



Grade your company's security. Take our quiz today!

PRST STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
BOISE, ID
PERMIT 411

Inside *This Edition*

1. 25 Years of IT Expertise
2. Your Untapped Secret Weapon for Growth
3. Byzantine Empire Declared War ... On a Whale?
4. Revolutionize Your Social Media Reach!

How to Use Social Media to Grow Your Business Like Never Before!

You don't need to bust trendy dance moves or be a meme machine to earn a following on social media. Countless business owners have shared their secrets about growing their list of followers and bringing their social media accounts to new heights. With these easy-to-implement tips, you can easily increase your social media presence — no pricey ads or ridiculous choreography required.

Create educational content.

When you share valuable, educational content, viewers will not just hit the like button. They'll also start following your account to learn more and maybe even check out your business website! Emphasize evergreen content, as you want the video to circulate and not lose its value over time. Show that you have practical, exclusive knowledge, and you'll see people flock to you.

Use original audio.

This one may be a shocker: Don't use trending sounds, songs, or automated voices. Instead, use your own audio that adds



value to your content and helps you stand out from countless other content creators. It may seem like a no-brainer to use trending audio to get you on people's "For You" page, but in the end, original audios are what help you get noticed. All you need is the sound of your own voice!

Provide a hook, value, and CTA.

Start your video with a hook, anything to keep your audience from immediately scrolling away. It doesn't have to be crazy; an intriguing fact or statement works fine. Next, share your

Continued on Page 3 ...



It All Started With a Passion for Technology

The Birth and Growth of Christo IT

Do you remember how different the internet landscape looked before the year 2000? When Christo IT first launched in 1999, we started with little more than a laptop and a prayer. I spent most of my time helping clients set up a single computer with dial-up in their offices or providing them with a domain name so they could give everyone in the company a unique email address. In the almost 25 years since we first opened our doors, we've expanded our services and helped thousands of clients with their IT needs.

I've always enjoyed playing with computers. From an early age, the thought of programming things and communicating with people around the world fascinated me. When it came time to attend college and pick a major, I began studying chemical engineering because Villanova didn't offer a computer science program. Even in those early days at school, I was always the guy who was helping others with their computer issues. Once I graduated from college, my affinity for computers and technology expanded into the workplace.

At one point, I worked for a startup that desperately needed a VPN. I set that up for the company before developing an email system. I kept up with the

IT responsibilities of this company while handling my day-to-day duties. Because of that job, I became even more passionate about computers, IT, and technology on a professional and personal level. I worked side jobs in the IT industry for a year or two before my primary employer downsized, cutting the bulk of the staff. That moment was a wake-up call for me. I decided to pursue my passion full-time and started Christo IT.

Those first few years were an absolute whirlwind. It started with domain name and email assistance but quickly grew into other areas. Laptops became more prevalent, which led to an increased demand for remote access. The Melissa virus took the world by storm in those early days, leading to heightened cybersecurity awareness. As cyberattacks grew more severe, businesses started implementing stronger cybersecurity practices, and we were there to help them devise the strongest strategy possible. To this day, we're the go-to for all your IT and cybersecurity needs.

One tool that has been incredibly beneficial to our clients is our risk assessment analysis option. With our NIST framework-based risk assessment,

you can ensure that your business has all bases covered. We start by making an inventory of what you need to stay protected before looking at what a cybercriminal would want from your business. We then analyze the systems and layers of security you have in place. We want to see how you monitor your network and who is responsible for acting when an alarm triggers. We then need to learn how you respond to an attack and what actions you have in place to ensure your business can recover. By walking through these pieces, we can help develop a plan to keep your business, employees, and customers safe. You can head to ChristoIT.com/cybercheckup for more information.

When you work with us, understand that we will provide you with the best service possible. We are built from the ground up for speed. When you call us, you'll talk to the engineers directly. Our team doesn't have anyone fresh out of school; everyone has six to 15 years of experience. Most of our calls are resolved in under five minutes so you can get back to business.

If you're ready to fortify your business's cybersecurity practices or have any questions about our services, please contact us today!



CRACKING THE INFLUENCER CODE

Why Small Businesses Shouldn't Shy Away

Marketing gurus have spoken about the benefits of partnerships with influencers for years, but many small businesses continue to shy away from the practice. Entrepreneurs often feel intimidated by the process or consider it a waste of time. They wrongly assume the benefits are slim to none if they're not in the beauty or fashion industries.

It can be a costly misunderstanding. In truth, influencer marketing is appropriate for virtually every business. The trick is to do it correctly. The world of influencers isn't very intuitive for beginners, so we've answered some of the most common questions small-business marketers have below.

What is an influencer?

