an online store, then list the ways people can contact you if they have a question or require support with your products.

**ACTION STEPS****Create a simple website.**

Don't have a website?
[Create one with Constant Contact](#) in minutes!

**Review your website for the appropriate pages.****Review to make sure you're answering the questions suggested above.****Add email capture forms to your website.**

What happens if someone visits your website or storefront and doesn't make a purchase?

In both cases, it's unlikely they'll come back again. Online visitors can find a new site in a few clicks, and offline customers will most likely scratch you off the list for stores to frequent if they don't see anything that interests them.

But what if you had a way to contact them?

Then you could encourage them to come back and eventually do business with you. This is why you'll want to collect email addresses from people who visit your website and storefront.

ON YOUR WEBSITE

- Add a sign-up form
- Create a pop-up subscription form

IN STORE

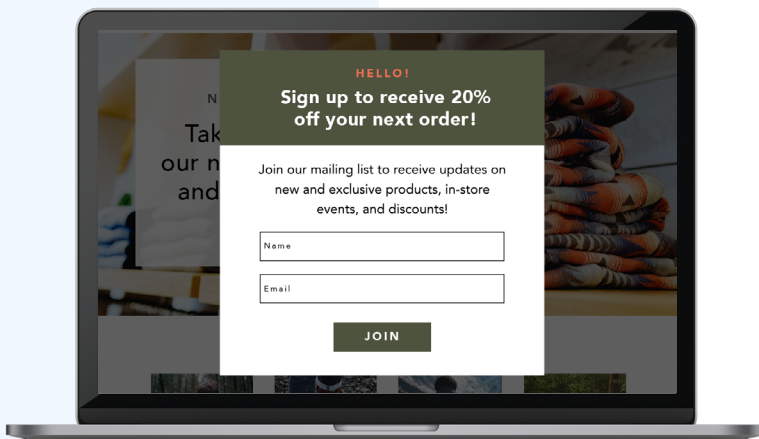
- Present a simple sign-up list
- Offer a business card raffle
- Ask for email address at checkout

Whether online or in-person, you'll offer something of value to a visitor in exchange for their email address — like a discount or exclusive content — to get more people joining your list.

EXCLUSIVE CONTENT

- Membership to an email-only special sales list
- An eBook with product knowledge or case studies
- An exclusive video playlist

Once you have someone's email address, you're able to reach out on a consistent basis to encourage them to do business with you by sharing a combination of helpful and promotional messages.





Email marketing: It's how you drive business.

Why is email marketing important today? Simply, because it works. And yes, email is still ranked as one of the most effective marketing channels according to Ascend2's 2019 Digital Marketing Strategies Survey Summary Report.

Like your website, email marketing also creates an asset you own. The contacts on your list are yours. And if you're doing it right, those are people who have said "yes, I want you to market to me."

Email marketing also allows you to automate much of the communication so the emails your contacts receive feel timely and relevant. Automation assures you get the right messages to the right people at the right time.



TIP

Create a simple series of emails to welcome people to your email list.

When someone signs up to receive your emails, they are actively demonstrating interest in you and your business. Take advantage of this time when a new contact is highly engaged and automate a couple of emails to continue the conversation.

Whether they sign up today or a week from today, they won't have to wait for you to manually send an email to hear from you. (More on the next pages.)



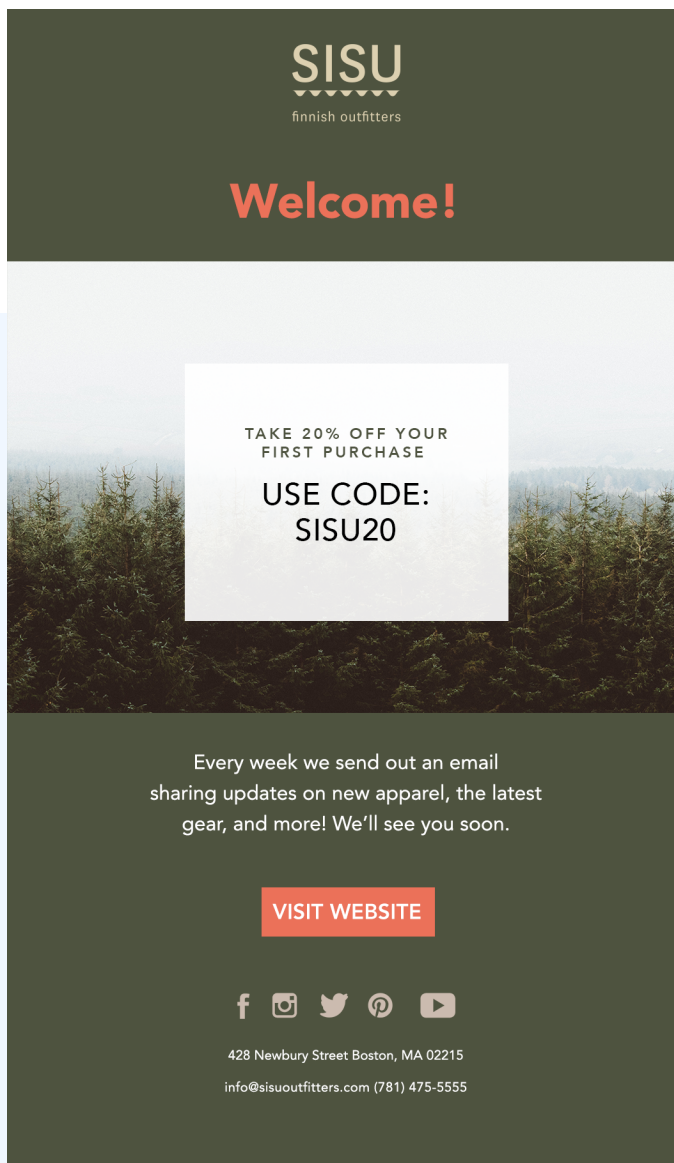
Here are two emails to include in your automated welcome series.



WELCOME SERIES EMAIL ONE

Welcome/ Delivery email

Send this Welcome email immediately after someone signs up. Deliver what was promised, welcome your new subscriber, and reiterate what they should expect in the future.



Welcome email example



WELCOME SERIES EMAIL TWO

Invitation to Connect

Send this email a few days after your Welcome email. Let your new contact know of the other ways in which they can engage with you, this will most likely be on your social channels, and invite them to connect with you.

This email is important because once your subscriber connects with you in other locations, you have multiple ways to engage and stay top of mind with your customers. And if your subscriber engages with you on these public forums, your business gets exposed to their connections who are likely also to make excellent prospects for your business.



TIP

Here are some practical ways to get new and repeat business with email automation.

Let's Connect!

Join us on our social channels to see our gear in action and to connect with our community!

FOLLOW US

LIKE US

428 Newbury Street Boston, MA 02215
info@sisuoutfitters.com (781) 475-5555

Let's connect email example



ONGOING COMMUNICATION

Plan on sending an email at least twice a month thereafter.

Consistency is key in any form of marketing.

To keep your customers engaged with your business, you want to be hitting their inbox at least twice a month. Write down the potential opportunities you have to reach out to your email contacts. These opportunities could mean national holidays, events specific to your business, or even those made up marketing holidays.

Consider this list of retail-specific emails:

- Product spotlight
- Email-exclusive sale or promotion
- VIP event
- Product care and maintenance
- Product preview or pre-sale

Share a combination of helpful resources and promotional emails to provide the most value to your contacts.

For instance, you can send an email newsletter on the first Thursday of the month with top product picks and a few curated articles to drive purchases. Then, on the third Thursday of the month, you can send out a special “Email Exclusive” promotion to drive sales.

If you are also an online retailer, you may want to consider sending more often than twice a month. You’ll notice some online retailers will send almost twice a week to keep you interacting with their brand.

