

THE BLUEPRINT

A GUIDE TO BUILDING
A SOCIAL BUSINESS

BY PLUSNET AND ENTERPRISE NATION



Welcome to The Blueprint!

As a business with humble Yorkshire roots, Plusnet has always supported small businesses by helping them get online and stay connected, and more recently unlocking the value of the digital pound to help grow their business.

We found that 55% of people aged 23 – 38 only search for businesses through social media. So the power of a decent online profile has really never been more important!

With this guide, we'll share some tips from experts on how to develop a social media strategy.

Read on and discover how to build your small business through social media for yourself- good luck!

Nick Silverwood, Plusnet Head of Business



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A GUIDE TO WRITING A SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY FOR YOUR SMALL BUSINESS:

Whether you already have established social media channels, or if you are about to embark on setting one up – a social media strategy is a crucial step you should take in order to set out what you want to achieve from powerful marketing tools.

Many small businesses are using social media to spread awareness, make business connections and to keep their customers updated with the latest news and developments. Yet without a strategy, social media activity can be random and uncoordinated with no clear goals in place to work towards. A social media strategy does not have to be a huge in-depth document; it can be as simple as an A4 piece of paper.

Enterprise Nation

MAIN OBJECTIVES

Having objectives should be the first step, by doing this it lets you see if your social media content is working.

Objectives could be as simple as spreading awareness of your business to the right customers, or perhaps it is more numbers driven and you want to see more people visit your website or call you up to work on a job.

“Setting up a social media account on any of these platforms is simple, and with up to 80 per cent of people looking online first for tradespeople, it could be the best move your business can make. It’s controllable, you choose the images you want to display, unlike traditional advertising, it’s free, and you can tell your business’s own story” – *Nicki Bamford-Bowes*
– *Interior Designer @andtheywentwild*

TARGET AUDIENCE

Considering your audience on social media is hugely important as you need to think about how they would most like to be addressed, and where online they are likely to be. Your tone of voice has and the sort of content you post needs to be appealing to your audience.

PLANNING CONTENT

Having a plan is much easier than creating content on a whim, so it’s really important to set yourself a small amount of time each week to focus on your social media efforts.

Individual images are powerful tools to show what you can do. But a series of pictures taken during a project can combine to tell a story.

Before and after images are powerful and persuasive, so think about photography before you even start a project.

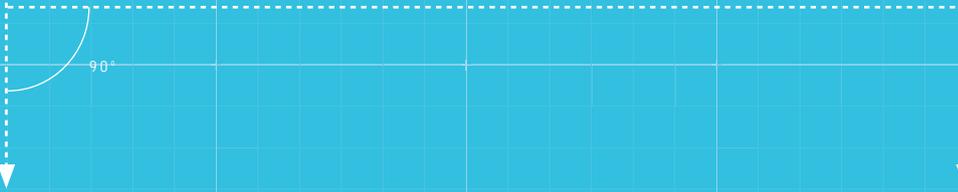
Don’t worry if the before images aren’t perfect. Remember, the worse the ‘before’ pictures are, the more impactful your ‘afters’ will be.

FACEBOOK TIPS

Facebook loves video – Videos are eye-catching way to capture attention and build engagement, although they may not generate as many clicks as images.

Post regularly but don't sell all the time – it's important to balance sales messages with a mix of photos, advice and how-to videos. Post sales messages too often and you risk damaging customer engagement – Facebook is a social media tool.

The below image shows all the stats you can see when you upload a video to Facebook. These can help give an insight into what content your audience likes.



The screenshot shows the 'Video details' interface for a video. On the left is a video player with a play button, a progress bar, and a timestamp of 0:56. The video title is 'plusnet: Humans of New Yorkshire - Arnold and Co...' and the description reads: 'Sheffield is a city of makers – and we wanted the jeans to reflect that. People buy into that; they want to feel that they're buying a pair of jeans but there's a bit of a story behind it. To begin with it was an online brand which was a great way to reach'. Below the video are options: '1:00 · Uploaded on 04/02/2020 · Owned · Appears once · View permalink · Copy video ID'. On the right is a 'Total video performance' table with the following data:

Total video performance	
Minutes viewed	4,197
1-minute video views	562
10-second video views	4,620
3-second video views	15,650
Average video watch time	0:06
Audience retention	
Audience and engagement	

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TWITTER TIPS

Twitter is a conversational app and is a great platform allowing businesses to promote themselves using their self-service advertising function.

The ads being used in the platform are labelled with a 'Promoted' label.

The ads show up in the Twitter newsfeed on mobile and on desktop.

Anyone can launch an advertising campaign, with as little budget as £10.

Simply go to the Twitter Advertising website (ads.twitter.com) to get started – you'll see a screen like the below where you'll be guided step-by-step in promoting your tweets or creating a bigger Ads campaign.

I want to
automatically
promote my Tweets

Easily promote your Tweets and
account with Promote Mode.
(US, UK, and Japan only)

[Go to Promote Mode](#)

[Learn more about Promote Mode](#)

I want to launch a
Twitter Ads campaign

Create campaigns tailored for
your business goals with Twitter
Ads.