When most people think of influencers, they imagine people whose job is to look attractive, make social media videos, and recommend makeup or diet products. But this group is only a small subset of the greater influencer community. An influencer is any person who has an audience that trusts their opinions and guidance. It's as simple as that. Authors, public speakers, business leaders, podcasters, and local celebrities are all influencers who can help you reach your target demographic, whether it's B2B or B2C.

How do you choose the right influencer for your brand?

Start by discovering who your audience trusts. You can use marketing software to determine who has your target demographic's eyes and ears, but you can also ask your existing customers with a survey. Don't simply choose people whose work you love unless you have reason to believe their audience needs your product or service.

Next, research your chosen influencers carefully. Many will have a controversy in

their past, so you want to ensure their brand values align with yours. Further, remember the influencers you work with need not be "famous" in the traditional sense. Local influencers can help local businesses make significant market gains.

What will make your partnership a success?

A winning influencer campaign involves much more than paying a celebrity to read from a script on Cameo. You want any influencers you partner with to understand and feel invested in your product. They should already be familiar with your field, understand your audience, and feel excited to work on the project with you.

As difficult as it is to relinquish control over your marketing campaign, giving influencers some creative license will serve your brand well. They know how to address their audience in a way that garners likes and shares. You should approve the pitch and final product, but treat influencers like the experts they are.

Finally, understand what you're getting yourself into. Influencers all have fee structures, but they can differ considerably. Read their rate cards carefully to calculate your expenses upfront and remember many will negotiate.

Further, review legal agreements in detail. They will specify how, when, and where you can use the content. Getting this piece wrong can mean not getting the product you thought you paid for.

It will take some research and practice, but influencer marketing could give your business new credibility and customers. Don't discount the possibilities — an endorsement from a personality your target market trusts could help your sales soar.



... Continued from Page 4

valuable educational content that helps viewers learn something new. Lastly, include a call to action (CTA) to persuade your audience to follow your account and look further into your business. With this formula, you'll reel a viewer in and encourage them to engage with your business.

Craft your caption and hashtags.

No business accounts should ignore their captions and hashtags! Leaving your captions blank or not adding hashtags is the same as throwing your social media posts in the garbage. Keep your captions simple and full of hot keywords to catch viewers' attention. Then, follow the three-by-three hashtag rule to make your video visible to the right audience.

Here's how it works: First, create 1-3 hashtags that describe your intended audience, not you. Are they small-business owners? Single parents? Car fanatics? Whatever your client demographic looks like, add hashtags that match them. Second, create another three hashtags that define what you offer. What are your products or services? Finally, use three more hashtags that relate to your business's "why" or the pain points of your potential customers. Add those hashtags



to the bottom of your post, and over time, you'll see your engagement boom.

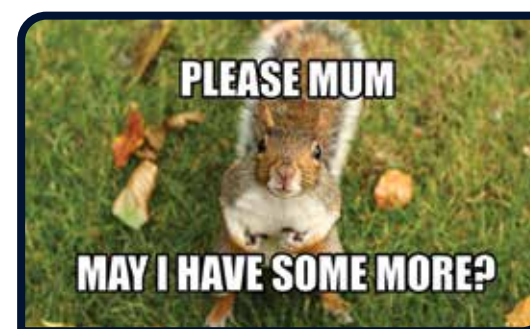
Learn to play the algorithms.

Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook are all powered by algorithms that determine how quickly content spreads and who sees it. These algorithms vary across platforms and can change at the drop of a hat! To be successful, you need to research the algorithms on the platforms where you post and follow their "rules."

On Instagram, for example, you're more likely to show up in users' Home feeds and Explore pages if you post Instagram Reels (short videos) instead of static images. You'll lose points for watermarking your Reels or bogging them down with too much text. On TikTok, you should make sure your videos are more than 10 seconds long, shot vertically, and use TikTok's library of text and visual effects.

Now, get out there (aka online) and start creating content that builds your following list! Soon enough, you'll see that social media isn't complex. It might be the easiest way to call attention to your business.

HAVE A Laugh!



CONSTANTINOPLE WAGED WAR ON A WHALE

The True Legend of Porphyrios

Social media lit up in spring with news that orcas were attacking boats in Portugal and Spain. Experts can't agree on why, but it's not the first time whales have gone rogue. The Byzantine Empire dealt with a similar problem in the form of a fearsome whale they named Porphyrios.



Porphyrios struck terror into the hearts of those in Constantinople during the 6th century; he spent roughly 50 years attacking boats in the area. Then he would disappear for years, but the locals never knew when he would reappear to sink more ships. The whale caused so many problems that Emperor Justinian I prioritized killing him. But even renowned war strategists couldn't take Porphyrios down.

Unfortunately for Porphyrios, he beached himself near the Black Sea, and the Byzantines took advantage and viciously ended his reign. Despite his end, Porphyrios is still the only whale to threaten the Byzantine Empire.