

TRAFFIC
GENERATION
SUCCESS
BLUEPRINT

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WELCOME

It is no secret that the internet is a powerful tool.

Entire businesses exist today that couldn't exist twenty years ago, thanks to the internet; and they aren't just getting by—they are thriving. But it's not just digital nomads and Silicon Valley start-ups that are leveraging the power of the internet to grow their businesses.

Across the world, single-owner mom and pop shops are using their websites to sell beyond their four walls. Enterprise-level Fortune 500 companies are using their websites to attract new customers and delight their existing customer base.

If your business doesn't have a website, you are simply missing out.

And if your business *does* have a website, but it isn't making enough sales or generating enough leads... then you are probably missing out too.

There is a whole world of problems that can cause a website to perform poorly, but the biggest one is the numbers game. The more people who visit your site, the more people you can convert. Period.

And with so many sites, and memes, and cat videos out there, how can you stand out?

How do you drive traffic to your website, generate interest in your product or service, and convert internet users into raving fans?

The answers do exist.

This handy guide takes a look at some of the most popular and effective methods for driving traffic to your website *no matter what business you're in*. These tactics are used by businesses of all sizes to grow and crush their goals, and if you are feeling lost when it comes to increasing the amount of traffic on your website, you have come to the right place.

Let's get started.

GOOGLE MY BUSINESS

For a truly staggering number of everyday consumers, the first step to patronizing a local business starts with a Google search. What this means for your business is that if your business is relevant to their search, then it had better come up in those search results. When it comes to Google and other search engines, this is bigger than just getting into the **SERPs**.

SERPs

Search Engine Result Pages—the list of results that a search engine returns when a term or phrase is searched.

Remember the objective of search engines like Google: to deliver the best results for every search. That means when someone is searching for a local business's hours of operation, the aim is not just to show that person the local business's website in the SERPs, but to also show that person the exact information they were searching for, in as few steps as possible.

This laser-targeted approach is even more important in the age of voice search. If you are the maker of a home assistant and a voice search returns the wrong information or returns information that requires users to open their phone or laptop, you will quickly lose market share.

What this ultimately translates into is a shared interest on the part of search engines like Google and local businesses. Google *wants* to give its users (the people performing searches) the most up-to-date information, and local businesses *want* the exposure that comes with local searches.

Enter Google My Business.

My Business is a free digital listing for your business that integrates with the Google suite, specifically with Search and Maps. Once you create an account and claim your business, you can update your business information right from the My Business dashboard.

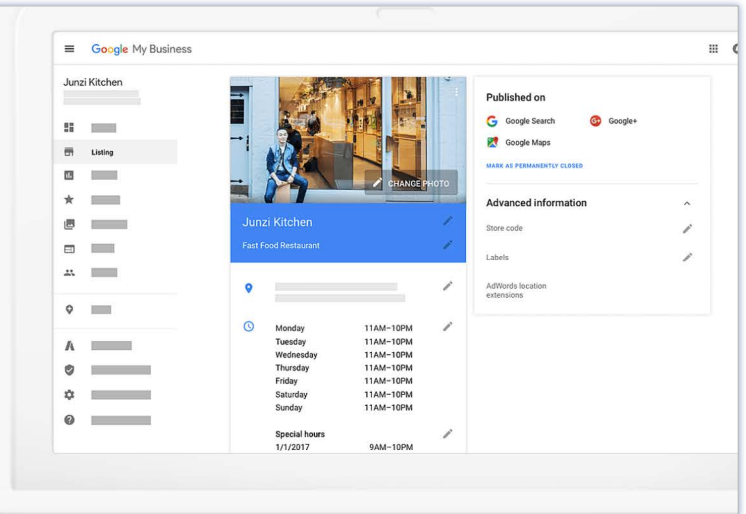
Critically important information includes contact information and hours of operation—these are the important bits that customers will be searching for—but it also includes images and other nonessentials that will give people searching for your business as

much info as they may need, and the biggest opportunity for you to sell them on your business before they have even left the search results.