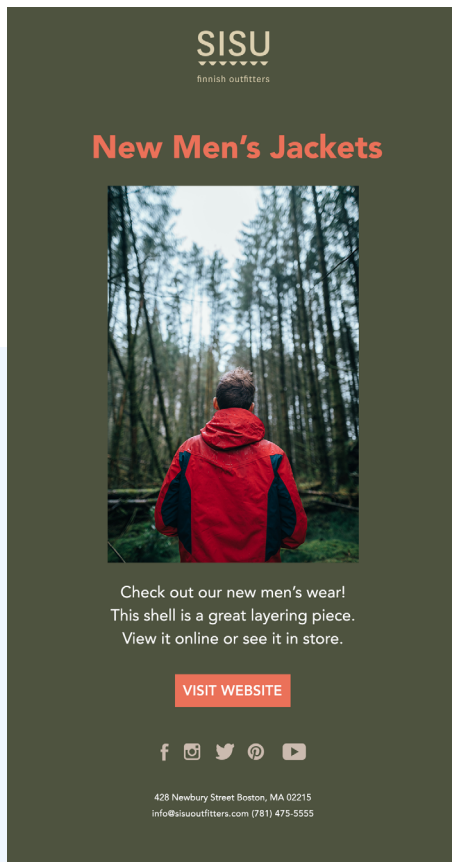
Depending on what your online shopping cart allows, you may send:

- Product purchase reminders
- Rewards program updates
- Special, time-sensitive offers
- Bundle discounts

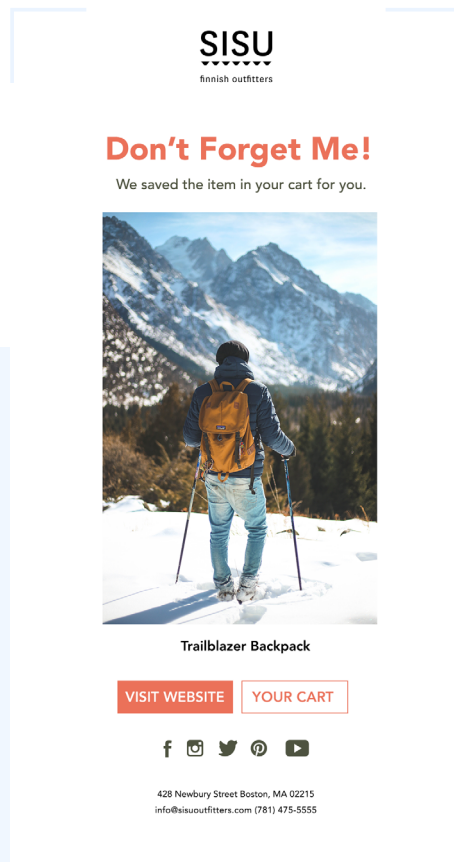


In the future, you can get more advanced with automation.

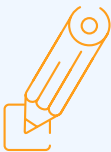
Send emails triggered by actions taken by your contacts like opening an email, clicking on a link, or joining a list. You can also take advantage of automated birthday emails to reward your customers with a discount or free item to celebrate their special day.



*Product spotlight
email example*



*Purchase reminder
email example*



ACTION STEPS

- ✓
Set up a simple, automated welcome series.
- ✓
Plan to send an email at least twice a month.
- ✓
Send special emails for events or holidays to keep your customers engaged.
- ✓
Think about other emails you may want to automate.
- ✓
Segment your list based on product preferences.



TIP

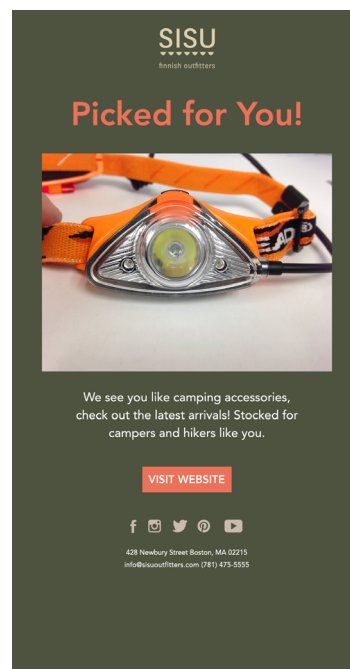
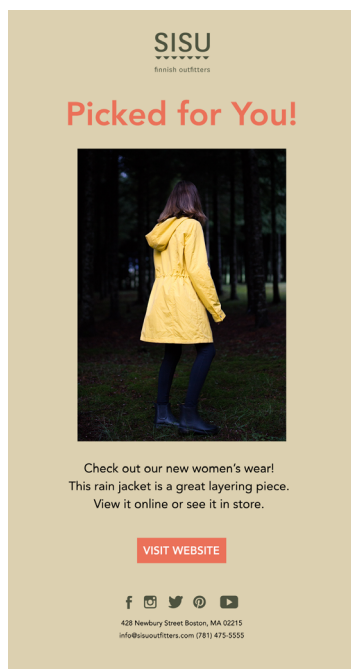
Find out more about **Constant Contact's Constant Contact's easy-to-use email marketing tools.**



Segment your list for more sales.

Your customers buy from you because you offer the products they need. If you can segment your list based off their product preferences, then you'll make your email campaigns far more effective.

During the subscription process, whether in-store or online, ask them for their preferences, so you can send out special email campaigns on the fly to drive more product sales.



Segmented email examples



Social media: It doesn't have to overwhelm you.

If you're like many of the small business owners we talk to, social media marketing can feel overwhelming. And it often feels like you're spinning your wheels — doing a lot of activity across many channels with little to show for it.

Remember that the key to social media is being social. Elicit comments and reactions from your fans and followers and be sure to respond back to them to keep the conversation going. The more comments you collect on a post (aka social engagement), the more potential you have to get your brand in front of other prospective customers.

Ultimately, social media should allow you to generate awareness, engagement, and action that you wouldn't have gotten otherwise.

Each social channel is unique and you should reserve your business name on the important ones so you have it. But you don't have to be active everywhere. That's why we recommend starting with two channels to drive eyes on your products: Facebook and Instagram. Let's take a closer look.



TIP

Choose the right social media platform for your business.

[Find out how.](#)

EACH SOCIAL CHANNEL IS UNIQUE

Facebook

In the news feed you'll be competing with friends, family, and news.

Odds are that your customers have a Facebook account. The chances are even greater that they use Facebook to help them find products like yours. Facebook has cemented itself as a premier platform for social media marketing for retailers. It's no longer a consideration; it's a necessity.

Be sure to have an active Facebook page in which you:

- Highlight your products
- Promote events and sales
- Share videos of the staff and store
- Ask questions and quiz fans to drive engagement

facebook



Sisu Outfitters

4 hrs · 🌐

Have you had a good experience online or in one of our stores recently? If so, please share! Having our customers recommend our business takes us a long way—we greatly appreciate it!



On Facebook, you also want to ask your fans to recommend your business.

This is crucial to your digital reputation and helps others to find you and consider you as a reputable business.

facebook



Sisu Outfitters

4 hrs · 🌐

Who's excited for fall camping? Check out our latest newsletter with tips for caring for your tent. Get more tips and promotions deliver to your inbox: www.sisuooutfitters.com/newsletter



Lastly, you'll want to integrate your email marketing with Facebook.

Share your email campaigns as posts on Facebook to get your content in front of more eyes. Also be sure to ask fans to sign up for your mailing list to grow your list.



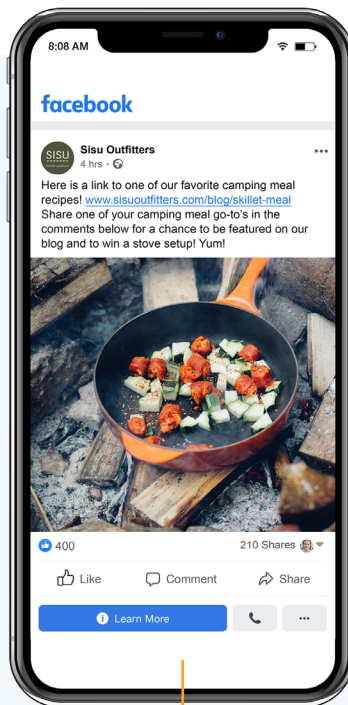
EACH SOCIAL CHANNEL IS UNIQUE

Facebook helps you connect.



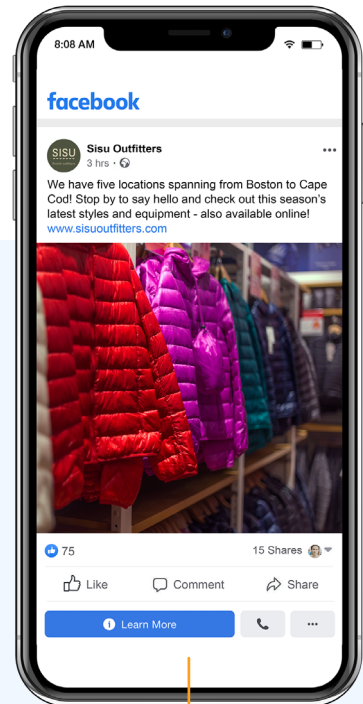
AWARENESS

Begin building relationships with your audience.



