



GROW YOUR AUDIENCE NOW!

MENTORSHIP COURSE BOOK

SOCIAL MEDIA

How To Grow An Audience Of Ideal Customers

Using Proven Social Media Tactics &
Strategies

Welcome!

Dear friend,

This course was created as a part of the "**Grow Your Audience Now**" **mentorship program**.

In this course, you'll learn how to build a massive and targeted audience that will lead to more sales for your business, no matter what niche you are in.

I'll take you by the hand and walk you through the process step-by-step.

It's totally hands-on, so you'll be taking action and implementing what you learn at each stage.

I'll help you avoid the mistakes that most people make and get you to a planned, effective approach on social media presence without the headaches and lost time of trying to do it on your own.

So, if you're ready to move ahead towards attracting an engaged following on social media, let's begin!

If you are on my one-on-one coaching program, feel free to ask me questions directly. You know where to find me!

To your success,

Abe Cherian



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Introduction

No matter what your niche is, all businesses today should have a social media presence. Social media enables you to reach a global audience of potential customers. The more people you reach online, the better your chances are to engage them, make sales, and grow your business as a result. But that can only happen if you develop a dynamic social following and give your target audience the content they want.

Most small businesses and entrepreneurs struggle to find and attract their ideal customer. Your aim is to build an audience of people who will benefit from your offers. Social media will help you locate and connect with this audience. Through sharing valuable content, you'll entice them to become followers and email subscribers.

You'll then need to engage with your followers and nurture those relationships further, so that they trust you and want to buy from you. This kind of relationship-building doesn't happen overnight. In order to be successful, you need to follow a strategy of proven social media tactics and take consistent action.

This course will help you define exactly who you want in your audience, find those people, attract them into your social following and email list, and engage them to build trust and credibility.... All using proven social media tactics.

Learning Objectives:

By the time you complete this course, you'll be able to:

- Set your audience growth goals and establish the mindset that will help you achieve them
- Evaluate what you already have in place to grow your audience, so that you can identify gaps for further action
- Get to know your audience on social media, so that you can tailor your approach in a way that resonates with your ideal customers
- Use social media to attract your audience, so that you can start to engage and build relationships with them
- Encourage followers to click through to your opt-in, so that you consistently add subscribers to your email list
- Nurture the relationships you create on social media and engage with your audience, so that they ultimately become customers
- Implement advanced techniques for audience-building when you're ready, so that you can continue to expand your reach and make more sales
- Consolidate and implement your learning and plan future action steps, so you can achieve the goals you set for this course

This course is broken down into 6 major modules and individual lessons to take you step-by-step through the ways to build an engaged audience on social media that will turn into a profitable customer base.

The modules follow a logical order, so while you can skip around if you want, it's best to work through them one at a time.

As you go through each module, use your Action Guide to help you complete the Action Steps at the end of each.

Expectations

Before we start the course, take a minute to think about what you want to get out of it.

In the **Action Guide**, write down three skills you expect to gain.

Now that you're clear about what you want this course to deliver, we can get started.

Module 1 – Get Ready to Grow Your Audience

You need to be prepared both mentally and practically before you start to build your all-important social media audience.

In this first module, you'll set your audience growth goals, establish the mindset that will help you achieve them, and evaluate the elements you already have in place to grow your audience.

- Lesson 1: **Why Grow an Audience Using Social Media**
- Lesson 2: **Set Up for Audience Growth**

Lesson 1: Why Grow an Audience Using Social Media

You Need an Audience

If you have no one to sell to, then you don't have a business. You need an audience that you can communicate with directly, gradually showing that you can help them with their challenges, build their trust, and then put your offers in front of them.

Social media is a powerful tool for audience-building and its influence is only growing.

The benefits of using social media include:



- Expanding your market reach
- Providing a cost-effective way of letting people get to know you

- Giving you social proof and consumer feedback
- Boosting brand awareness.

Above all, being active on social media builds a communication channel through which you can reach and engage your target audience. But social media shouldn't be your only way of communicating with your audience. It's an adjunct to your marketing plan that will entice people to become **followers** and **email subscribers**. Having them opt-in to your list is a vital part - once people have signed up to your list, you can connect with them directly and market to them. And that email list remains your property. Don't forget that your social media activity, your followers, and your likes, belong to the platform. If that platform crashes, you'll lose all your hard-won contacts.

You must be clear on your social media objectives or you will waste time. Most everyone finds it easy to get distracted when they're on their favorite platform. You could quickly find yourself spending hours following different leads, but this isn't an efficient use of your time.

Remember that your big-picture objective is to build an audience of people who want to buy what you're selling and with whom you can have direct communication.

Within that, you need to set specific goals. These will vary as your overall business goals change. Start by asking yourself what you need an audience for. Some of the reasons to build an audience include:

- "I want to sign up more people to my program"
- "I want to build a bigger team"
- "I want to double sales in the next year"

Set an initial goal for the audience size you're aiming for. You can do this for each platform you use, for social media generally, and then for email subscribers separately, or just have an overall figure in mind. When you start attracting your audience on social media, this will help motivate you to reach your goals.

But remember that it's not the size of the audience that matters as much as the quality. 'Quality' here means your ideal customers and how engaged they are (which we'll discuss in more detail in a later module).

Make sure your goals are realistic and that you don't expect to grow an audience overnight. There's no quick fix to building an audience. You must be ready to put in the work to get the results you want.

The course will take you step-by-step through the audience-building process and you'll be refining as you go, so you may need to back up and tweak as you learn more about your audience and what they want.

Develop an Audience Growth Mindset

Both experienced entrepreneurs and business newbies find the topic of growing an audience on social media daunting. For this reason, it's important to get your mindset in the right place before you start.

First, accept that social media activity is no longer optional for a business. Social media has become a standard piece of your business infrastructure. It's as essential as having a website.

There are some basic principles to keep in mind:

Give away information for free, just to be helpful

Be prepared to give value first

Don't get overwhelmed by options

Be prepared to be genuine

- Give away information for free, just to be helpful.
- Be prepared to give value first. Sales will take time to come.
- Don't get overwhelmed by options. If you can't decide which platform to use, then choose the platform you know best to start with.
- Be prepared to be genuine. People see through fake. Do what you love, and this will come across to those reading and listening to your words.

It's inevitable that past experience will color how you view this task. If you've put time and energy into social media before but haven't had much success building your audience, you must be prepared to start over and try again. You need a change of mindset so that you approach it this time with a different motivation.

Write down how you feel or think about building an audience using social media. This will help desensitize you to what's happened before.

Reframe any negative thoughts into positive ones, for example:

- **Negative:** *I tried this before and it didn't work*
- **Positive:** *Maybe I didn't get the results I wanted in the past but there's nothing stopping me getting them now*

Use affirmations to motivate your daily actions. Affirmations are statements of intent written in the present tense. Repeat them several times a day and they will impress this information on your subconscious so that you can start working towards achieving your objectives.

Here are some examples:

- *Every contact I make today means better relationships with prospective customers*
- *I enjoy making connections with new people on social media*
- *I'm happy to spend the time on X platform as it's helping me reach my goals*

You need to write affirmations in your own words. Choose words that resonate with you. Write them on post-its and put them near your computer or use Sticky Notes on your PC. Don't forget to read them regularly. Use them to start your social media session so you're motivated from the get-go.

There's a simple 3-step model in the next lesson that will help you make progress building your audience on social media.

Key Takeaways:

- Be clear on your specific goals for building an audience on social media.
- There's no quick fix to building an audience. You must be ready to put in the work to get the results you want.

Action Steps:

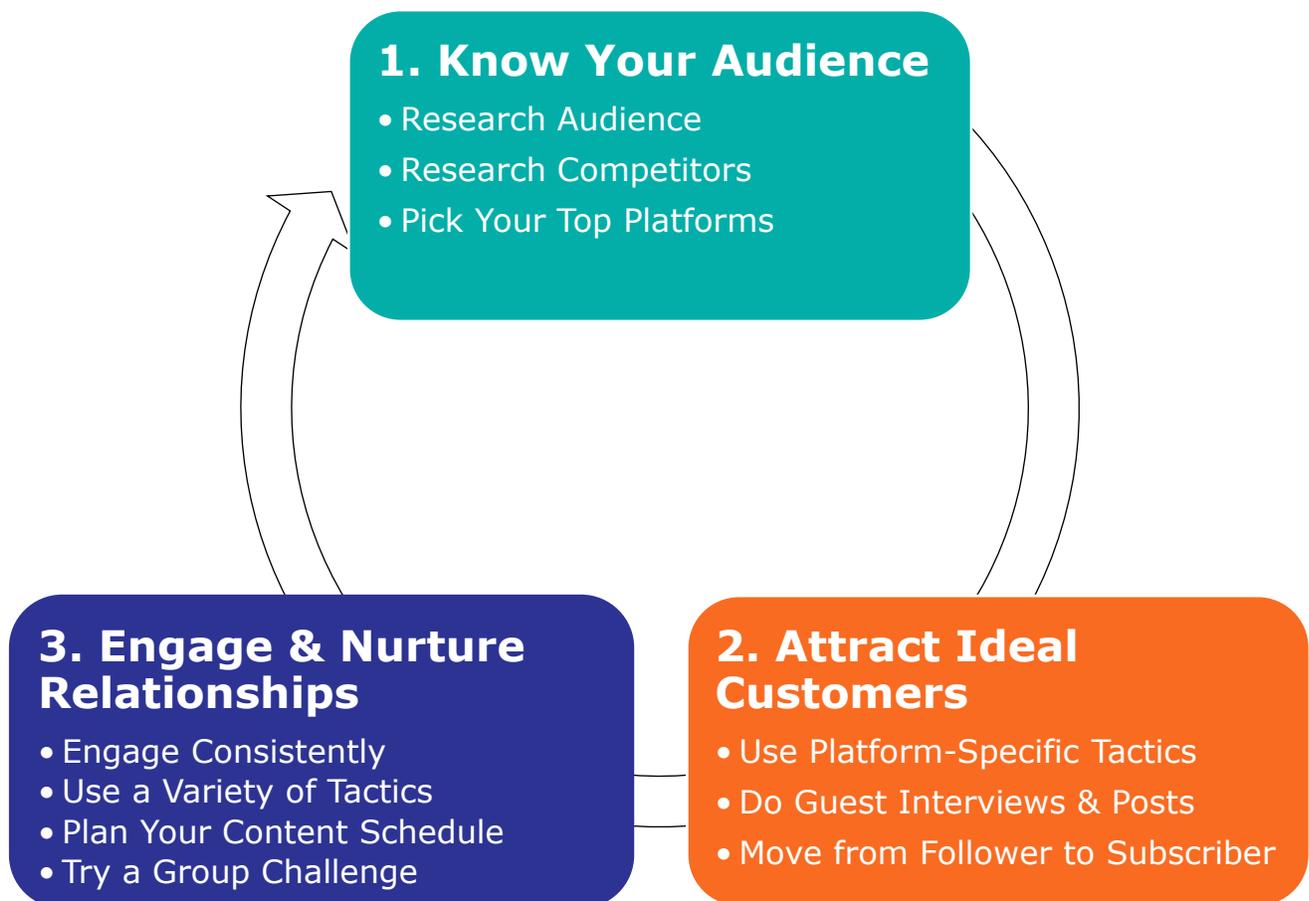
1. What do you need an audience for? Be specific in your answer.
2. Set an initial goal for size of audience on social media.
3. Write down how you feel/think about building an audience on social media. Reframe any negative thoughts into positive ones.
4. Write 3 affirmations you can use daily.

