

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Marketing the Freemium Platform

This guide contains some useful hints and inspiration to get you started in marketing (and making money) with our freemium social media management dashboard.

There are only a handful of social scheduling tools for business, and our platform ranks as one of the best, by having content research and other unique features. By allowing you to set your own price we are giving you the opportunity to compete directly with the likes of Buffer and Hootsuite, only you have none of their overheads except marketing.

In this guide we are going to give you some suggestions and ideas on how to grow your userbase for the best financial return.

The three main types of resellers

Resellers tend to fall into three different types:

1. Additional Service. Resellers with an existing set of services such as web design agencies or hosting companies who want to engage a larger audience and use our marketing tools to run ads to a large user base. They are mostly interested in the hot leads that they get from the ads that are run to the free users, and the benefit to their existing brand.
2. Monetization of existing userbase. Resellers who have a large userbase already such as owners of a large mailing list, blog readership, business directory etc. can offer this service to their users and gain an instantaneous stream of upgrades and monthly revenue.
3. Sole Business. Many of our resellers have set up a business around our platform. Buffer got its first 100,000 users JUST by blogging and guest posting. You don't need a large marketing budget to get your own social media dashboard off to a flying start.

How to grow your free userbase *(and start earning money)*

Buffer (one of the leading social dashboards) has (at the time of writing) over 2.5m users and generates over \$7m per year in revenue. They started by simply blogging about their service. Your target market is the SME/SMB market, and our surveys have shown that over 70% of this market have not heard of any of your competitors.

All you need to do is drive visitors to your signup page. Our system will do the rest, including monetizing the free user.

<http://social.yourdomain.com/signup>

There are many routes to grow your userbase and we make a few suggestions below.

Pricing

You need to find a price point that enables you to make a good ROI (Return On Investment). Obviously this will depend on what you are spending. A lot of marketing can be had for free – but you will also find you can grow a very profitable social platform by investing cleverly in targeted ads.

As your ad spend changes and is analyzed (we have cohort analysis coming to the Admin Panel soon!) you might also like to change your Pro Account price. We've thought about that and made it easy.

You can change your price at any time (it won't affect existing users who have already upgraded). To change your pricing, log into your Reseller Admin Control Panel and click on SETTINGS then on the tab marked BILLING/PRICES.

Email marketing to existing users / clients

In the RESOURCES section of the Admin Control Panel you will find a tab called EMAIL TEMPLATES. This contains a number of different introduction emails that you can use exactly as presented, or as inspiration for your own material.

Sending an email to an existing SME/SMB client or user that knows your brand gets an incredible percentage conversion to free user.

Don't stop with one email, and don't ONLY use graphical emails or text emails. Use a combination of both (there are templates for both types available). People who never read graphical emails will take the time to read a more personal looking email.

We recommend a series of emails, spaced out over a 6 week – 12 week period. You will still be getting a good signup rate on every send. Always remove your SIGNED UP users from your marketing database. You can download your entire userbase from the MARKETING menu, under EXPORT LEADS, then ALL CUSTOMERS.

Subject lines are very important to get good open rates. If the person receiving your email knows your brand, then they are more likely to open the email if it offers them something free in the subject i.e. "Robert Smith – a free tool for you as a loyal XYZ customer".

There are many mailing tools available to help you get good delivery rates and excellent conversion rates. We would recommend MailChimp.com

Email marketing to business prospects

You have to be very careful here that you are not seen as a spammer. We do not condone any form of spam. There are, however many people who have opt in email newsletter subscribers that would love to promote an interesting service such as your new social dashboard for small businesses.

Look around the market, you will find that you can cut a deal with most business newsletter owners as long as your product doesn't interfere with what they sell. Most newsletter owners are desperate for something interesting to say. Write something interesting!

You might be able to get them to write a review of your platform. Especially if you show them and explain that they could get a free banner ad within your free userbase for a month (etc.). You can often get your platform reviewed and promoted completely free, but offering an incentive such as free ads or even a percentage of the revenue from any users who upgrade will close the deal.