ENGAGEMENT

Post content your audience may want to engage with by liking, commenting, and sharing.



DRIVING ACTION

Let people know how they can purchase your products.

EACH SOCIAL CHANNEL IS UNIQUE

Instagram

Highly visual network. Let people see what's happening with your business.

With over 1 billion monthly active users, Instagram is a major player in the retail social media space. Instagram is an image-based social media platform that helps you amplify your online content and spread your brand further. You can use photos, videos, or computer graphics on Instagram to help create and bolster an emotional connection with your audience.

You can make several different types of posts to make your brand more fun and engaging including:

- Product features and benefits
- Product launches
- Photos and videos from customers
- Holidays and events
- Memes
- DIY ideas
- Customer testimonials



Bad photo quality



Good photo quality

Picture quality is a vital element of a good brand.

When using Instagram, it's important that you have high-quality photos, videos, and images. If you are not good at taking photos, consider having one of your staff hold the phone or camera. The last thing you want is for your photos to turn off a potential customer.

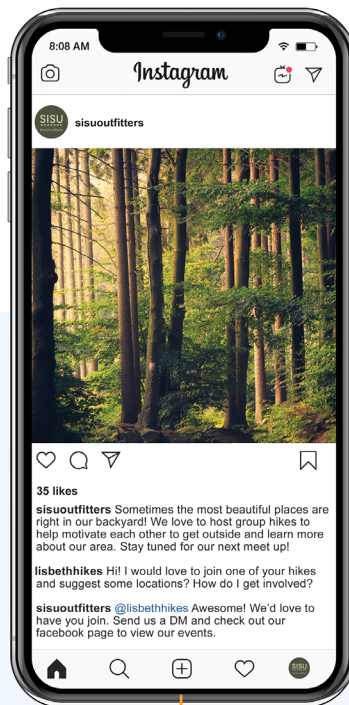


EACH SOCIAL CHANNEL IS UNIQUE

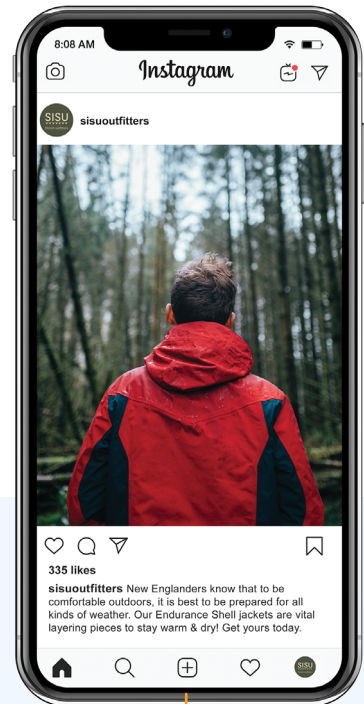
Instagram boosts your brand.

**AWARENESS**

Let people know how others are using your products. It helps them paint a mental picture of owning your products themselves.

**ENGAGEMENT**

@Mention other users and/or respond to comments to drive engagement and more views of your posts.

**DRIVING ACTION**

Highlight specific products and include a link in your bio so people can learn more and potentially purchase.

EACH SOCIAL CHANNEL IS UNIQUE



Public news feed of what's happening now.



AWARENESS

Let followers know about your other social channels.



ENGAGEMENT

Use the platform to start a conversation.



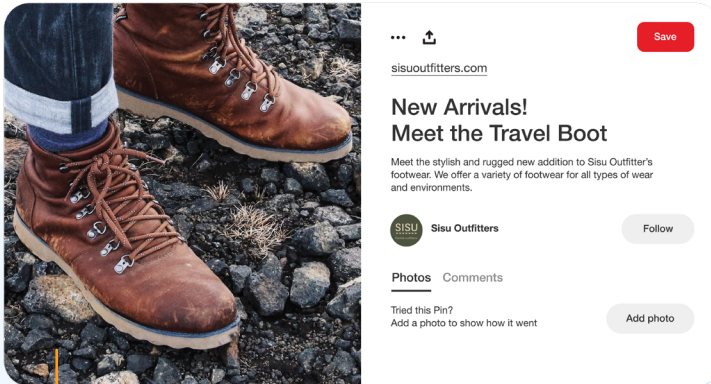
DRIVING ACTION

Let followers know about current promotions and drive sales.

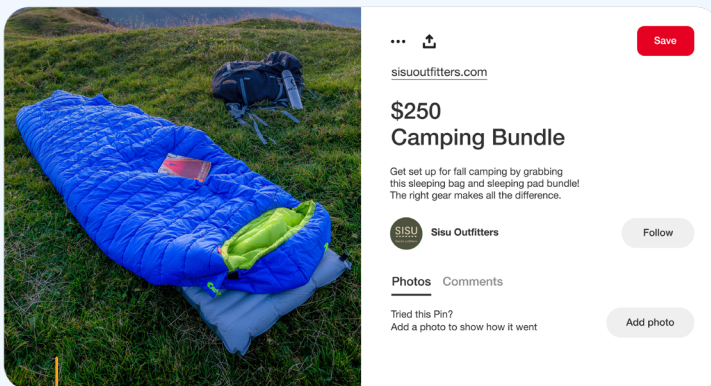
EACH SOCIAL CHANNEL IS UNIQUE

Pinterest

Boards with tips and ideas.



AWARENESS Let people know about new products.



DRIVING ACTION Showcase products and provide pricing for easy purchase.

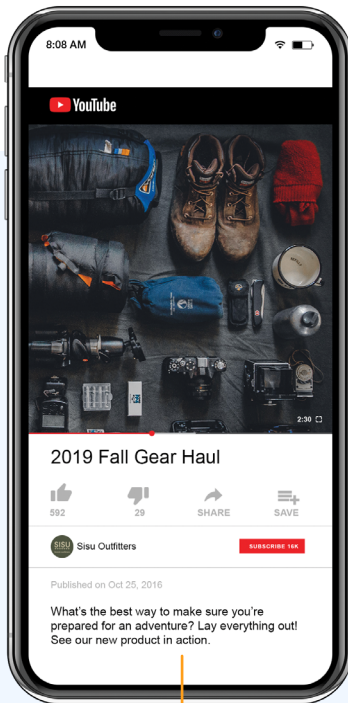


ENGAGEMENT
Engage with those taking the time to learn more about your products.

EACH SOCIAL CHANNEL IS UNIQUE

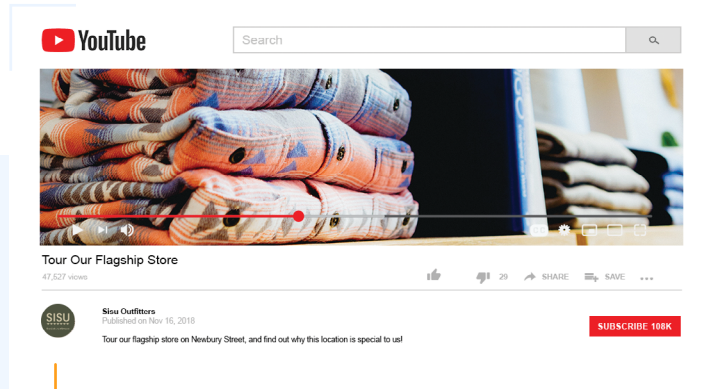


Video content that's educational and entertaining.



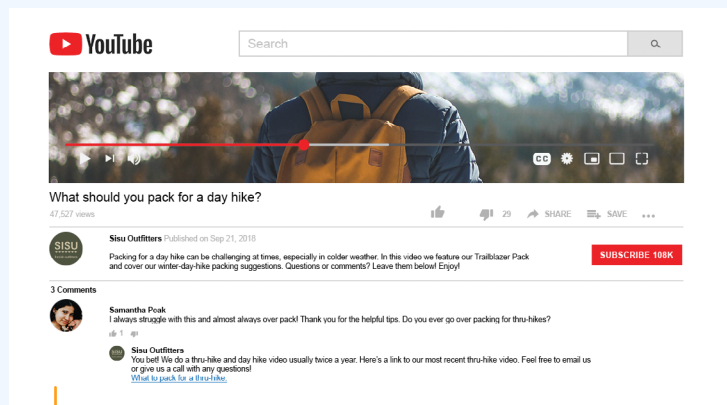
AWARENESS

Create video content to let people know about available products.