Lesson 2: Set Up for Audience Growth

Know Where You're Starting From

You need to be prepared before you start your research. Keep the audience growth mindset by repeating your affirmations daily (or several times a day). This is important to prevent you from slipping into overwhelm.

Follow these 3 simple steps and you'll get where you want to go:



1 – Know Your Audience

- Research your audience
- Research your competitors
- Pick your top platforms

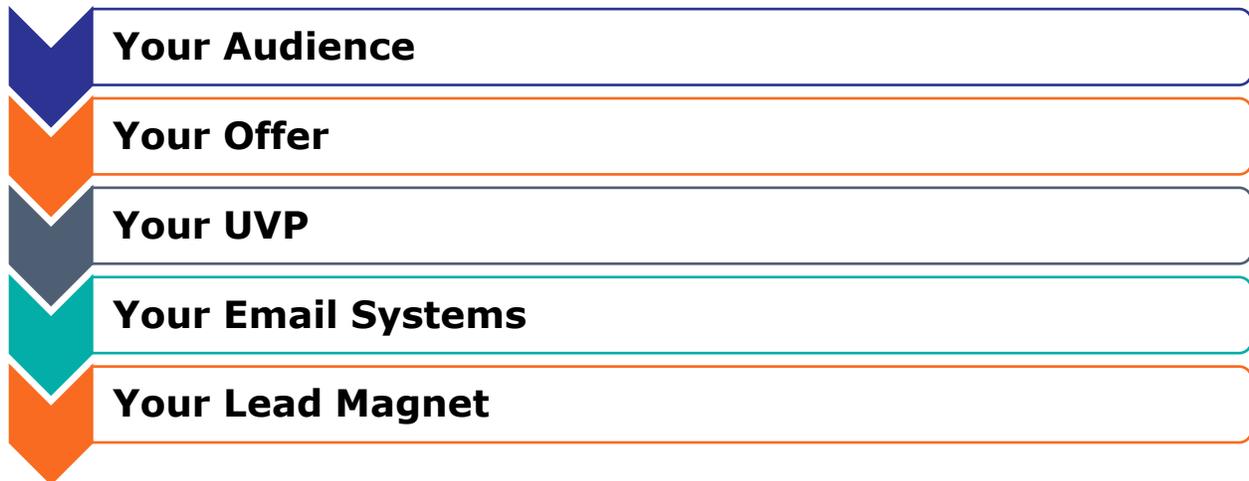
2 – Attract Your Ideal Customers

- Use platform-specific tactics
- Use guest interviews and posts
- Move your audience from follower to subscriber

3 – Engage & Nurture Relationships

- Engage consistently
- Use a variety of tactics
- Plan your content schedule
- Try a group challenge

We'll cover all these steps in the course, but first, let's check that you have the key elements in place before you dive into any research and growth. You must know:



- **Your audience.** Describe your ideal customer based on what you currently know. This will form the basis of your target audience profile.
- **Your offer.** Outline your offer so you're clear on what you'll be selling further down the line. If you haven't created your offer yet, you need to have a good idea of what it will be, who it's for, and how it will help them. Otherwise, you could waste time building the wrong audience.
- **Your UVP** or Unique Value Proposition. No matter what product you're selling to which market, you need to stand out from your competitors. Your UVP is a statement that explains how your business is different from everyone else's in the market. It tells your customers how you can better meet their needs and what makes you special. It tells them why they should buy from you instead of from your competitors.

Here are some examples of well-known UVPs:

- "We're number two. We try harder." Avis
- "Melts in your mouth, not in your hand." M&Ms
- "The Smartest Way to Get Around." Uber

- **Your email systems.** Check you have an email provider to capture emails with an opt-in box. If you don't, set one up such as [MailChimp](#), [Active Campaign](#), or [Aweber](#).
- **Your lead magnet.** Make sure your lead magnet is relevant to your audience. Check that the link to opt-in for your lead magnet is on your website and other profiles. If you don't already have a lead magnet, create a one-pager of top free resources in your industry, set up a list and opt-in page, and have at least one automated follow-up email to deliver the lead magnet.

Complete the Audience Building Checklist with your current social media stats. This will mean looking back over the previous month's results and consulting the analytics provided by the platforms you use for some of them. Don't worry if you can't complete all the sections yet. This is a snapshot of where you are today with your preparations to grow your audience and marks your starting point. You can add to this and measure your progress against it as you go along.

Set Up Your Social Media for Audience Growth

Ensure any existing profiles you've set up are consistent in content and project the same message, image, title, and so on. If you haven't already, include a link to the relevant opt-in page on each social media profile and cross-link profiles to other social media platforms.

If you don't have them already, set up business pages on the platform(s) you use now. It's not advisable to use your personal pages for business, except on LinkedIn where your personal profile is what attracts the most attention. If you're using YouTube, make sure you create a business channel.

Key Takeaways:

- Make sure you have the key elements such as your ideal customer, your UVP, and your offer details in place before you dive into any research and growth.
- Check your social media profiles to ensure they're consistent in content and project the same message.

Action Steps:

1. Complete the Audience Building Checklist to see what you have in place and where gaps are.
2. Write a description of your ideal customer.
3. Outline your offer.
4. Make any necessary changes to your social media profiles so that the descriptions are consistent with your offer and UVP and include a link to your opt-in page.
5. **Important** – If you don't have it already, set up an email provider, design an opt-in box/page, and create a one-page lead magnet that is delivered to people after they opt-in.

Module 2 – Step 1: Get to Know Your Audience

Researching your target market is one of the key tasks any business needs to complete. You have to be able to describe your ideal customer as if they were someone you knew.

In this module, you'll deepen your understanding of your audience and find out where on social media they prefer to interact. In this way, you can tailor your approach to resonate with your ideal customers.

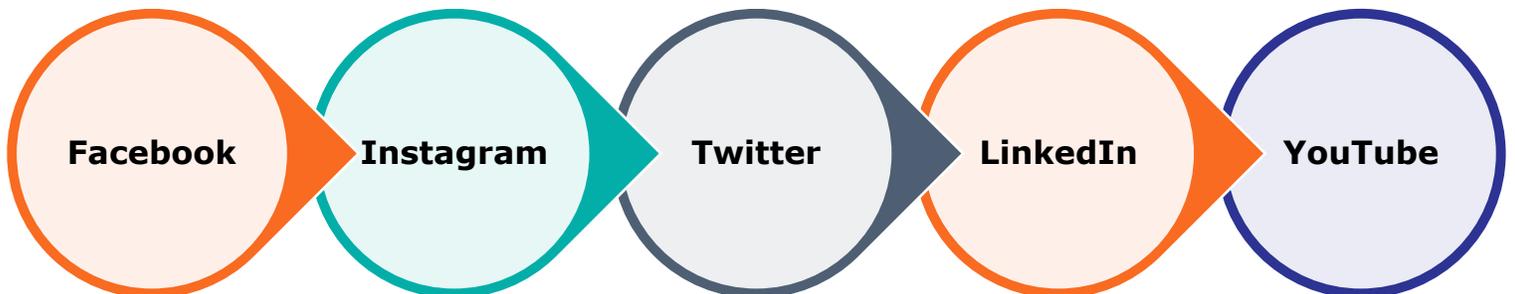
The Big 5

In Step 1, you start listening in on the platforms your ideal customers frequent to get to know them better. This way, you can determine which platforms are the best for understanding your audience. Then, you can start learning about the particularities of those platforms.

There are dozens of social media platforms out there. In terms of the top ones to use, there are some key differences between B2B (business to business) and B2C (business to customer). The top 5 B2C platforms are [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#). For B2B, they are [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#). All allow text, images, videos, and links, and all are already being used by businesses today.