Niche Marketing *(you can have unlimited accounts)*

People like to buy from like-minded people from companies that share their values in some way. They also like to buy from specialists. If you offer LondonSocial to Londoners and ChicagoSocial to businesses in Chicago, they are more likely to sign up.

If you offer HealthBusinessSocial to businesses in the health sector, again you will see a greater take-up and use of the service.

Your platform's Content Research section has the ability to display custom RSS feeds. This means you could offer to pre-populate the content research section with laser targeted RSS feeds for every signup that upgrades to Pro.

One set of 4 or 5 RSS feeds could then be entered in a couple of minutes for every Pro user in that niche.

You can have as many reseller accounts with us as you like. Feel free to create different accounts for different markets. Don't forget that you can set your base currency in each to suit the correct country of your market.

By keeping your accounts for each vertical separate, it also becomes easier to track the success and cost per acquisition of each campaign's users.

Blogging

Blogging should be considered an essential part of your business. It will drive high quality, targeted visitors to your website. Initially your only cost is your time (although many of our resellers employ freelance bloggers). Each post needs to contain information that relates to your social media dashboard and how it benefits a user. It should not be written in a "salesy" manner. If you write it like a person and relate to the reader, they will naturally take your service. Buffer signed up their first 100,000 users by a single person writing a blog.

You should aim to release at least 10 articles per month to get the maximum benefit from your blog.

Social is HUGE. It's one of the easiest things to blog about on the planet. Everyone is talking about it, and there are some incredibly interesting facts and figures out there that you can relate directly to your dashboard – and its business benefits.

LinkedIn

The biggest B2B marketing platform in the world. You should have a personal account, linked to your platform and you should spend some time learning how to get the most out of LinkedIn marketing. It is literally a gold mine of free users.

Don't forget to take a look at LinkedIn ads. They are relatively cheap, highly targetable and you'll see a huge signup rate. You are giving something away for free that is extremely useful. What's not to like?!

Partnerships

We touched on this in the "Email marketing to business prospects" section. You can partner with newsletter owners, but look much wider. You can offer incentives to anyone who has the ear of your target audience. YouTubers, Business Forum Owners, Business Directory Owners, Bloggers etc. etc. You can offer them free ads on your network (each of them will want to grow their own forum, blog, directory etc.) and probably convince a large number of them to offer your platform to their users. Don't forget that your platform is AWESOME. It's free, and it's REALLY useful. They are enhancing their own brand, and kudos, by recommending such a useful free tool.

Twitter

A staggering 100m people a day use Twitter and they offer the ability to create highly targeted ads to their 500m+ active users.

Whilst predominantly a consumer tool, there are literally millions of SME/SMB businesses on Twitter trying to attract their own audience. Finding a tool like yours that will make their life easier will make their day. Most of them interact directly with the Twitter App and interface. They do not know a dashboard like yours exists. They are going to LOVE your content research tools and Visual Composer!

Facebook

An even more staggering 500m people a day use Facebook. Again, they offer highly targeted ads to their 1 billion+ active users.

Again there are millions of businesses on Facebook and they would simply LOVE to be using your platform. If they hear about it, they'll use it. Get out there, do some Googling about Facebook Ads and growing a targeted B2B campaign on Facebook and you'll start seeing large numbers of user signups.

YouTube

The king of video sites. With a picture painting a thousand words, a series of short videos about your social dashboard will make for a great marketing idea.

Use a free tool like Screencast-O-Matic or a top end tool like Camtasia to make awesome videos of your platform.

Ensure you sell the BENEFITS of the platform – not the features.

Make a video that solves a problem.

“How do I schedule something on Facebook” – Title the clip something that people will be searching Google for – then SOLVE the problem with your free platform. People will see how easy it is to use and signup.