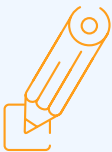
DRIVING ACTION

Welcome customers to your store through video.



ENGAGEMENT

Respond to comments and questions from viewers.



ACTION STEPS



Create a Facebook page and Instagram account to start.



Set business goals for the social channel across three categories.

- Awareness
- Engagement
- Driving Action



Create a plan for the social channel to reach your business goals.



DID YOU KNOW?

Want to know more about social media marketing?

[Get started with our Social Quickstarter.](#)

Keep focused on how social media can help you with business goals such as awareness, engagement, and driving action.

Engage with people on social and ultimately move them to your website and build your email list so you have a list of contacts you own to drive business.



Don't forget, social media isn't the only place where people may find and engage with your business.



4



Listings and review sites: Provide accurate information and respond appropriately.

Today people use a variety of apps and websites to find the information they're looking for. Sometimes these listings are automatically generated and other times your customers may create them. As the business owner, you're able to take control of these listings by claiming them. It is often as simple as clicking a button and submitting requested information that proves the business is yours.

Once you've claimed a listing, you're able to update the information on those pages for accuracy. Make sure all information is correct and up to date across all sites. The last thing you want is for someone to find incorrect information as it could cause you to lose business.



TIP

Once you've claimed a listing, you're able to update the information on those pages for accuracy.



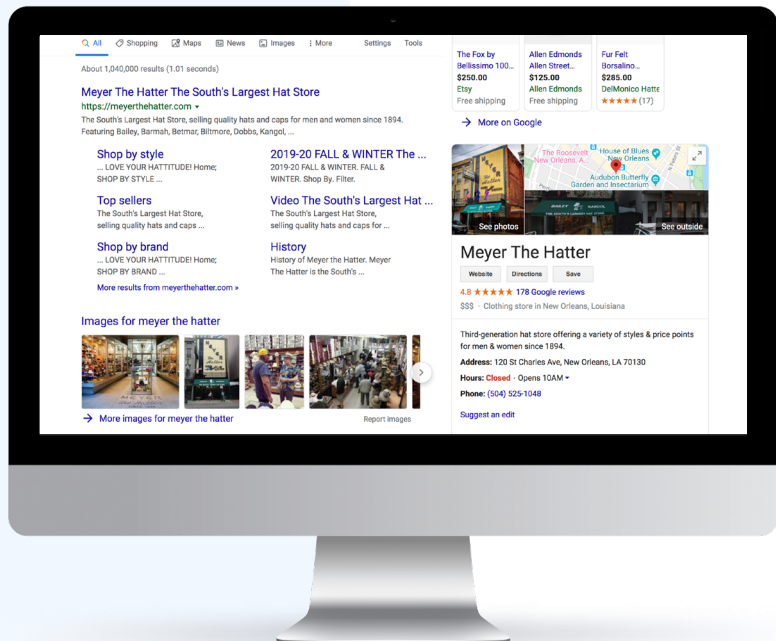
Facebook Business Page

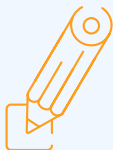
Your Facebook page should provide all the correct information about your business.



Google My Business Listing

Claim your Google My Business profile to take advantage of the prime placement in Google search results.





ACTION STEPS

✓
Claim your Facebook business page, Google My Business profile, and Yelp Listing.

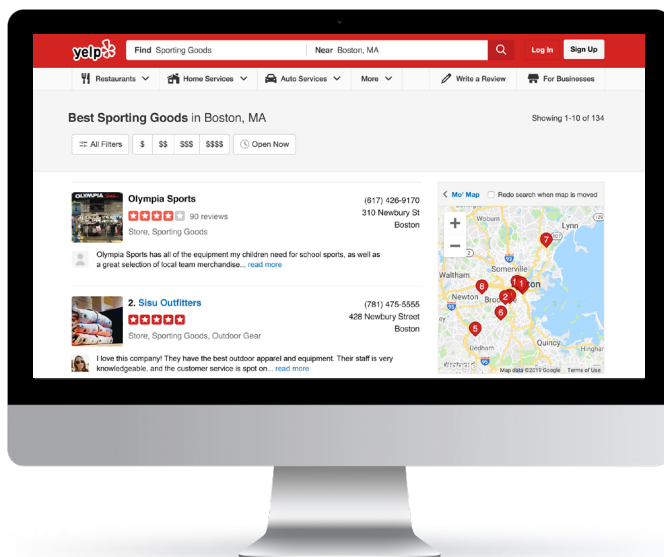
✓
Identify any other important listings that may be important for your business.

✓
Make sure all information is correct on all sites.



DID YOU KNOW?

Find out more about setting up your Facebook business page, Google My Business profile, and taking control of your listings.



Yelp Page

Many people use sites like Yelp to find businesses around them. The more robust your listing, the better your chances are of standing out amongst competitors.



At the very least claim your Facebook business page, Google My Business profile, and Yelp page. And if there are other listing sites important in your industry, claim your business information there too.





DID YOU KNOW?

74%

of consumers say that positive reviews make them trust a local business more

84%

of people trust online reviews as much as recommendations from friends and family

ACCORDING TO BRIGHTLOCAL



With stats like these, there is no denying that your retail business needs to have a digital presence with positive reviews.

Online reviews drive new customers into your storefront.

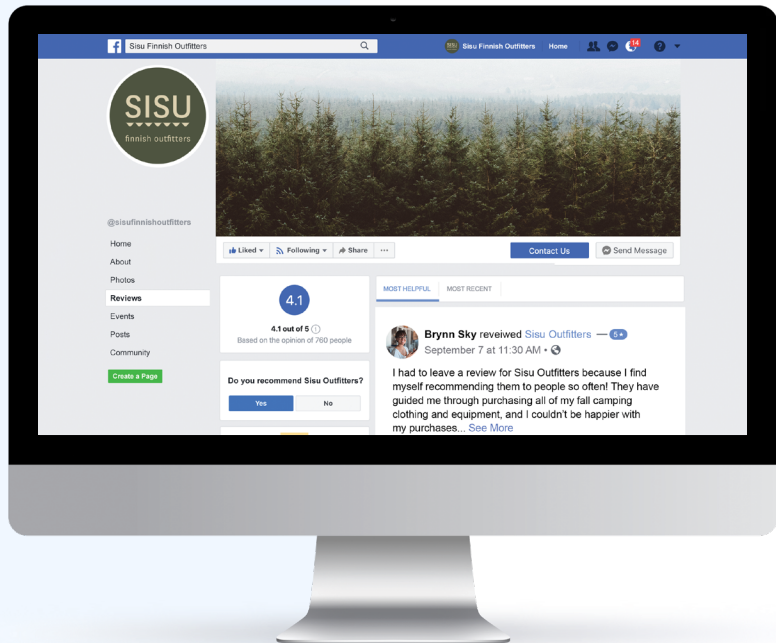
Ultimately you want to do more with review and listing sites. Consumers are making split-second buying decisions, and reviews on sites like Google, Facebook, and Yelp help to determine where they spend their money. Nowadays, more and more consumers are relying on data points like Google reviews to make their buying decisions.

Of course, you want to make sure that you have set up and claimed your review pages on the main review sites including Google My Business, Yelp, and Facebook.