BUSINESS INFO

Keep your info updated so people can find you.

Need to adjust your hours for the holidays? Or add a new phone number? Make changes in a few easy steps with Google My Business, and your listing will update across Search and Maps.



from Google My Business

The listing is totally free and comes with a bunch of handy features.

WEBSITE

Each Google My Business page comes with the ability to create a free basic website. It's a no coding, drag-and-drop website with limited capability that allows you to showcase your business. The website is **responsive** and can be edited from your computer or phone. It is also preconfigured to easily integrate with the Google AdWords program, which is a standby in the world of digital advertising.

RESPONSIVE

Websites that are built with responsive design will grow, shrink, and otherwise reconfigure based on the display settings of a variety of devices. This means that a site that looks good on your computer will look good on a phone as well, and vice versa, in a smooth, seamless experience.

My take on the website builder for your Google My Business account is a mixed positive. On one hand, your page won't have the capabilities you're looking for if you're serious about a web presence. It is that simple. On the other hand, think about what your free My Business website *really* is.



There is a reason that it's free, and there is a reason it integrates with Google's ad network so easily. Google is using this feature to drum up new users for their ad network, and I have to admit, it is a good idea on Google's part. For businesses that may not understand websites, or what a website can do for them, Google is essentially building them a **landing page** so that they can utilize the AdWords network (which they wouldn't have been able to do without a website).

Discover other benefits of your new website.

Your free website is super simple to set up, and it includes powerful features designed to help drive more customers to your business.

Mobile ready

With its responsive design, your website automatically adjusts to look great on every screen whether it's a computer, a tablet or a phone.

Custom domain

Get a website address that reflects your business with a custom domain.

Automatic updates

Your website automatically updates with info from your Google listing, so it's always up-to-date.

Manage on the go

Create and manage your website from any device, so you can make changes quickly.

Drive calls and visits

With your phone number and Google Maps location prominently displayed, customers will always know how to find you.

Ads-ready

Bring more customers to your site with [AdWords Express](#)—your site is designed to drive customer actions.

from Google My Business

LANDING PAGE

A landing page is the page that is served to a person who clicks on a link. It may or may not be the home page of the site that hosts it—it is whatever page the link was pointing to.



Here's my advice on the free website that comes with your My Business account.

Use it, but don't rely on it, and here's why: First of all, it's free, which is great. Second, it is optimized for Google, which is great. Because it's preconfigured to connect to Google's AdWords network, build your free site and use it as a landing page for the AdWords network.

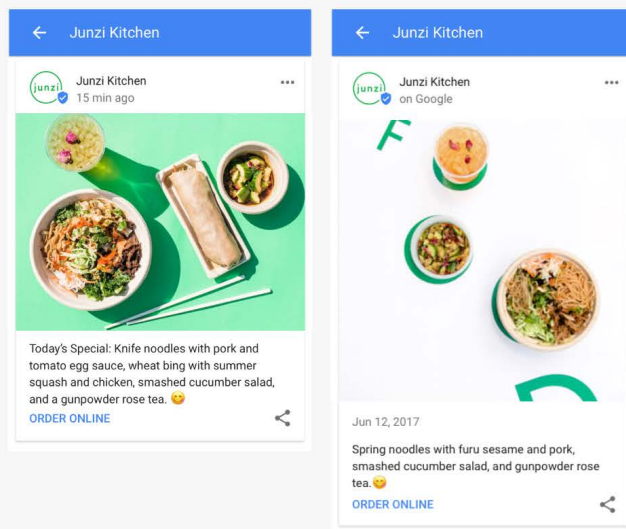
The big "but" in the room, however, is don't make your My Business site your only website. You are going to want a way to use your website as a sales tool, a lead generation tool, and a tool to grow your business. The site that Google lets you build is easy and free, but it is not robust enough to fill each of those roles for your business.

POSTS

Google My Business allows businesses to post updates (think more social media and less blog) that appear right in the business entry in Search and Maps. This is a great way to further shape how Google's users interact with your business, and it presents an opportunity for you to use daily specials and other promotional updates to entice them to come in the door.