Let's look at the top 5 social platforms and some of their general characteristics:



- **[Facebook.](#)** Great for building brand loyalty and reputation. Used for sharing content, telling your story, and communicating with your audience
- **[Instagram.](#)** Visuals are more important than text. Use Instagram to show products, staff photos, office events, and so on, making it great for adding a human element to your business. Harnesses the power of hashtags, Stories, and carousel advertising
- **[Twitter.](#)** Inclined towards breaking news, quick updates, and link sharing. As one of the more fast-paced platforms, Twitter offers various information for different target users. Restricted character count
- **[LinkedIn.](#)** Professional network suitable for professional-looking content (case studies, analysis, business news). The focus is on B2B connections. LinkedIn has a unique referral feature where you can ask for recommendations and endorsements of your skills. This will help build your expert status, so take advantage of this to grow your audience
- **[YouTube.](#)** You might not think of YouTube as a social network but it's a huge community where users are engaging with content via profiles, likes, and comments. Video remains a popular marketing tool and YouTube is the leader in the field for video watching and interaction.

Features and functionalities on social media are always changing and new ones are being added, so check each platform's support pages to keep up to date:

- [Facebook Help](#)
- [Instagram Help](#)
- [Twitter Help](#)

- [LinkedIn Help](#)
- [YouTube Help](#)

Other social media platforms exist that appeal to different audiences, such as [Pinterest](#) or [Snapchat](#), so go there if your audience is there. The chances are that your ideal customers will also be on at least one of the Big 5.

Who Is Your Audience?

In order to look for your audience on social media, you need to know who they are. Therefore, the first thing to do is get to know your audience. And not just the basic demographics that you've already identified.

You need to research your audience to get a deeper understanding of who they are and what their needs are.

The best way to do that is to be an eavesdropper on their 'conversations' on social media.

Set out to discover key things about them, such as:

Language they use

Where they hang out

Their biggest challenges

Whom they follow

How they consume information

- **Language they use.** Pay attention to the words and phrases they use to describe themselves and their challenges so you can use that language in your conversations and in your sales and marketing materials
- **Where they hang out.** You have to be able to find them before you can get in contact with them
- **Their biggest challenges.** This will give you a clue as to the solutions they're seeking and will help with your product development
- **Whom they follow.** If you know the influencers or industry leaders they follow, you can follow them too and see what gets discussed
- **How they consume information.** Some people prefer to read blog posts, and many like to watch videos. There are others who download podcasts so they can listen on-the-go. Other people still read magazines and newspapers, online and offline.

Write this information down so you have a record and then review your data from the last module. You might need to revise your offer, messaging, profiles/pages, and so on in light of what you've discovered.

Ask yourself: "Does this match up with what I thought before?"

This research isn't just about listening in to others. It also kicks off your audience-building because people will start to notice you as you move around social media.

How to Find My Audience

If you have existing customers, you can find out which platforms they prefer to use simply by asking them. You might already know this information but if not, you could:

- Create a survey asking specific questions about social media habits and send it to your list
- Send these specific questions to your customers in an email.

If you have no customers yet, then look at websites that serve the same market as you and see where they share content. If your competitors are on a particular platform, then it makes sense for you to be there too. Don't forget face-to-face contact. Talk to people you meet at conferences, trade shows, speaking events, and so on, and ask them where on social media they prefer to hang out.

Identifying these platforms will show you where to go to interact most effectively with your ideal customers. Once you've pinpointed these platforms, make sure that they're also right for your business and business goals.

Competitor Research

Use social media to find out about your competitors as well as your potential buyers.

When you know who serves the same market, follow them on social media and observe them. See what they share, what they ask, what the reaction is, where they get the most engagement, and so on.

Gather information such as:



- **Content:** What type of content do they use on the platforms?
- **Engagement:** The number of likes, comments, and shares
- **Post Frequency:** How many times a day/week do they post content?

Use [Buzzsumo](#), [Feedly](#), or a similar software to help you research influencers in your field and see what's trending in your industry.

Tactics to Get to Know Your Audience Better

When you're beginning your Step 1 'listening in' activities, choose two platforms to start with. In that way, you'll be more focused and see better results.

There are some general tactics that apply to all platforms:

Join other people's groups geared towards your audience

See what they're asking about or discussing

Note down the issues raised and the concerns expressed

- Join other people's groups geared towards your audience
- See what they're asking about or discussing
- Note down the issues raised and the concerns expressed.

Make sure you try these tactics before adding other platform-specific tactics for your chosen platforms.

Here are some of the current ones:

Facebook Tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Join groups for your target market➤ Follow the people your audience follows➤ Ask questions in your own groups
Instagram Tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Use the "Audience" button for subscribers' demographics➤ See what your competitors are posting
Twitter Tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Set up a list of your ideal audience➤ Join a Twitter chat. Enter the hashtag for the event➤ Use TweetReports to find relevant chats
LinkedIn Tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Find groups that suit your ideal customer and join➤ Share content from industry leaders
YouTube Tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Set up a business channel➤ Use tools to look for the most searched keywords

Facebook Tactics

- Find and join groups where your target market is and where you can watch and listen
- Seek out the people your audience follows and follow them as well
- Ask questions in your own groups if you have them

Instagram Tactics

- If you have subscribers, use the "Audience" button to see details of their demographics
- If you don't, then research your competitors and see what they're posting and what reactions they get.

Twitter Tactics

- Set up list with as many of your ideal audience members as possible and subscribe to other people's related lists. You need to see who your audience follows as these are potential contacts for you, and you want to see what your audience is sharing
- Join a relevant Twitter chat (or tweet chat). This is the perfect place to start as it's like a virtual meet-up for people with common interests where the moderator asks questions and the group provides answers or comments so you can learn about the participants. Enter the hashtag for the event. If you're not sure where to start, use [TweetReports](#) to find relevant chats

LinkedIn Tactics

- Find groups that appeal to your ideal customer and apply to join. Groups are very active on LinkedIn and you'll easily find several suitable ones
- Share content from industry leaders to start to raise your profile

YouTube Tactics

- Set up a business channel. Don't post videos about your personal life, such as your children or pets, unless you are your brand and that's what your channel is all about
- Use a keyword tool like [KeywordTool](#) or [TubeBuddy](#), which are specific to YouTube, to look for the most searched keywords in the niche you're looking to target before you build your video content

Try out a few of these tactics on your chosen platform to see what results you get. If they don't work, then choose another tactic to try.

Key Takeaways:

- Listen in on the social media platforms your ideal customers use so you can get to know them better.
- Use social media to find out important information about your competitors as well as your potential buyers.

Action Steps:

1. Research your audience.
 - a. What are their biggest challenges?
 - b. What specific language do they use about their dilemmas?
 - c. Whom do they follow?
 - d. How do they consume information? e.g. video, podcast, publications, blog posts
 - e. Review your data - Does this match up with what you thought before?
 - f. Revise your offer/messaging/profiles/pages etc. if necessary. Update the audience definition you recorded in last module.
2. Competitor research:
 - a. Which platforms do they use most?
 - b. Content: What type of content do they use on the platforms?
 - c. Engagement: How many likes, comments, shares do they have?
 - d. Post Frequency: How many times a day/week do they post content?
3. Choose two social media platforms to focus on.
 - a. Write down why these two are the most suitable for your business.
 - b. Try out two of the tactics to get to know your audience mentioned in the lesson for your two chosen platforms and note your findings.

Module 3 – Step 2: Attract Your Ideal Audience

Attracting an audience on social media isn't about quantity but about quality. You need to be interacting with the people who want to know more about you and how you can help them.

In this module, you'll find ways to attract your target audience to your social media platforms and encourage followers to click through to your opt-in so you can start to engage and build relationships with them through email.

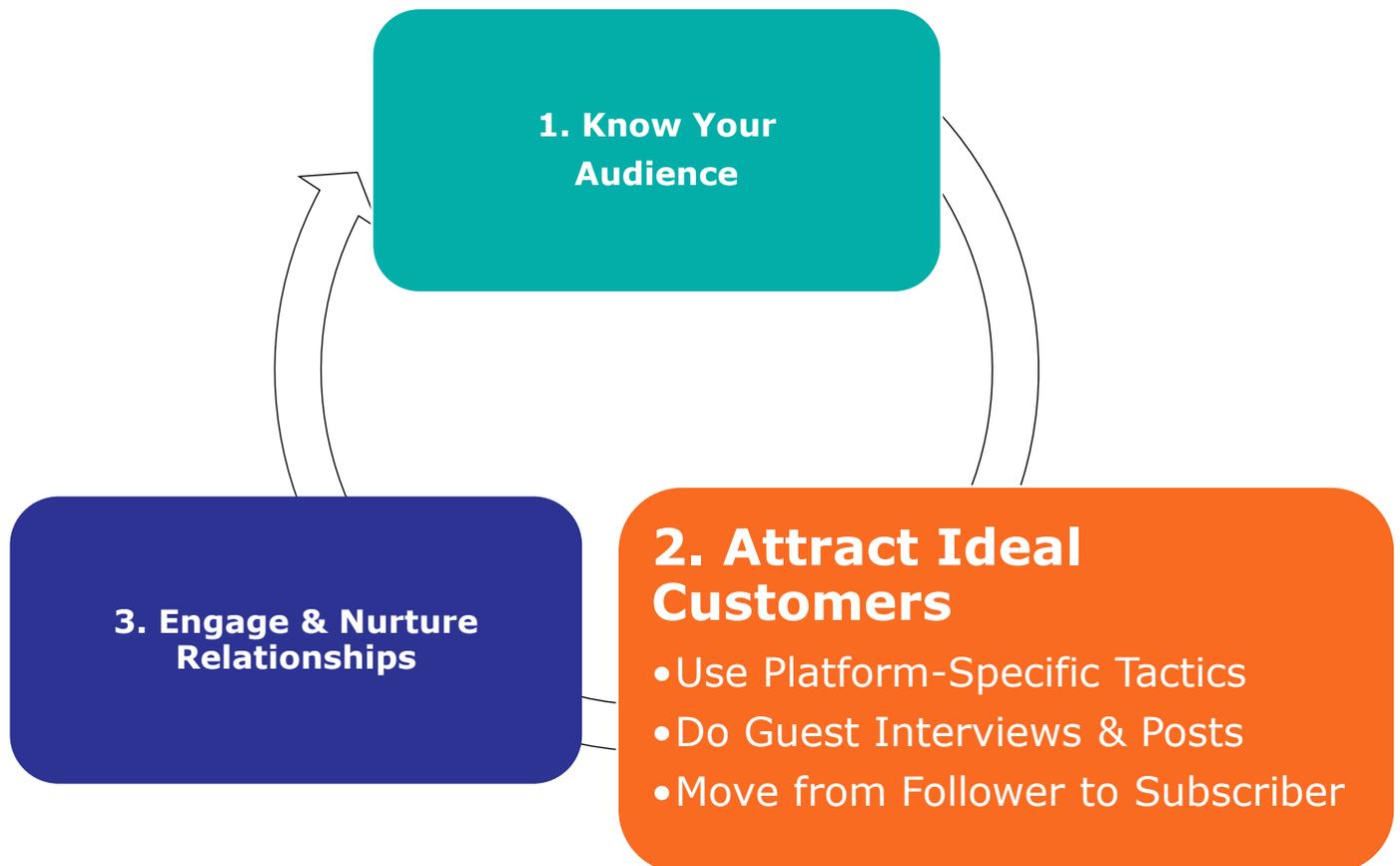
- **Lesson 1: Build Your Audience**
- **Lesson 2: Use Social Media to Build Your Email List**