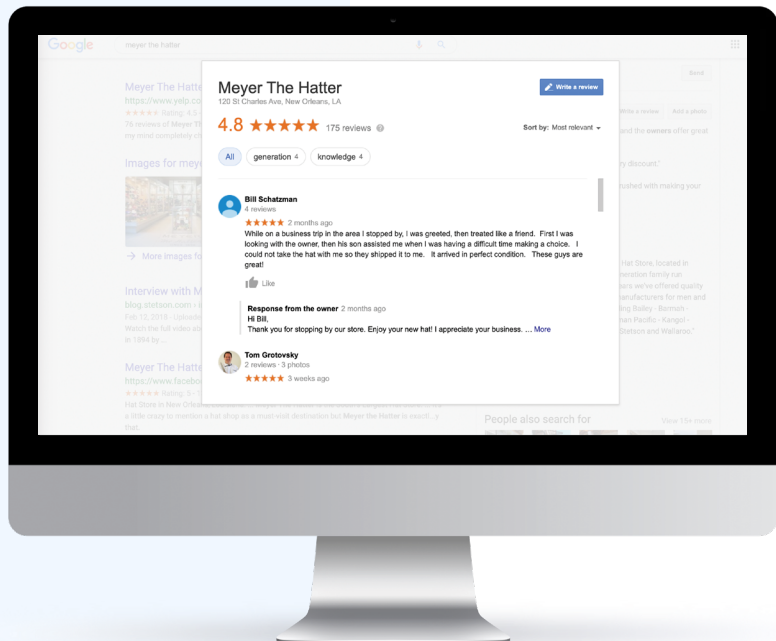
The next step is to begin collecting reviews. The easiest, and most effective, way to grow your reviews is by asking delighted customers while you have their attention. Did they just buy a beautiful, one-of-a-kind purse from you? Ask for a review about their experience. Did you just sell them a variety pack of delicious coffee flavors? Get them to write a review, so their friends know where to buy their next batch of java. Consider using email marketing to drive reviews after the sale.

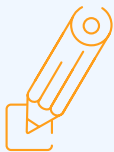


Facebook Reviews Page



Google My Business Reviews





ACTION STEPS

✓
Set up your online review sites on Google My Business, Yelp, and Facebook.

✓
Ask customers for a review when they're most satisfied with your service.

✓
Respond to every review to close the feedback loop.



DID YOU KNOW?

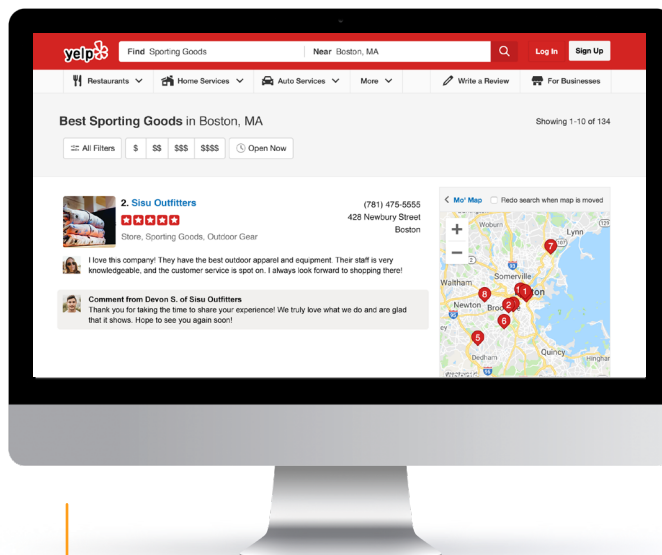
89%

of consumers will read your response to the review and take it into consideration when making their buying decision.

ACCORDING TO BRIGHTLOCAL

CONSTANT CONTACT

Yelp Reviews



↓
Ultimately, once you have collected reviews, be sure to respond to each and every one. It's important that you close the feedback loop and show consumers that you take your online reputation seriously.



5



Create content: Increase your chances of getting found.

Content is what people search for, consume, and share online.

If you produce relevant content on a consistent basis that aligns to what your audience is searching for you'll have more people finding you, making connections with your business, and helping you reach more people by sharing your content.

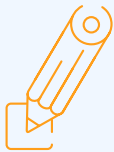
This content helps search engines, like Google, find your business and can result in free traffic to your website. Yes, there are some technical aspects to consider for search engine optimization or SEO. But at its core, it's about delivering relevant and meaningful content to the people you're trying to reach.

A blog is functionality that makes it easy to add content, or posts, to your website on a regular basis. Whereas your website contains information about products, a blog gives you the ability to demonstrate your expertise by answering more specific questions for prospects and customers.



DID YOU KNOW?

A blog allows you to create helpful content for your audience directly.



ACTION STEPS



Add a blog to your website domain.



List the top questions you get from prospects and customers.



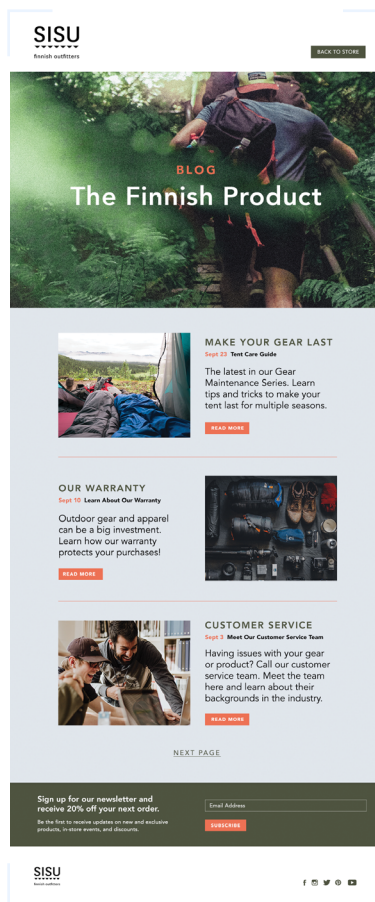
Create a calendar to regularly publish content that answers those questions.

Search engines love fresh blog content.

You get the most benefit when your blog is connected directly to your website and not off on some other platform. Choose a publishing frequency that works best for your business. That could be once a week or once a month. You can then use this content on your social and email channels to lead people back to your website.



CREATE CONTENT



- What are the frequently asked questions about your products?
- What do your customers do once they purchase your product?
- How do customers maintain their products?
- What is the warranty for your products?
- Who do customers contact if they have an issue with the product?
- Are there other products that would complement their purchase? (Think upsell.)

Blog landing page example



How to amplify your efforts.

Once you have the foundational elements in place, you can and should use paid advertising to amplify your efforts. The online landscape has changed over the years. Where it used to be enough to just be there to reach your potential customers, algorithms on most social channels limit the access you have to your audience. Algorithms also impact where your business ranks in search results.

**In many cases, online, you'll have to pay to reach people.
That's not bad. You just want to do it in a smart way.**

Facebook and Instagram Ads can help you reach new and existing customers in a highly targeted way. Google Ads allow you to capitalize on search engine marketing by showing up in the search results for queries related to your business.

Let's take a closer look.

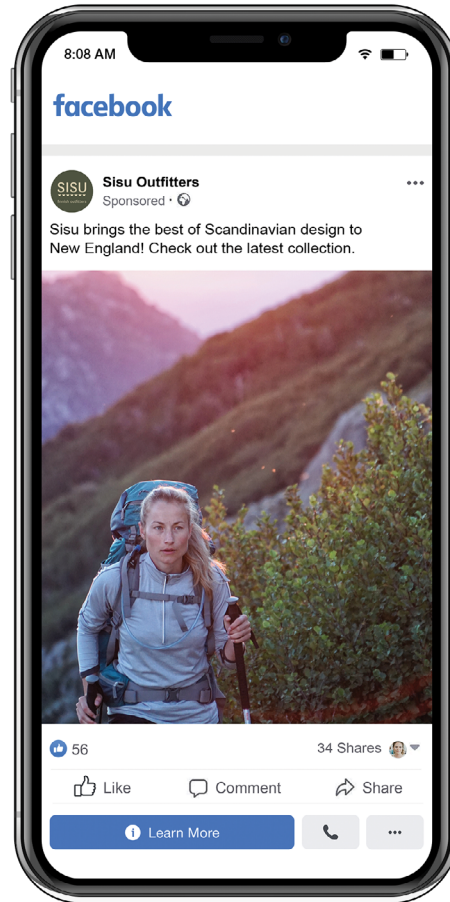


Facebook and Instagram Ads

Ads on Facebook and Instagram are powerful because not only are there lots of people on the platforms, you can also target your ads specifically to increase their effectiveness.

You'll most likely get the most juice for the squeeze on Instagram because of the visual nature of the social platform. The great thing about Instagram ads is that you can include links to your website in your posts. These links should go directly to your product pages to drive sales.

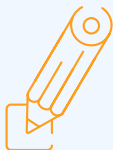
Target your ads based on location, demographics, interests, behaviors, and connections. You can even create a lookalike audience to target people similar to those already on your email contact list.



DID YOU KNOW?