SEO

Search Engine Optimization. SEO still works and drives huge targeted traffic to websites. Don't try and get to the top for "Social Management Platform", that's too hard. You'll find it MUCH easier to get to the top for phrases like "social management platforms compared" or "how do I post to Facebook and Twitter at the same time". By creating dozens of blog posts with the correct titles and keywords, you can generate loads of visitors and it's easy to convert them to a free service, once they arrive. Use the Google Keyword Volume tool to find niche phrases. Google "Google Keyword Volume tool" to find it!

PPC (*pay per click*)

Google Adwords is still king of PPC but don't forget Bing. Bing now accounts for 20% of the US search market, a much larger percentage than it has in the UK. Test using both, as the cost per acquisition will be different.

Both Bing and Google have their own platforms for selling ads, but there are some important "rules" that are just as important for either.

The most important rule is that all successful advertizing is based on experimentation. PPC is not (initially) a "set and forget" advertizing system. Well, not for the people who make the most money from it! If you test various ads and various keywords you WILL find some low cost acquisition routes that get you free users that (in turn) upgrade to Pro users – or buy your other services from your free account ads.

Never add too many keywords into a single ad group. The more closely your ad matches the keywords, the higher your CTR (click through ratio) will be, and the lower your CPA (cost per acquisition).

Be careful with broad matching your keywords. Google uses “broad match” by default. Adding your keywords in inverted commas will mean they are in “phrase match” which will lower the volume of people seeing your ad, but leave you in more control. Experiment with Broad Match and Phrase Match.

Ensure the title of your ad is as closely matched to the keyword(s) as possible.

Don't try and sell every feature of your platform in a single ad. Write multiple ads that target multiple features and match these to keyword searches.

Dump your ads that have a poor CTR and learn from the ads that have a high CTR. Why is it performing better? What makes it stand out? What benefit is it promoting? Learn from this and write more ads that are similar. They should perform well.

There are whole blogs on how to best use PPC – get Googling and you will find an incredibly fast way to build a profitable platform.

Retargeting

(sometimes called Remarketing)

If you are not already using retargeting, be prepared for the most profitable few lines of text you have ever read.

Retargeting is the process by which those annoying ads follow you around the internet. You know, you looked at an item on Amazon, and now you keep seeing it everywhere else you go.

Retargeting is ridiculously easy to get started in, and is one of the easiest ways to keep your brand in the eye of your potential users/clients.

There are various retargeting platforms. The two that we have found easiest to use and highly profitable are Adroll.com and PerfectAudience.com, take a look at each and decide which you are going to use.

You'll need a number of graphical banners designed. Get someone to design them who has an eye for design. If you don't have a designer to hand visit Fiverr.com. You'll find you can get a nice looking banner designed for you for just \$5!

Again, there are lots of good blogs about getting the most out of retargeting, but it will be one of the best marketing investments you ever make.

Split Testing

We would highly recommend something called A/B split testing for ALL your advertizing. If you take your mailing list (for instance), put it into random order (Google "randomising a text file") then split it in half and send two versions of your email out to each half, then track the clickthroughs (MailChimp can do this) you will see which email is the most successful. Next time use the most successful email against ANOTHER version and so on. Eventually you get the very best email for converting users (HINT: we've already worked with some resellers to create the emails in the RESOURCES section, and they are the result of multiple A/B split tests).

Conclusion

Marketing is always about thinking outside the box, hard graft and often patience. Always keep going. A marketing “failure” is never a failure. It’s a red cross in a box, on the way to finding a green TICK that is your success. All successful marketeers have notched up dozens of “failed campaigns” on their way towards success.

Take some inspiration from this document, or think of something entirely new – then get stuck in. You have a world class product that you can give away free. You can sign up literally hundreds of thousands or even millions of free users and gain a significant monthly revenue stream with this product.

If you have marketing ideas that you would like to run past your account manager we always love to hear the innovative ways our resellers are getting out to the market, and we will help in any way we can.

We have some exciting dashboard enhancements coming out over the coming months, so get marketing, while we focus on giving you the world’s best SME/SMB social media dashboard.