Lesson 1: Build Your Audience

Focus Your Social Media Time

Don't get stressed because you aren't on every social media platform. You can't be everywhere and still do an effective job of audience-building. If you try, you'll wear yourself thin. It takes time and consistent action to build a social media presence. That's why we recommend you focus on the two platforms, and no more than two, where your ideal customers hang out most. You made this decision in the last module.

Now that you know your audience and have everything in place, you're ready to move to Step 2 to actively start attracting your ideal customers.



You want to attract an audience that's interested in finding out more about your solutions and needs your help resolving their challenges. You need methods to get in front of 'new' people and expand your reach.

First, make sure you've publicized your social media presence in two simple ways:

1. Embed 'follow' or 'like' buttons on your website so people can engage with your social media profiles in a single click without leaving your site
2. Add social media links to your email signature with an email generator such as [Wisestamp](#), [HubSpot](#), [MailSignatures](#) or similar, and encourage people to, for example, "Like my Facebook page."

In Step 2 of the 3-part system, you're not just listening as you did in Step 1. You'll be more proactive as you start communicating and interacting with your audience and asking them to follow you.

Here are some key tactics to use across all platforms:

- Post high-quality content regularly and share it across your social media platforms (we'll look at planning this later in the course)
- Share your audience's content in your groups, on your pages, and with influencers who might be interested
- Respond quickly to comments, questions, or ideas that followers post on your pages and in your groups so other people on those pages can see how helpful you are

- Use hashtags. These are particularly prevalent on Twitter and Instagram. Hashtags are essentially search functions, so think about how your audience will be searching for information. Use keywords related to your content – hashtag the subject or words related to the subject. There are tools that can help you to find good hashtags such as [Tagsfinder](#), [All-hashtags](#), and [Seekmetrics](#)

Don't forget to add people you meet offline to your social media platforms with their permission, and then follow up with them online to build the relationship further.

Specific Platform Tactics to Use

Each platform will have some specific audience-building tactics that work well on that system.

Let's look at a selection of them:

**Facebook
Tactics**

- Invite your email list to 'like' your page
- Use the 'invite' button
- Ask followers on other platforms to 'like' your page
- Create open Facebook groups
- Encourage followers to 'react' to your posts

**Instagram
Tactics**

- Create attractive visuals
- Use the 'Stories' feature to share a slideshow
- Add up to 30 hashtags
- Put your 'hook' in the first sentence

**Twitter
Tactics**

- Use the search function
- Use visuals to attract attention
- Use retweets and ask for comments
- Set up a Twitter chat
- Add comments to retweets and @mentions

**LinkedIn
Tactics**

- Start a group in your area of expertise
- Interact in groups where your ideal customers hang out
- Direct message connections or connections
- Write articles and status updates and ask for comments
- Use SlideShare, post videos and use LinkedIn Live

**YouTube
Tactics**

- Brand your channel so it's recognizable
- Ask viewers to subscribe to your channel in each video
- Subscribe to other people's channels and comment
- Promote your videos on your other social platforms

Facebook Tactics

- Send personal invitations to the people on your email list to invite them to 'like' your business page or profile
- Use the 'invite' button to invite existing followers and content sharers to 'like' your business page
- Ask followers on other social media platforms to 'like' your business page
- Create open Facebook groups for your target audience and get discussions going with questions and sharing topical content
- Encourage followers to 'react' to your posts. A 'heart' or 'Wow' is more valuable to you than a 'like' in terms of Facebook algorithms and will help increase your organic reach.

Instagram Tactics

- Create attractive visuals such as infographics, photos image quotes, and videos and use these visuals to explain your products and your brand. Take real photos and use those if you can, as people recognize stock photos
- Use the 'Stories' feature to share a slideshow of multiple photos and videos. Add doodles and effects to liven up your posts – only do this if it's appropriate to your audience, since it could be seen as unprofessional. These 'stories' are only shown for 24 hours, but you can save them as 'Highlights' on your profile to keep them there permanently. This is a great way to group thematically similar 'stories' such as "Behind the Scenes" or "How to Use Our Product"
- Hashtags are widely used on Instagram and you can add up to 30 to your post, so research relevant hashtags for each post using [IconoSquare](#), [Webstagram](#), or similar

- Put your 'hook' in the first sentence of your descriptions so it shows up in people's feeds. Make it interesting or enticing and they'll want to read on.

Twitter Tactics

- Use the search function to find your ideal customers and influencers in your field and follow them. Join their conversations by @ (mentioning) them, answering their questions, replying to tweets etc.
- Use visuals to attract attention to your posts, e.g. good quality images, gifs, short videos, etc.
- Use retweets to share your audience's content and to promote your own blog posts and web content. Ask for comments or questions on what you've written
- Set up a Twitter chat to connect with more people in your industry on a wider scale. Twitter chats are an easy way to both attract new people and engage with your peers and target audience by asking targeted questions (Q1, Q2, etc.) and encouraging answers (A1, A2, etc.) from the community. Twitter chats usually last an hour and have 6-8 questions. Set one up with a short chat hashtag that is unique and easy to remember, and choose a time that suits your audience. Prepare your questions and promote them. Announce your Twitter chat across all channels, including other social media platforms, your website, blog, and within emails. Act as moderator to begin with and then, if these work for you, ask someone on your team to help moderate as the tweets often come thick and fast and it's a challenge to keep up
- Take time to add comments to Retweets and @mentions before you send them on.

LinkedIn Tactics

- Start a group in your area of expertise and invite people to join. Make sure you restrict membership to your target group so that you're attracting the people you want to reach. Welcome each person individually as they join and ask them to say something about themselves. This will help your audience research and start interaction
- Interact in groups where your ideal customers hang out. These are groups you joined in Step 1. Offer help and advice but don't try to sell by posting regular links to your blog posts. This can look spammy
- Use the Search function to look for your target market. You can use filters to tailor your research by location, job title, industry sector, and so on. Send an individual invitation to connect to each person
- Direct message connections of your connections if they appear to be in your target market and ask to connect
- Write and post articles and status updates and ask for comments
- Upload slide shows and presentations using [SlideShare](#) and post short videos to your profile
- Apply to use LinkedIn Live, if it's not already available to you, so you can livestream content your audience will be interested in.

YouTube Tactics

- Brand your channel so it's immediately recognizable. Add your photo, colors, logo, and other branding
- Ask viewers to subscribe to your channel in each video that you upload. You can add a button at the end or beginning of the video and give written details in the section below the video

- Subscribe to other people's channels. Comment on their videos to get your channel seen more widely
- Promote your YouTube videos on your other social platforms.

Whatever platforms you're appearing on, implement relevant tactics for audience-building. Your aim is to keep people's attention so that they don't go elsewhere and start following one of your competitors (we'll look at engagement strategies in detail in the next module).

Be a Guest

Build your audience further by appearing as a guest on other people's platforms. This will expand your reach and get you in front of new people.

Choose people in an associated field. You're unlikely to approach a direct competitor, but business owners with complementary activities would be very suitable.

Here are a couple of examples:

- A yoga mat manufacturer could partner with owners of local yoga centers
- A business coach could add value to someone who sells time management and project management software

Here are some ways to partner with other businesses as a guest presenter:

- Guest posting on their blog

- Guest interviews on their podcasts, digital radio shows, and livestreams
- Guest speaking on their webinars and speaking events
- Guest video blogging on their YouTube channel

Building partnerships with other entrepreneurs is a two-way street. You want greater coverage and more social media followers, but you must think about what they and their audience need. Put yourself in their shoes and think about why people would want to interview you.

Draw up a profile of what would make you an attractive guest, including any relevant experience with the audience and your social media stats if they are significant. Look for synergies with their market.

For example, can you:

- Help solve a problem their audience has that they don't serve?
- Provide additional help to add value to their products?
- Offer solutions that they can't?