Constant Contact walks you through the process of creating ads, making it easy to find customers on Facebook and Instagram, drive website traffic, and grow your contact list.

[Find out more.](#)



ACTION STEPS

✓ Set aside a budget of \$150 to experiment with paid advertising.

✓ Consider Google Smart Campaigns and Instagram ads.

✓ Drive traffic to top performing pages on your website.

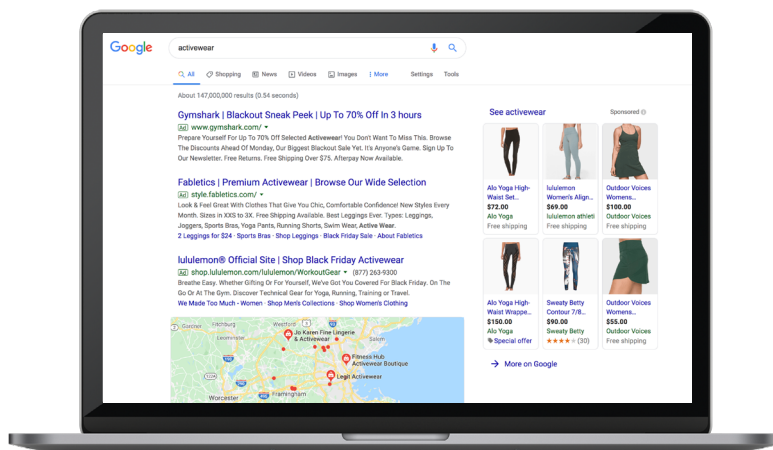
✓ Use ads to get new signups for your email list.



DID YOU KNOW?

Constant Contact has simplified the process for creating an ad and bidding on keywords so that you can quickly start promoting your business to the people who are actively looking for what your business offers.

Find out more about growing your business with [Google Ads from Constant Contact](#).



CREATE CONTENT

Google Ads

People use Google every day to search for specific goods, services, programs, charities, and organizational information. You can pay to have Google Ads display your text ads at the top of the search results or on other websites through their display network based on specific keywords. These ads are pay-per-click (PPC), which means you pay only when people click on your ad.

Google also offers Smart Campaigns to help you drive more in-store traffic, phone calls, or website visits. Smart Campaigns make it very easy to set up your ads to drive product sales.

When you purchase a Google ad, be sure that your ad does not go to your homepage. Instead, your ad should direct potential customers to a specific page on your website (most likely a product page.) This will help drive more eyes on your products and more subsequent sales.

How much should you spend on ads?

When you're first getting started set aside \$150 to test with, which gives you about \$5 per day. As you learn what does and doesn't work you can invest more money in the ads that are working to bring you more business. This budget also gives you enough runway to see which types of ads are working for you.



How it all comes together

Now you have a better sense of how consumers are finding businesses online and the tools you'll need to position yourself for success.

How do you bring it all together to drive new and repeat business? The reality is that if you're not top of mind, people forget about your business. And that can cause you to lose money. Let's take a look at how this all comes together.

Connect

It's all about getting people to your door or mobile-responsive website. You now know that happens through word-of-mouth referrals, searches online, review sites, paid advertising, people finding you via mobile searches on apps, or through listing sites.

Experience

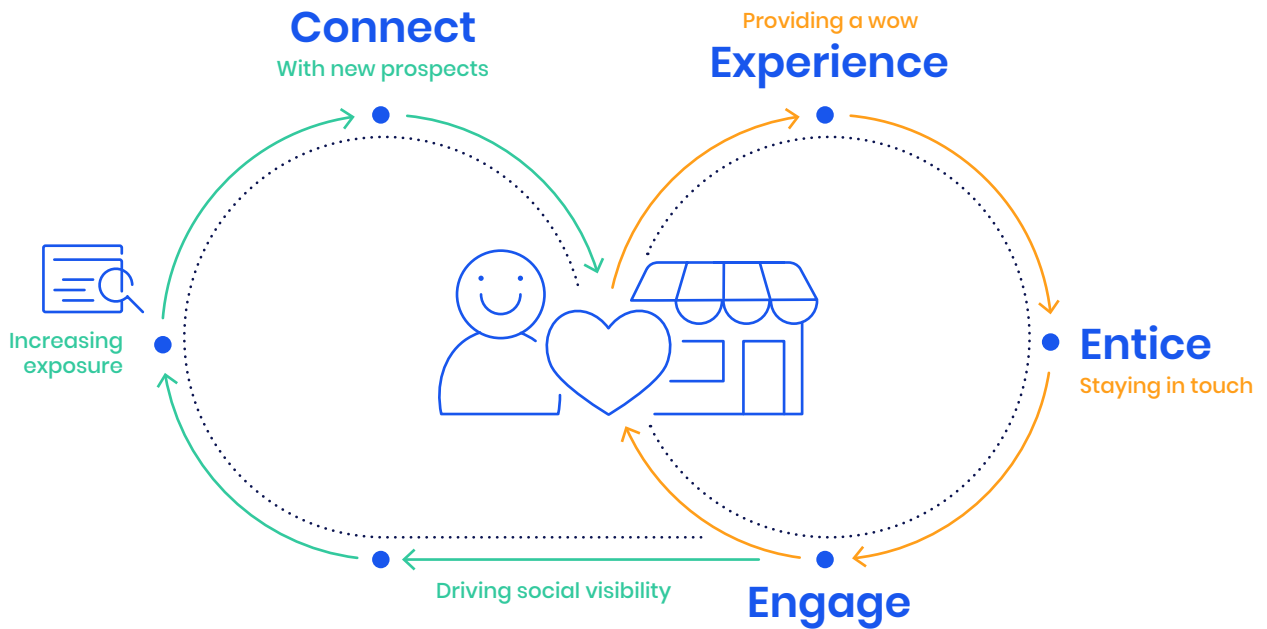
Wherever your prospective customer is engaging with you, you should provide a positive experience. That's often as simple as making sure people are finding the answers to their questions, responding and engaging with people, and generally being helpful.

Entice

At this stage where someone is feeling good about your business, it's a great time to entice them to stay in touch with you. This could be mean following you on social channels, or even better, joining your email list.

Engage

Next, engage with these people who have opted to connect with you on a regular basis. This engagement is at the heart of the relationship between a brand and its customers. Engagement keeps you top of mind and puts you on the path to creating repeat customers, loyalty, referrals, and increased exposure for your business. Simply, engagement creates more awareness for your business and brings more people to your door.



Your existing customers are likely to do business with you again and when your connections engage with you on social, forward your emails, write you glowing reviews, or share your content with their contacts, who also make great prospects for your business because they share similar characteristics, those interactions create more visibility for your business.

In turn, this brings new people to your business and feeds into the ways people find your business in the first place.

And that's how it all works together.

By focusing on those core elements of connect, experience, entice, and engage, a small business can create the relationships and interactions that keep existing customers coming back and increase word of mouth and social visibility that brings new customers through the door.