[Go to Twitter Ads](#)

[Learn more about Twitter Ads](#)

INSTAGRAM TIPS

Before you start a project, set time aside to think about all the opportunities for striking images and create a plan of what to capture at what stage.

Instagram is where you showcase the stunning visual elements of your job. Clever composition can make all the difference when it comes to creating memorable and striking images.

People look longer at an image if it's surprising, and pictures that aren't symmetrical catch people's eye.

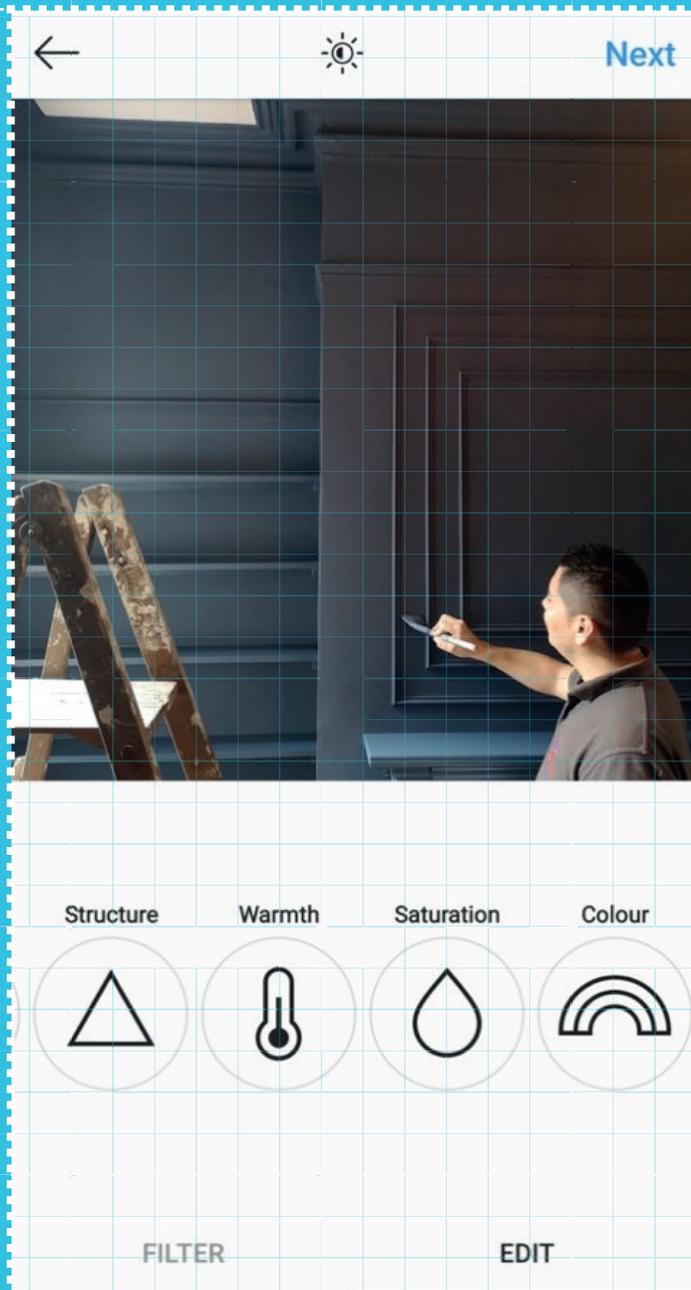
Don't be afraid to include something unexpected in every image, if you're a decorator that could be an open pot of paint resting on your ladder in front of a newly painted wall, or your dusty boots on a glossy floor.



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You'll find many ways to make your photos look great on every smartphone. You can boost the saturation to show of brilliant colours, turn up the exposure to flood dark pictures with light and adjust the shadows and light to either add depth or sparkle, depending on what looks best. For example, tiles should shine, while a matte paint finish should look velvety and sophisticated.

– Nicki Bamford-Bowes – Interior Designer @andthentheywentwild



Brilliant pictures are great. But how can you be sure that enough people see them? This is where the power of hashtags come in. Hashtags are simply words that people use to search specific images and content on Instagram. They'll help users find your images quickly. Use hashtags specific to your line of work such as #florist #interiordesign or #carpenter plus geographical ones that help you connect with people in your area, such as #London #LondonPlumber.



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Photo tagging is also a great way to get noticed. Tap on the image on Instagram, and you will be able to 'tag in' the brands you use, such as @farrowandball or @toppstiles, and if those brands like your image, they may repost them to their vast following which opens up more leads. Tag yourself too, so you are associated with those brands if and when they repost your images.

– Nicki Bamford-Bowes – Interior Designer @andthentheywentwild



plusnet
Sheffield



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Thanks for reading the Blueprint series of guides to social media.
We hope you take some of the knowledge shared here and use
it to help your own business reach new customers!
Nick Silverwood – Plusnet Head of Business

See more Blueprint guides to social media here:

[About the Blueprint](#)

[Guide to Social Media Strategy](#)

[Guide to Facebook](#)

[Guide to Instagram](#)

[Guide to Twitter](#)

KEEP US UP TO DATE WITH YOUR SOCIAL
MEDIA JOURNEY BY TAGGING **@PLUSNET**



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