There are sites that help you find potential interviewers who are looking for people to talk to:

- [Source Bottle](#)
- [Radio Guest List](#)

Prepare everything you need before you approach anyone. If you don't have a full media kit you can send, you could adapt the profile you created about yourself and your business. Don't forget to include your contact details and links to your website and social media accounts. A good, high-resolution photo of yourself is also useful.

Once you've researched people you'd like to be interviewed by, follow them on social media and make a connection. You're more likely to get picked if you've had prior contact with them.

Make sure that the host of any guest appearances you undertake will circulate your details and social media contacts to their audience and that they agree to share your interview on their social media platforms too.

Using this tactic, you should be able to grow your audience significantly. Keep 'before and after' figures so you can see if your social media stats change as a result of your appearance. In this way, you can evaluate if it makes sense to use this tactic again and approach others for similar opportunities.

You may find that you receive requests from guest bloggers and interviewees wanting to be interviewed by you. Only accept a collaboration if their content is useful and relevant to your audience.

Key Takeaways:

- Accept that you can't be present and active on all social media platforms at once. Stick with the two you've chosen and see what results you get.
- Build your audience further by appearing as a guest on other people's platforms.

Action Steps:

1. Choose three tactics for growing your audience for each of your 2 chosen social media platforms.
 - a. What do you hope to achieve?
 - b. How will you measure your success?
 - c. Implement the tactics and note the results.

2. Write down a profile of what would make you an attractive guest on someone else's blog or podcast.
 - a. Find two opportunities for guest speaking/blogging.
 - b. Follow the businesses on social media.
 - c. Create any publicity materials you need.
 - d. Submit your request for interview and follow up if necessary.
 - e. Keep 'before and after' stats on social media so you can see the effect of the interview on your audience figures.

Lesson 2: Use Social Media to Build Your Email List

From Follower to Subscriber

The final part of Step 2 is to take your new audience and get them onto your email list. In this way, you can continue your audience research and relationship-building by email. You can also use email marketing to recommend offers and make sales.

Make it easy for people to sign up to your list. For example:

- Only ask for their first name and email address
- Add a link to your lead magnet in your email signature
- Ensure the link to your opt-in page for your lead magnet works. You set this up earlier in your social media profiles and on your website/webpages.

You'll need content posted on your social media platforms with links to your opt-in page. But don't overdo it or it will look spammy. Vary direct opt-in links with posting content that has your opt-in clearly visible.

If you don't have any content ready or aren't sure where to start, here are two ideas for useful content that you can begin with:

- Write a 500-word blog post that's useful in solving a problem for your target group. Include your lead magnet opt-in to attract more people to sign up. Post the link to your blog post, along with an image and short summary, on all your social media platforms and any relevant groups if you have permission.

- Write a “Top Experts” list from your area of expertise. Tell the people on this list (e.g. via an @mention on Twitter) that they are on the list and ask them to share with their followers, which will entice their followers to follow you. Don’t be pushy though. Send them a direct message saying “I’m including you on my list of top experts to help my audience. If you’d care to share with your people too, that would be great.”

But don’t just rely on blogging. Remember that you can share content through a video series, livestream events, podcasting, webinars, and more. Always have a link to your opt-in in the video description, livestream comment, podcasting notes, webinar comment, or redirect them to it at the end.

Record Your Progress

Use simple metrics to record your progress on social media so that you stay motivated and measure your success. There are some basics to monitor, for example:



- **Likes, Shares, Comments:** The easiest metrics to track and they exist on all platforms
- **Audience Growth:** The number of social media followers and email subscribers you've gained over a specific period
- **Credibility:** Your followers / following ratio, i.e. if you follow 500 people but only 90 follow you, this won't inspire confidence.

Check out the monitoring tools available with your social platforms. All the major social media networks have their own built-in analytics and dashboards which include a wealth of useful information about audience engagement. You can add other tools later if you decide you need them.

Check your current stats and compare them to those you recorded in your Audience Building Checklist in Module 1. Don't despair if you don't see a big increase yet. It's a trial and error process, so you may need some tweaks to achieve what you want.

Key Takeaways:

- Make it easy for your social media audience to sign up to your email list.
- Use simple metrics to record your progress on social media so that you stay motivated and measure your success.

Action Steps:

1. Prepare and post the two blog posts as suggested in this module to augment your current content:
 - a. Take the problem-solving blog post that points to your lead magnet and post it to all your social media platforms.
 - b. @mention the industry experts you added to your Twitter list or blog post on Twitter, letting them know about it. Spread this out by mentioning a few people each day.
2. Record your metrics under the headings of:
 - a. Likes, Shares, and Comments
 - b. Audience Growth
 - c. Credibility
 - d. Note how your numbers have increased because of your actions so far.

Module 4 – Step 3: Engage and Nurture Relationships Before You Sell

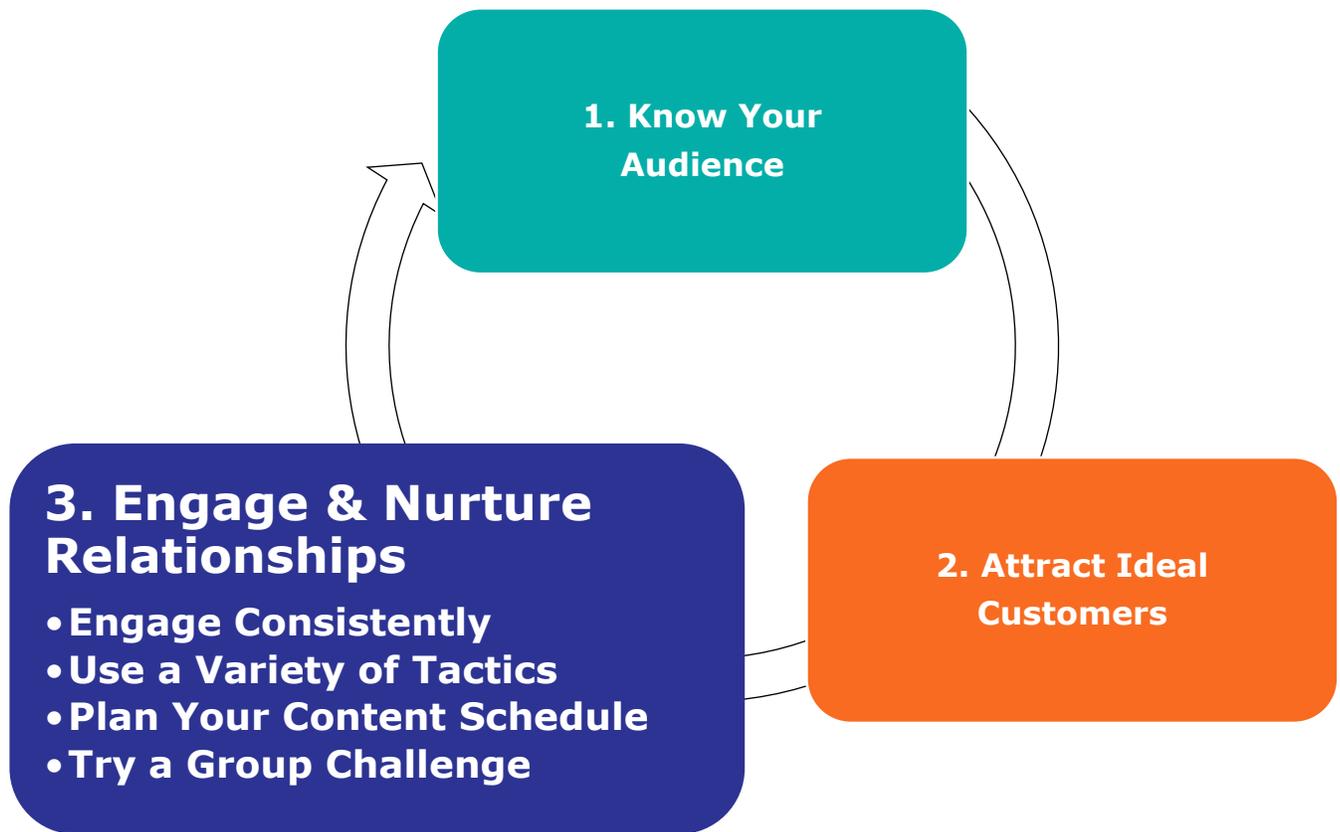
Before you can make sales, you must build trust and engagement with your followers.

In this module, you'll learn how to nurture the relationships you've already created on social media and engage more deeply with your audience so that they become potential customers.

Engage with Your Audience Consistently

You're at the third and final step of the system to build your audience using social media. You've probably noticed a rise in your numbers and levels of interaction since you started the course. Posting regularly on social media helps ensure that your brand sticks in people's minds and increases the chance that they buy.

However, having a large audience won't, on its own, guarantee that you make sales. You need ways to convert those followers into customers, and part of achieving that is to build trust and engagement.



Step 3 is where you take specific actions to keep your audience involved in your business. Consistency is the key. You need to show up for your audience every day, engage, and post regularly to stay visible and build relationships.

This is your best chance of getting in front of your target market on social media as consistency counts for much in the social media platform algorithms. These are very complicated and change regularly. They have their own ways of determining what shows up in people's feeds, so even if your content is top-notch it isn't automatically shown to your ideal customers. Unless you're an expert on your platform's algorithms and constantly keep up with changes, you have to accept that your influence over what's posted where is limited. However, uploading content consistently does help.

As does engagement. Let's dive fully into that.

As with any prospective sale, you need to engage with your leads to build the know, like, and trust factors before most people will even think of buying. If you start selling to them immediately, most people will be put off and quickly leave. For example, someone who has downloaded your lead magnet may respond well to an offer of more information, but may be put off by pushy sales tactics if they are still in the research stage of their buying journey.

You may also be banned from social media platforms if you are blatantly selling all the time. Always follow the community guidelines.