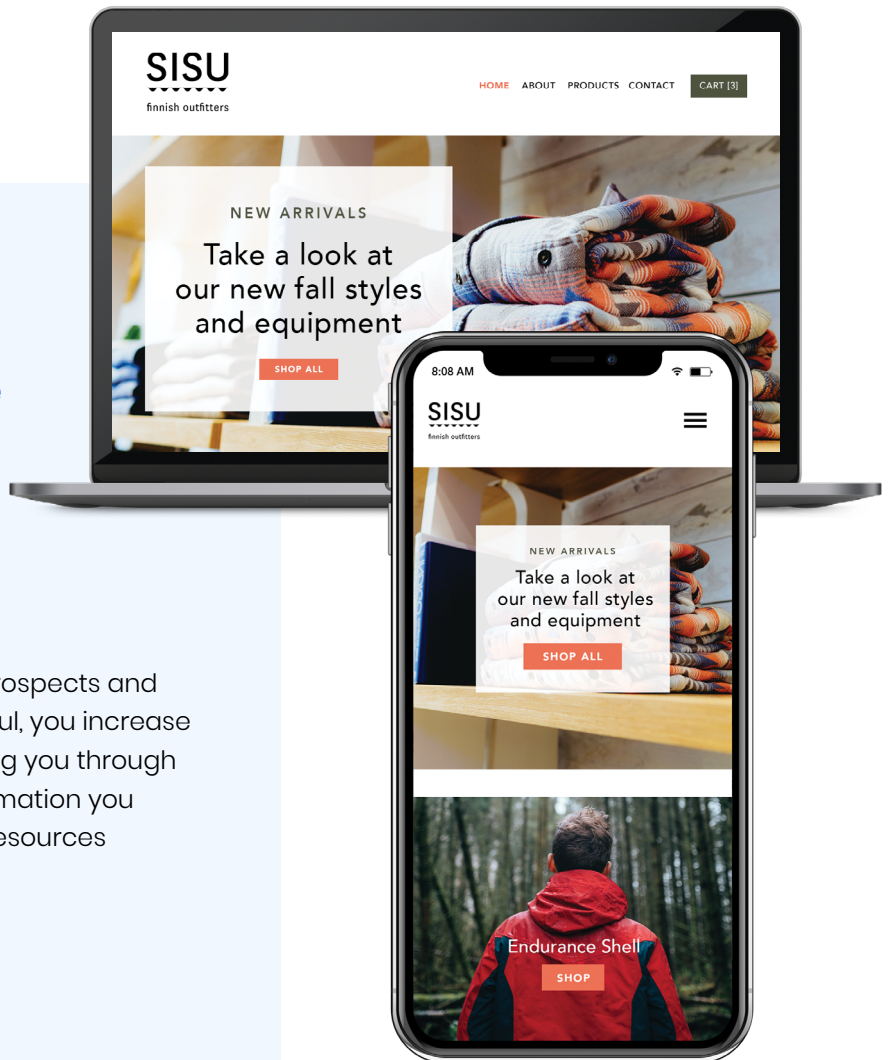
TO RECAP

Here's how you
can take action:



Create a
mobile-responsive
website as
a resource
for potential
customers.

By answering questions of prospects and creating content that's helpful, you increase the chances of people finding you through search, consuming the information you provide, and sharing those resources with their connections.



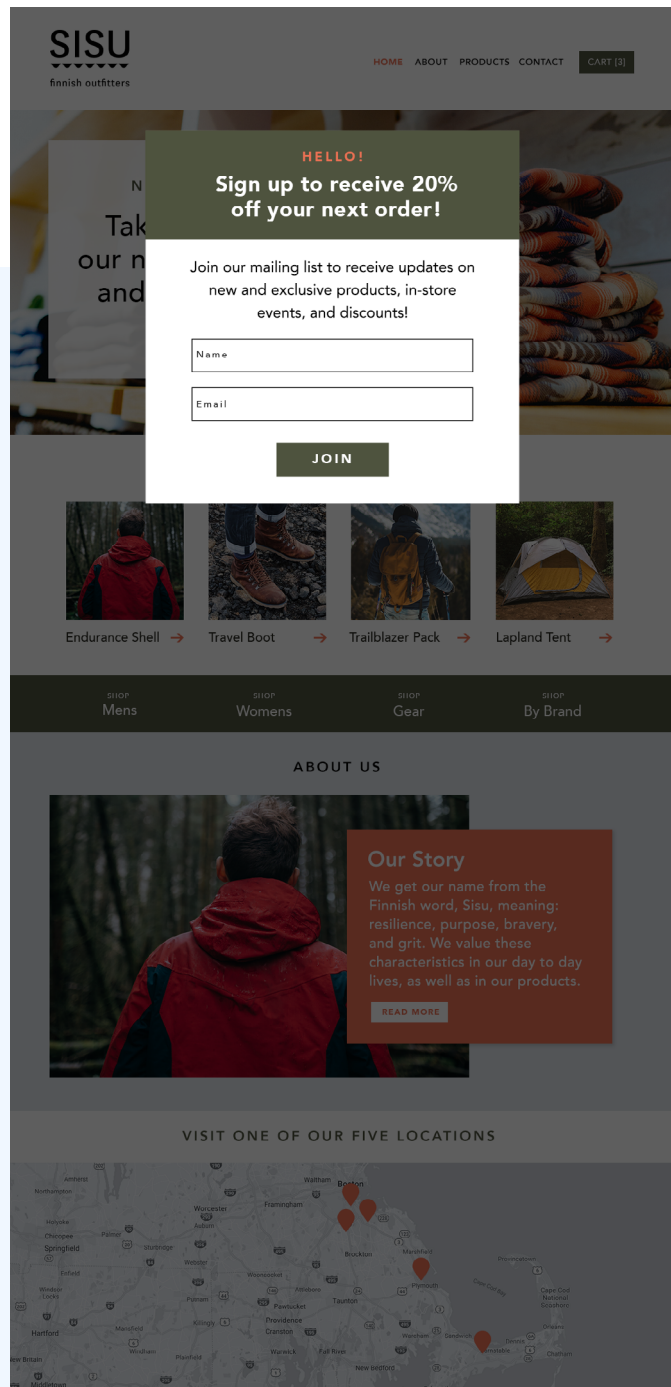
TO RECAP

Here's how you
can take action:



Capture email addresses from website visitors.

Offer a promotion or exclusive content to entice people to join your email list. Then you'll have a way to follow up and encourage people to do business with you.



TO RECAP

Here's how you
can take action:

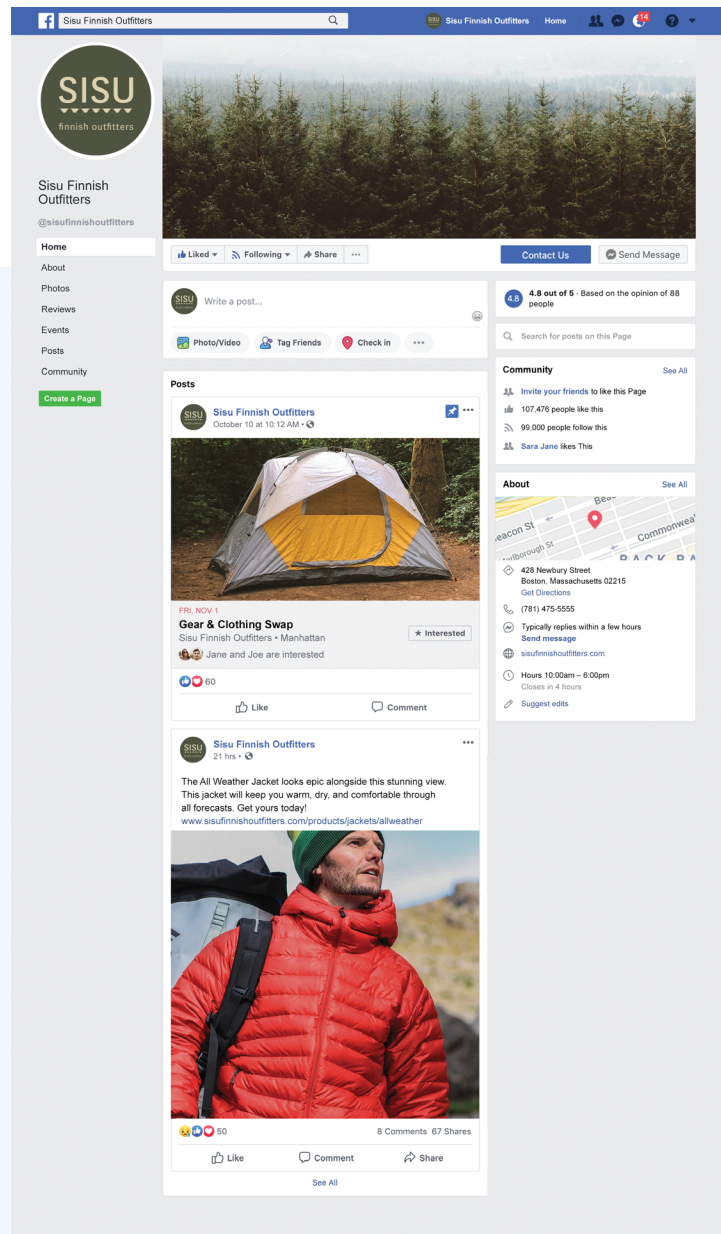


Interact and
engage on social.

Remember it's called
social media for a reason.

Social works best when you're not just asking people to purchase your products. Use channels like Facebook and Instagram to generate awareness, support customer service, and to drive action

Ultimately, try to get social followers to take the next steps by visiting your website and joining your email list.



TO RECAP

Here's how you
can take action:



Engage with reviews to build trust.

Say “Thanks” when your customers take the time to say positive things about your business.