Create repeat business with regular updates.

Give customers more reasons to come back by posting daily specials or seasonal updates to your listing.



MY TAKE

The posts feature is by no means the most powerful aspect of your My Business account, but it is a handy asset to have and a nice tool to add to the toolbox.

INSIGHTS

In today's digital landscape, data is power. And no one is better at data than Google. Your My Business account comes with a bunch of information regarding impressions, engagement, and the search terms that were used to find your business. This data encompasses your entire My Business account, along with post-level info.

IMPRESSIONS

An impression is an instance where your SERP entry, post, or other digital asset was displayed on a screen. This is distinct from a click or a "click through." An impression simply means the digital asset in question was displayed—someone saw it. A click means that the link or other digital asset (such as an ad) was actually clicked on and interacted with.

MY TAKE

The more actionable information you have access to, the higher quality your decisions will be. I have never turned down actionable digital insight before and won't start doing so any time soon.

GOOGLE MY BUSINESS CONCLUSION

The My Business program from Google is a stroke of genius on the part of Google. It creates an incentive for businesses to help improve the quality of experience for Google's users and acts as a gateway for new ad customers.

It is also a totally free way (unless you purchase ads) to provide exposure to your brick-and-mortar business. If you have a brick-and-mortar business that needs to bring customers in the door or needs to generate leads, and you do nothing else to bring your business into the digital space, make sure you claim your My Business entry and keep that info up to date.

What if your existing business, or the business you intend to start, exists online only?

Well, this won't really work for you. But rest assured, there are a ton of other ways to drive traffic to your website.

RESOURCES

[Get Started with Google My Business](https://www.google.com/business/)

(<https://www.google.com/business/>)

[How to Add or Claim Your Google My Business Listing](https://support.google.com/business/answer/2911778?hl=en)

(<https://support.google.com/business/answer/2911778?hl=en>)

[Learn More About Google My Business](https://www.google.com/business/resources/)

(<https://www.google.com/business/resources/>)

PAID ADVERTISING

For every need, there is someone out there looking to fill that need, for a fee. If you are looking for traffic to your website, there is no shortage of paid advertising opportunities available.

Paid advertising is a straightforward way to drive traffic to your site, so we won't spend too much time on it. Of course, once you get started there are a million and one tweaks, a/b tests, and minor changes that you can make to campaigns once they're up and running, but no matter what service you use, the concept is the same.

We're making the distinction here between paid digital advertising and paid social advertising (up next). Of course, it's all digital advertising, but social advertising—Facebook in particular—is such a different beast that it gets a section all its own. Most digital paid advertising is done via networks, and the people with the biggest network are, of course, the people at Google.

For small businesses just starting out in the world of digital advertising, one of the most effective programs to use is Google AdWords.

Google AdWords is a **pay-per-click** (PPC) ad program that displays sponsored results whenever a user searches a target keyword.

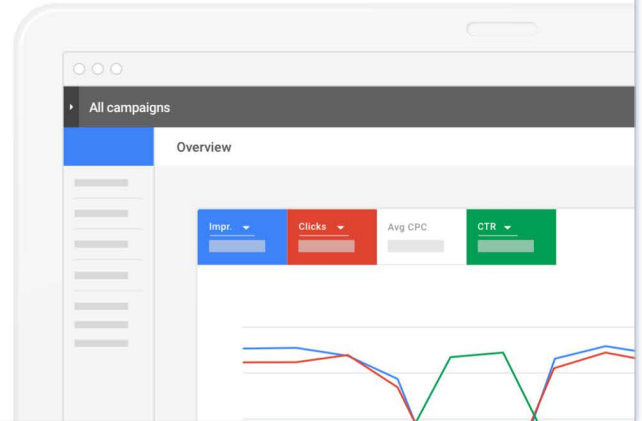
You only pay for results.

No visit, no fee.

Signing up for Google AdWords is free. You only pay when someone engages with your ad, like by visiting your website or calling your business. In other words, when your advertising is working.

Start with any budget.