By using engagement tactics, you'll stay in touch with your audience to support, educate, and inform them, and make them want to stay with your brand to find out more.

Ways to Engage Your Followers

By now, you'll have at least two ways to keep in direct contact with your followers: email and social media, and you need to build engagement on both.

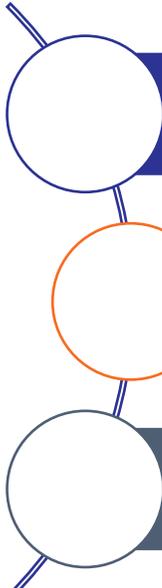
Our focus in this course is on social media but let's take a quick look at some key email basics before we go into detail on that.

Email

Now that you have subscribers on your email list, you need to nurture those leads.

Make sure you have some follow-up emails scheduled to go out automatically with valuable content that extends the worth of your lead magnet. In this way, you can begin to engage on autopilot and keep the flow of conversation going while saving yourself time. Always personalize your

emails and don't rely solely on automation. You'll still want to send additional emails when appropriate, for example to:



Email your list about new social media content you've posted

Encourage your email list to follow you on your social media platforms. Use buttons for your favorite platforms in your email signature

Keep your email subscribers informed of contests or giveaways you're running on social media

- Share any new content that you've posted about on social media to your email list. Send them a link to the content of your blog post, video, podcast, or whatever you've produced
- Encourage your email subscribers to follow you on all your social media platforms. Remember to use buttons for your favorite platforms in your email signature
- Keep your email subscribers informed of contests or giveaways you're running on social media and any exclusive events for subscribers only.

There are many ways you can use email marketing to engage people and put offers in front of them. If you need to look further into this, take a course or do some research to discover more.

Now let's move on to social media.

Social Media

If you think of social media communication like a face-to-face conversation, this will help guide you on the best ways to interact. If someone asked you a question at a meeting or on the phone, you wouldn't just ignore them. However, many businesses do this on social media. Just because you don't have the person in front of you, don't make the mistake of overlooking them as this will come across as impersonal and will turn people off.

There are many different ways to interact with your followers on social media which will increase engagement.

Here are some ideas:

Ensure the focus of your communication is on your audience



Ask questions and send back answers to encourage two-way dialogue



Comment on your followers' content



Keep track of direct messages so you can respond quickly



Give "shout outs" to people in your groups



Encourage positive feedback on your products, offers, and content



Acknowledge those who interact regularly and thank them



- Ensure the focus of your communication is on your audience and not on yourself and keep it there. Whenever you interact, think to yourself “What’s in it for them?”
- Ask questions and send back answers to encourage two-way dialogue. It’s as important here as it would be in a face-to-face conversation
- Comment on your followers’ content. Share their content and tag them whenever appropriate
- Keep track of direct messages on your platforms so you can respond to them quickly
- Give "shout outs" to people in your groups. People really appreciate this gentle way of endorsing them and they will do the same for you
- Encourage positive feedback on your products, offers, and content. Listen to what your audience tells you as this can help you in future product development
- Acknowledge those who interact regularly and thank them for their contributions and support. You might want to reward them with something like “Top contributor of the week” status.

Help People Take Action

In addition to posting regular, useful content to help your ideal customers and keep yourself top of mind, use specific techniques to encourage engagement. You don’t want a passive audience that simply consumes your input. You want to build a community of engaged and committed followers, and a great way to do this is to get them to take action. This motivates their involvement and when motivation is high, people stayed engaged.

The following are proven methods to motivate people to act on social media and some examples of ways to use them:



- **Questions/requests.** When you write a blog post, add questions at the end for people to answer. Share your opinion on your social media platform and ask others to comment and tell you if they agree
- **Challenges.** Set the group a specific task to achieve in a set period of time. We'll look later at running Facebook challenges, which is an extremely effective way to keep people engaged
- **Contests and giveaways.** Run a prize-winning event or organize a giveaway with gifts and rewards
- **Live video sessions.** Livestream your content in short bursts delivered regularly at the same time each week.

Don't forget to use social media to publicize events offline too. For example:

- If you're at a trade show or speaking event, invite people to come and see you/speak to you afterwards
- Get them to tweet you that they're coming
- Organize a meet-up after the event.

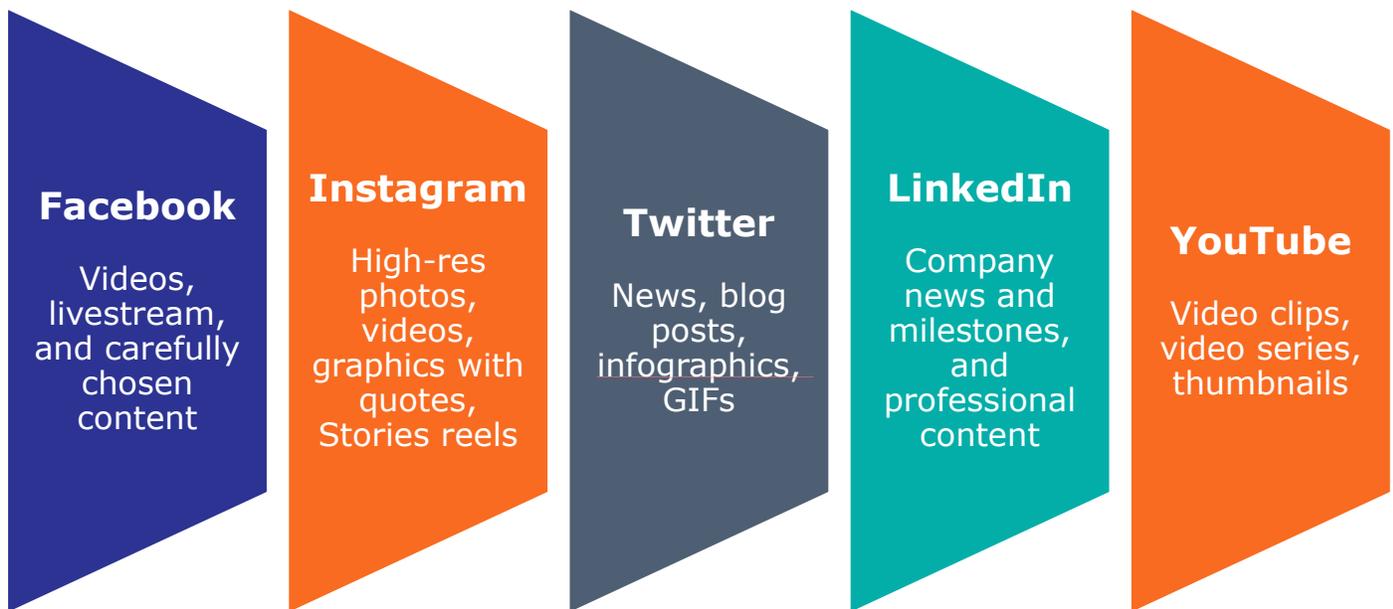
It's often a treat to meet up in person with someone you've been following online. It helps build the relationship and certainly increases engagement.

Plan Your Social Media Content Schedule

Like with your blog posts and other content, you need to plan your social media content and engagement activities ahead of time.

Not all content is suitable for every social media platform, so take that into account. It's quite alright to post different things on different platforms.

Here's a quick guide for the Big 5:



- **Facebook:** Videos, livestream, and carefully chosen content
- **Instagram:** High-res photos, videos, graphics with quotes, Stories reels
- **Twitter:** News, blog posts, infographics, and GIFs
- **LinkedIn:** Company news and milestones, and professional content e.g. training webinars, whitepaper, and industry studies.
- **YouTube:** Video clips, video series, thumbnails.

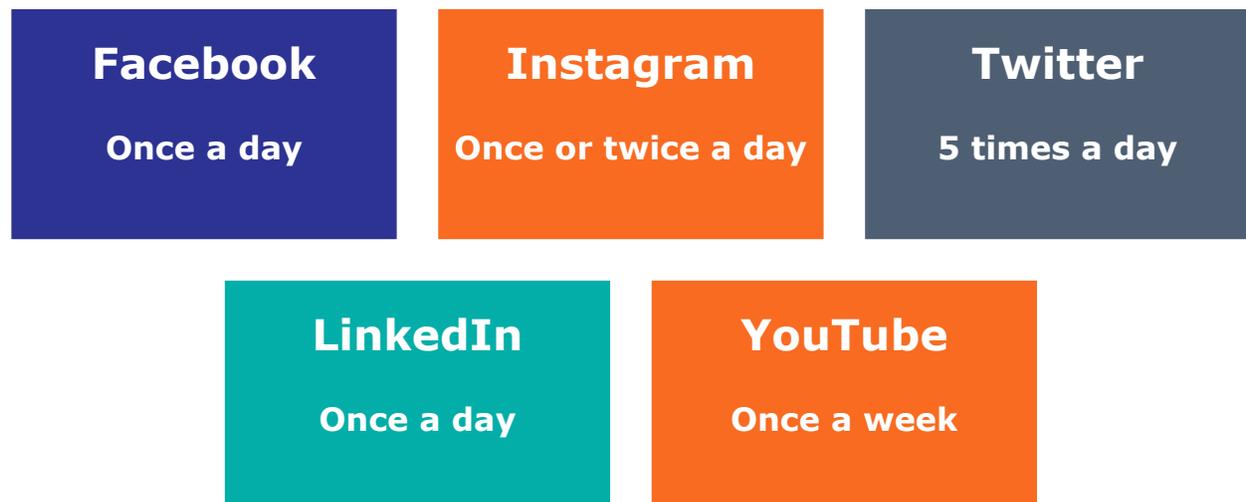
Plan When to Post

You want to get the most eyes as possible on your content and maximize engagement by knowing the best times to post on social media. You might have some ideas from your competitor research in a previous module. You'll probably need to do more research now that you've built your audience so that you can post content at optimal times when your audience is actively engaged.