Also, be sure to attend to negative reviews as well. People are looking to see how you'll respond. Sometimes the feedback is legitimate, sometimes it's not. Respond professionally to see if you can rectify the issue. People watching can tell if someone's being unreasonable.

The screenshot shows the Yelp website interface. At the top, there's a red header with the Yelp logo and a search bar containing 'Find Sporting Goods' and 'Near Boston, MA'. Below the header, there are navigation tabs for 'Restaurants', 'Home Services', 'Auto Services', and 'More'. The main content area is titled 'Best Sporting Goods in Boston, MA'. There are filters for 'All Filters', price ranges (\$, \$\$, \$\$\$, \$\$\$\$), and 'Open Now'. The first business listed is '2. Sisu Outfitters' with a 4.5-star rating. The business description is 'Store, Sporting Goods, Outdoor Gear'. A review from Devon S. of Sisu Outfitters is shown, praising the company's outdoor apparel and equipment. The business address is 428 Newbury Street, Boston, and the phone number is (781) 475-5555.

TO RECAP

Here's how you
can take action:



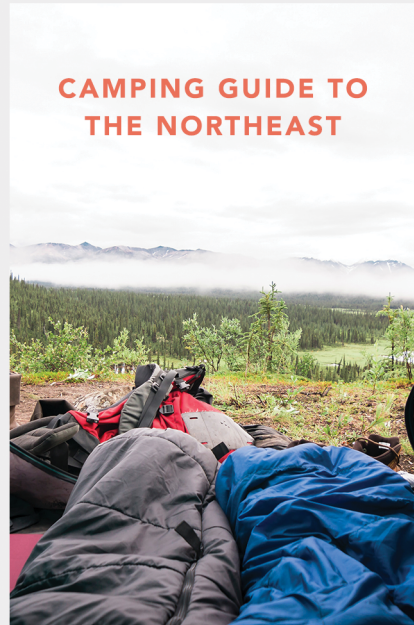
Use email marketing to provide exclusive, helpful, and promotional content

Email marketing allows you to build more meaningful customer relationships and drive business because people have opted-in to receive information from you.

They're more engaged with your business than the typical social media follower. Provide subscribers with deals, information, events that they won't receive other places. Email can also drive action on your social channels or product pages.

SISU
finnish outfitters

CAMPING GUIDE TO THE NORTHEAST



Click the link below to read this
amazing guide to camping in the Northeast!

VISIT WEBSITE

GUIDE



428 Newbury Street Boston, MA 02215
info@sisuoutfitters.com (781) 475-5555

TO RECAP

Here's how you
can take action:



Amplify your efforts with paid advertising.

With your fundamentals in place on Instagram and Google Ads, you can bolster traffic to your website, drive more calls, expose your business to more people, and collect more email addresses to drive even more product sales.

facebook



Sisu Outfitters

Sponsored ·



Sisu brings the best of Scandinavian design to New England! Check out the latest collection.



56

34 Shares

Like

Comment

Share

Learn More



How will you know your online marketing efforts are working?

There's no shortage of things to measure today. Likes, followers, shares, opens, and clicks are all leading indicators. Don't focus on these vanity metrics alone to determine success. Pay attention to the things that are meaningful for your business.

Some high-level questions you should answer to gauge success:

- Are people visiting your store?
- Are people visiting your website?
- Are people joining your email list?
- Are people contacting you?
- Are people making purchases?

How long does online marketing take to work?

From an organic, or non-paid perspective, you should think in terms of months. But once you build that foundation and have those strong relationships with your customers, the time frame shortens. Then you can experiment with paid advertising to amplify those efforts that are working.

REMEMBER

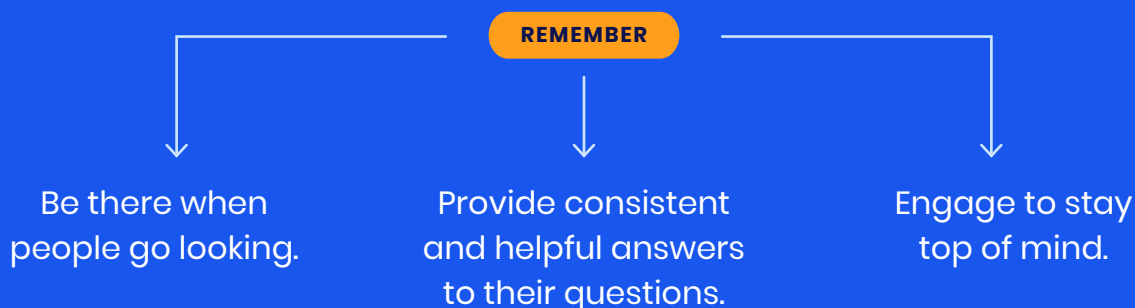
Across all that you're doing online, the idea should be to use your mobile-responsive website, email marketing, social channels, business listings, content, and advertising to be useful to your current and potential customers.

- Create your website as a resource.
- Use other channels to drive people to your website.
- Capture email addresses and engage to drive new and repeat business.



How online marketing can work for you

**With your knowledge of how to make
online marketing work for your business,
you're ready to take those next steps.**



By doing these things you'll get the word out about your business, drive more people to your website, and do more business.

You've got this. You've got us.

CONSTANTCONTACT.COM

Is your business online ready?

Review the following information. If you answer “no” on any of these items, a Constant Contact marketing advisor can point you in the right direction.



Call our marketing helpline:

(888) 1DK-MKTG
(888) 435-6584

Do you have a logo for your business?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Do you have a domain name?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Do you have a website?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Is it mobile responsive?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Does it include at least four pages?		
<i>Homepage</i>	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
<i>About Page</i>	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
<i>Products Page</i>	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
<i>Contact Page</i>	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Are you answering the indicated questions for visitors on each page?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Are you using the appropriate imagery and photography throughout your site?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Do you have a way to capture email addresses from your website?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Are you offering something of value in exchange for an email address?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Have you ever run an SEO audit on your website?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Are you using an email marketing tool to stay in touch with customers?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Do you have a Welcome Series ready to automatically go out to new subscribers?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Do you have a written plan to classify leads and communicate regularly	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Do you have any ideas for other emails you may want to automate?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO

Are you using social media channels for your business?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Have you reserved your business name on the major social channels?	<input type="radio"/> FACEBOOK <input type="radio"/> TWITTER <input type="radio"/> INSTAGRAM <input type="radio"/> LINKEDIN <input type="radio"/> PINTEREST <input type="radio"/> YOUTUBE	
Have you chosen one channel as your primary area of focus?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Are you engaging with people trying to interact with your business on this channel?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Have you set business goals for your social activity across the three categories?		
<i>Awareness</i>	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
<i>Engagement</i>	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
<i>Driving Action</i>	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Do you have a written social plan to achieve those goals?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Have you identified the listings and review sites that are important for your business?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Have you claimed your business on these listings and sites?		
<i>Facebook</i>	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
<i>Google My Business</i>	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
<i>Yelp</i>	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Have you confirmed the information is accurate on these sites?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Are you engaging with people on these platforms?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO

Do you have a way to easily create content on your website such as a blog?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Have you made a list of commonly asked questions from your customers?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Do you have a written plan to publish answers to those questions on a consistent basis?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Are you currently doing any paid advertising?

☐ FACEBOOK

☐ INSTAGRAM

☐ GOOGLE

☐ OTHER

Have you set aside a small budget to test your paid advertising efforts?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Do you have a written plan for paid advertising efforts?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Do you have a key metric that's important for your business?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Are you looking beyond vanity metrics and paying attention to the metrics that matter for your business?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Are more people visiting your website?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Are more people joining your email list?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Are more people contacting you?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Are more people becoming customers?

☐ YES

☐ NO

→ Find more powerful tools, marketing advice, and how to win with online marketing at constantcontact.com

Constant Contact is an online marketing platform built to simplify the complex task of marketing your idea, even if you're a beginner. And our award-winning team of marketing advisors is there for every customer, every step of the way, offering live, real-time marketing advice on the phone or online anytime you get stuck.

Whether it's creating great-looking email marketing campaigns, running Google Ads to get more website traffic, or finding new customers on social media, we've got all the tools, features, and expert guidance you need to help you succeed—all in one place.



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Waltham, MA 02451

[CONSTANTCONTACT.COM](https://www.constantcontact.com)