Downtimes such as lunch breaks, commutes, evenings, and weekends are generally the times when people are most active on social media. Discover the best time to post by trying different days and times and seeing when you get the best reaction by viewing your analytics. If you want to attract a global audience, then you'll need to make sure your content goes out at times that suit different time zones.

How often you post depends on your audience – too little and people will forget you, too often and you run the risk of annoying your audience.

Frequency also depends on the platforms you use and your audience. Here is some guidance, but adapt this to suit your followers and their needs:



- **Facebook** – once a day
- **Instagram** – once or twice a day
- **Twitter** – 5 times a day. Tweets have a short shelf life, so spread your tweets through the day. You can create them by cutting down longer posts
- **LinkedIn** – once a day
- **YouTube** – once a week

You'll find out what works best for you by trial and error. Above all, quality and consistency are more important than quantity. Commit to what you can realistically achieve and stick to that.

Use the Social Media Content Planner to help you plan out the type of content you want to post on your two chosen platforms, and how and when you'll do that, for example a weekly livestream on Facebook or an Instagram 'Story' twice a month.

Then, set up automation to schedule the posts in advance and save yourself time. Use tools like [Hootsuite](#) or [Buffer](#) for this.

Treat Your Audience Like a Community

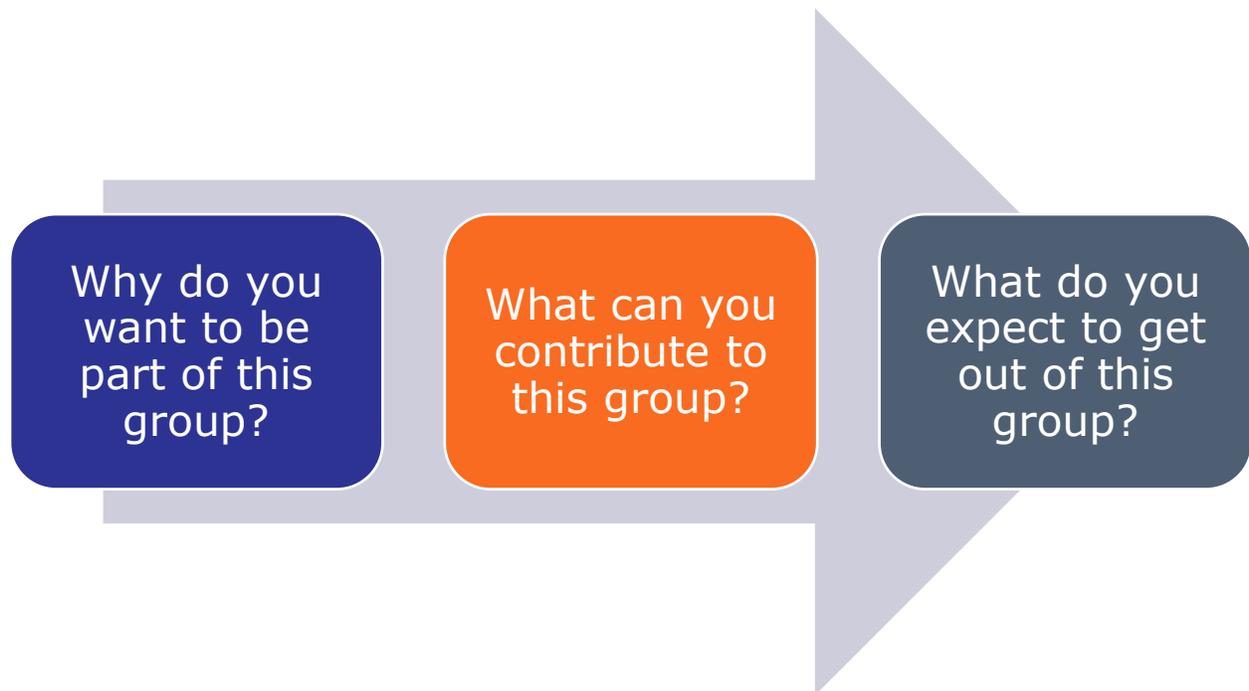
Communities have grown in popularity on social media because people like to belong to an exclusive 'club.' Plus, they succeed in increasing engagement.

A successful community will turn followers into loyal fans and enthusiastic brand ambassadors who will certainly want to sign up to your email list. Your community will express your values and won't be like anyone else's. This

uniqueness sets you apart from your competitors and helps build your brand.

Offer benefits to community members such as coupons, free tickets to live events, exclusive access to you, free samples, and so on. It's like a reward system for loyalty.

The easiest way to set up a community is to use free private groups on social media. Invite your followers to join, tell them the benefits, and restrict access by asking them a couple of simple questions, such as:



- Why do you want to be part of this group?
- What can you contribute to this group?
- What do you expect to get out of this group?

In this way, you'll deter the tire kickers and ensure you restrict membership to active and engaged people.

We're going to look at some specific engagement tactics next and you can use these to build and strengthen your community.

Run a Group Challenge

One of most powerful ways to engage people is to run a free challenge on Facebook. A 'challenge' is a series of actions that your participants take every day for a set period of time. You tell them what to do each day, they take that mini action, and you continue to motivate them until they see the targeted results. It can last anywhere from 5 days to 100 days, but start off with a short challenge first.

With a challenge, you encourage your followers to take the actions they need to get the results they want, and you support them along the way. It's motivating for them and it's good business for you, as you can demonstrate your expertise and later promote paid products to satisfied participants. Your business goal will help you determine the type of challenge you run and who participates in it.

Evaluate your budget before you start. Although it's delivered free, there are costs to you in terms of your time and development of materials. Once you've run one challenge, you'll be able to more accurately determine the budget for the next.

Here's a 10-step process that you can adapt. This is for a 7-day challenge:



1. Set your objective and start date. Identify the goal for your challenge in terms of how it will benefit your business. You're not creating a challenge just for the sake of it. There has to be a tie-in with your own business goals. Do you want more sales as a result? More customer testimonials and success stories?
2. Identify exactly what you will be challenging people to do. Get ideas by looking at what your competitors have done or are doing now. Then look at what your own customers find most challenging or have been asking you about most often. Pick the focus for your challenge and make sure it's something achievable. Set the timeframe based on how long you think it will realistically take to achieve a result
3. Create a closed group on Facebook for this specific challenge. Set up an opt-in page so people have to sign up to get challenge details and participate
4. Schedule a follow-up email series that will trigger when they opt-in. Add a link to your group in the emails, and set them to send out daily or every other day
5. Plan your content and how you'll deliver it. For example, you might decide to create downloadable PDF worksheets for each day of the challenge. Make sure all your content follows a logical, step-by-step flow that guides your participants and motivates them to complete the challenge
6. Promote your challenge to your current email list and social media followers, announce it on your website, and to people who are likely to share it with their audience
7. Day 0 - Go live in your challenge group, welcome people, and get them oriented and ready

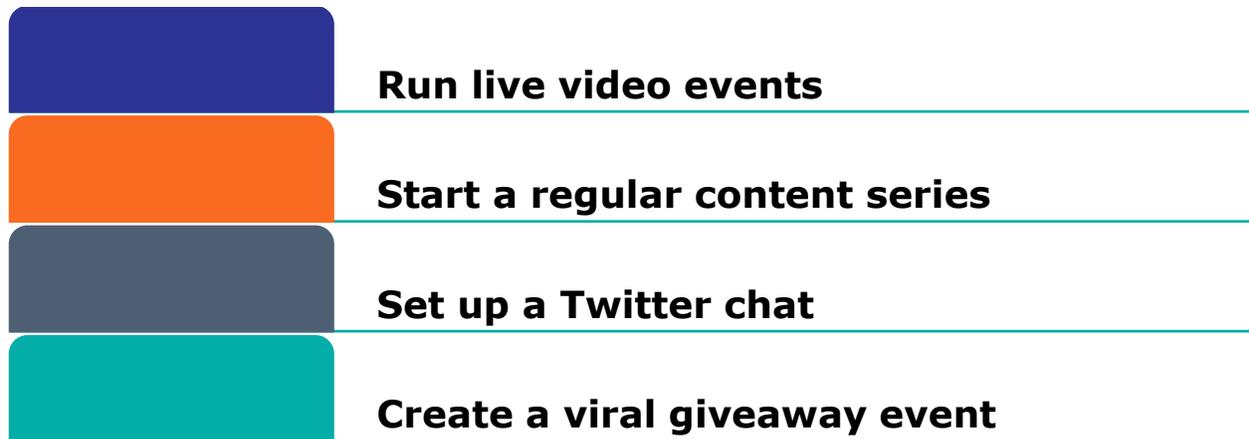
8. Days 1 through 5 - Use live video every day to discuss that day's steps and give instructions by email and livestream. Remember to invite people to ask questions. Ask them to share their insights and successes on their own social media pages
9. Days 6 and 7 - Start to promote related paid offers to participants. Make sure you have a sales page and payment method ready
10. Help participants evaluate their progress during the challenge. Participants who see results come back for more and spread the word about how much you helped them. They are your best potential customers.

After you've finished running your first challenge, it's a case of rinse and repeat. You can run the same challenge multiple times or choose a different objective for a new challenge.

Other Proven Engagement Tactics

There are many tactics you can use on different social media platforms. You might have tried some or been part of some already.

Here are a few ideas to get you started:



- Run live video events on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/Periscope, and YouTube. If you can't go live on LinkedIn yet, you can still post the recording of your live sessions there. Make sure you include a call-to-action.

Choose interesting content, for example:

- Share something about you and your business
 - Publicize a forthcoming event
 - Give them behind-the-scenes glimpses of what you're doing now
 - Broadcast a live event
 - Run a how-to session connected to your product or service
- Start a regular content series, such as "Did You Know?" or a "Tip of the Day" that your audience can look forward to. Deliver this as a blog post, video blog, podcast, livestream, etc. at the same time each week. Use the medium your audience likes best and make sure there are links to your opt-in page
 - Set up a Twitter chat as we mentioned earlier. It's great for engaging existing followers as well as attracting new ones. Keep the interaction going and retweet any key messages to your wider audience
 - Create a viral giveaway event offering a prize in exchange for liking

your page, referring others, signing up to your opt-in, and so on. This incentivizes people to take action. For example, run a giveaway that encourages your audience to tag a friend and ask them to follow your account.

Whatever tactics you choose, focus on being helpful and avoid self-promotion.

Key Takeaways:

- You need to show up for your audience every day, engage, and post regularly to stay visible and build relationships.
- You need to plan your social media content and engagement activities ahead of time.
- Build a community to turn followers into loyal fans and enthusiastic brand ambassadors.

Action Steps:

1. Create 2 engaging follow-up emails that people will receive after they download your lead magnet.
2. Use the Social Media Content Planner to plan what content and activities you'll do to build engagement on your chosen social media platforms. Then
 - a. Research the best times to post to your audience and note that in the Social Media Content Planner.
 - b. Schedule your posts in advance wherever possible
3. (Optional) Follow the 10 steps in the lesson to design a short Facebook Group challenge event.
 - a. Plan steps 1-6 in your Action Guide.
 - b. Complete steps 7-9 when you run the event.
 - c. Finish Step 10 when the challenge is over.

Module 5 – Optimize Your Audience Growth

You've spent a considerable amount of time and effort growing your audience, so you'll want to make sure that you sustain the following you've built.

In this module, you'll discover advanced techniques for audience-building to use when you're ready, so that you can continue to expand your market reach and make more sales.

Going Further with Social Media

When you believe you've achieved a satisfactory level of engagement and an increasing number of followers, you'll want to try some more advanced tactics. Only you can decide what is "satisfactory" for your business. Refer back to your business and social media goals to help you.

Over time, you may have discovered what works well for your audience, so you can be creative about developing your long-term strategy.

Here are a few ways to personalize your approach to attract and engage more people on social media:

- Customize different opt-in pages for your lead magnet to make them unique to each social media channel. Include your opt-in box. For example:
 - "Hey Twitter followers, thanks for checking me out. I have a gift here for my followers that are interested in xxx. If that's you, add your details"

- “Customer Relations Webinar Series for LinkedIn professionals. Sign up to receive registration details”
- Tailor your profiles based on the platform. Alter the language to suit the audience such as a more casual and personal tone for Facebook and Instagram, and a more formal one for LinkedIn.

So far in the course, we’ve been looking at ways you can increase your social media following without spending money. If you have a budget and you’re committed to spending it, then paid ads or sponsored links are another way to go, and they are available on all the main social media platforms.

But beware because you can spend money quickly and have little to show for it. Social media advertising works best when you’ve already tested out your audience, your lead magnet, and your product because you then have hard data from your sales figures to prove you have an offer that sells. You’re clear on what you’re advertising and to whom, so you’ll be able to maximize your advertising budget.

Even with practice, advertising on social media is often a game of luck. You can’t be sure whether your offers will show up in people’s news feeds or alerts and whether they’ll see them. Therefore, unless you are an expert on advertising on a specific social platform or want to outsource to someone who is, think carefully before you go down this route.

Practical Steps for Moving from Building Trust to Selling

At some point, you’ll be ready to make your offer and generate sales. Before that happens, you’ll need to put some essentials in place to make the sale. For example:

- Design and publish an enticing sales page
- Install an easy-to-use shopping cart and troubleshoot any issues before you launch
- Set up payment methods so you're ready to take money. Make sure they're mobile-friendly
- Plan your launch, for example:
 - Create engaging content to lead up to the launch such as a video series, a challenge, a mini-course, or webinar series
 - Use social media and your email list to circulate information about the forthcoming launch.

Make sure you have these key elements in place before you start making offers. Any technology needs to be thoroughly tested so it doesn't create a glitch in the shopping experience and deter buyers.

Key Takeaways:

- Try some advanced tactics when you feel you've achieved a satisfactory level of engagement.
- Before you make offers, ensure you have the essentials in place to make the sale, such as a sales page, shopping cart, etc.

Action Steps:

1. Write down three ways you could customize your opt-in pages for your chosen social media platforms.
2. Have you considered paid advertising on social media? If so, which platform(s) and what is your budget?
3. Make sure you have the essentials in place before you launch:
 - a. Sales page
 - b. Shopping cart
 - c. Payment methods.

Module 6 - Review and Refine

In this final module, you'll learn some tips to get even better results from your audience-building efforts. You'll also have the opportunity to review the course and plan future action.

Tips to Take Things Forward

Now that we're at the end of the course, here are some final actions for you to plan:

Advanced Metrics

You looked at basic analytics in a previous module, but as you spend more time with your social media audience, you'll want to add more advanced metrics. Before you sign up for new tools, get clear on what you want to use data for. It's a waste of time collecting data for the sake of it.

You could start by making the distinction between:

Brand goals

Raising awareness of your brand and building engagement.

Metrics needed on brand mentions, sharing, discussion, engagement, and interaction

Sales goals

Lead generation and increasing sales.

Metrics needed for number of leads, engagement rates, and conversions into sales.

- **Brand goals** — Raising awareness of your brand and building engagement. Metrics needed on brand mentions, sharing, discussion, engagement, and interaction
- **Sales goals** – Lead generation and increasing sales. Metrics needed for number of leads, engagement rates, and conversions into sales.

As these two goal areas have different targets, you obviously need to measure different outcomes.

Set your goals first and then research the tools you'll need. Some of them are free such as [Google Analytics](#) which is useful for analyzing the impact of social media as a marketing channel and source of traffic. Others are paid such as [SproutSocial](#), [Zoho](#), and [Buffer](#). Always take a free trial to make sure you get what you need before entering into a contract.

Plan regular time to analyze your metrics and use the results to inform your ongoing social media strategy.

Go Beyond Social Media

You need to continue your audience-building activities. But don't restrict yourself to social media alone. Use contacts and followers to get in front of more people. Getting referrals and developing affiliate partnerships are two proven ways to achieve this.

Referrals

Many businesses miss out on referrals as an important source of leads. Existing and past customers are good people to target, but any of your social media followers with whom you've engaged over time can have friends, family, and colleagues to suggest as potential customers.

When a follower on social media refers you to a friend of theirs, that friend is much more likely to buy from you than someone who found you by searching online. Today's consumers trust other consumers' opinions more than the marketing messages from the business itself.

Make it easy for customers to refer you by providing the text of an email they can send out. Offer incentives and special bonuses for successful referrals.

To request referrals, send an email out to all your subscribers and post something on your social media page to, for example:

- Ask followers to share details of your page or group with their friends and followers. Those who wish to join will still need to answer the screening questions, so you'll have control over membership
- Get each lead or past customer to give you three referrals in return for a discount on their next purchase
- Offer a prize for the most referrals in, for example, a two-month period.

You can formalize the process by starting a referral program using software such as [Referral Rock](#), [Referral Candy](#), and [Invite Box](#).

Affiliates

If you want other people to help with the work of marketing your business, then you need to start an affiliate program.

Initially, this is more work for you because you'll need to create marketing materials that your affiliates can use. However, once you have the program set up, you can recruit influencers and followers who refer others to your program. Of course, you'll need to give enough of a commission to make it worth their while and this will vary depending on the product price, the

amount of involvement you require from your affiliate, and who they are. For example, if they are an industry leader, you would normally give a high commission rate, even 100%, if their publicity gets your offer in front of a new and large audience. If you recruit affiliates among your social media followers, the rate would usually be much lower – around 20-30% - but it's up to you to set what you think is fair. If you factor in the cost of affiliate commission into your pricing, then you cover these outlays.

You can easily find people willing promote your offers for you, for example:

- Choose some of your best customers and engaged followers on social media and ask them if they'd like to become an affiliate for you and earn money
- Approach people you recommend or whose products you recommend. Ask them if they are prepared to be an affiliate for your offers
- Run a contest or challenge with rewards for your affiliates who bring in the most sales. Rewards can be cash, gift cards, physical products, or an even higher commission rate for a period of time
- Contact a complementary business and ask them to partner with you as an affiliate and promote for you by email. Offer them generous commission and/or commit to doing the same for them and schedule it for later in the year.

There are many choices of affiliate software available to manage the stats and the payments, such as [JVZoo](#), [Tapiliate](#), and [Post Affiliate Pro](#). You can also add a plugin to your WordPress website like [Affiliate WP](#). Some shopping carts and platforms include affiliate features, so check out different shopping cart choices to see if they have the solutions you need before you look further.

What You Learned

This is a course you can refer back to time and time again to remind you of ways you can build your social media audience and improve your sales. It's important to reflect on what you've learned, so answer these questions, and complete the action plan table in your Action Guide:

- What have you learned about building and nurturing a social media audience?
- What difficulties have you encountered?
- How do you plan to address these?
- What further steps can you take to become totally comfortable with the process?

Key Takeaways:

- If you add monitoring tools to measure progress, make sure you know why you want to collect this data.
- Consider using referral systems and affiliate marketing to increase your market reach.

Action Steps:

1. Write down what your current policy is on:
 - a. Referrals
 - b. Affiliates
 - c. How could you incorporate these into your business to build your audience?
2. Review the course thoroughly and use the action plan in the action guide to record your goals and what needs to happen next.