You set your own budget, so your costs will depend on what you are trying to accomplish with your online advertising. Some businesses spend tens of thousands of dollars a month, and others are comfortable investing several hundred.



from Google AdWords

PAY PER CLICK

Ad cost can be computed in a number of ways. The pay-per-click model charges the owner of an ad anytime that ad is clicked. This is distinct from charging based on the number of impressions or the number of conversions.

The results above are the Google AdWords ads that display at the top of the search results.

The nice thing about a PPC ad is that if the person who sees it isn't interested, they don't click, and no charge. The *really* nice thing about AdWords PPC ads is that they're related to the search that is being conducted. So if I search for "window washers in San Francisco," there is a good bet that I'm in the San Francisco area and that I have windows in need of washing.

So here are the good things about AdWords ads so far: they are affordable and they are highly targeted. But another great feature is the **native** presentation.

NATIVE ADS

Native ads are advertisements designed to blend in with the platform or content that surrounds them. FCC guidelines mandate that advertisements must be labeled as such; however, savvy marketers know that many people are naturally resistant to ads. This resistance can be reduced when ads are presented in a way that is not intrusive or disruptive to the user experience.

What you are left with is an ad that works around the clock, is only shown to people who are interested in what you are selling, and fits right in with the results they were looking for. Not a bad deal at all.

I am a big fan of AdWords ads, but the biggest mistake that new digital advertisers make is focusing on the ad and missing the work they need to do on their site first. If you are paying to send traffic to your site, you are going to get traffic to your site—simple as that.



What happens, however, if that traffic comes to a site that isn't set up to sell to them? Or to capture their information? Not only are those missed opportunities, but paying to attract people who don't help you complete your business objectives can start to add up.

My advice? Make sure you have your website squared away with content upgrades, sales funnels, lead funnels, etc., *before* you start supercharging things with ads.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We're living in the social age. As platforms like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Pinterest have come into their own, their power and reach have increased exponentially. We're going to focus on Facebook and Pinterest for the purposes of this guide, but they are by no means the only games in town.

Twitter, Instagram (a Facebook property), Tumblr, Reddit, LinkedIn... these platforms all enjoy high levels of engagement and/or offer sophisticated, targeted advertising programs. You'll notice YouTube isn't mentioned in that list. We're categorizing YouTube (and other video-sharing platforms) into their own section for this guide—despite the fact that they are, for all intents and purposes—social media platforms.

Why Facebook and Pinterest?

Facebook currently boasts 2.13 billion users worldwide (as of Q4 2017), which is a staggeringly massive number of users. Of these people, 1.4 billion log in every day and are considered "daily active users." Facebook has taken more steps than any other social platform to effectively monetize their two-billion-strong user base, and as a result, Facebook has extremely sophisticated advertising tools. These tools allow advertisers to target specific segments with laser precision in the digital environment where those people are already spending time.

We'll get to those tools in a second, but first let's talk about Pinterest. Pinterest is not a perfect fit for every business, but it is a unique social platform that can be a huge asset to businesses that fit the bill.

Numbers from early 2018 put Pinterest's user base at about 175 million users, with 75 million based in the US. That is a fraction of the total social media market, but it is a targeted, pre-segmented portion of all social media users.

Pinterest is not for every brand or product, but the ones it is a good fit for see considerable success on the platform. Pinterest users are overwhelmingly women (81 percent), though new signups are a sixty-forty split female to male, so the platform is reaching a larger male audience than it has in the past. Even so, just 7 percent of pins are created by men.

Despite the fact that the number of Pinterest users is dwarfed by those of other social media platforms, Pinterest still sees a large amount of **organic reach** and a high number of "shopping pins," or shopping-oriented shares.

ORGANIC REACH

Exposure and engagement on a social media platform that was not paid for.

To top it all off, half of Pinterest users make more than \$50k per year, with 10 percent making over \$125k. Not one to miss out on a revenue opportunity, Pinterest has allowed advertisers to boost their organic effect with rich pins—pins that include extra info—and, of course, a "buy" button.

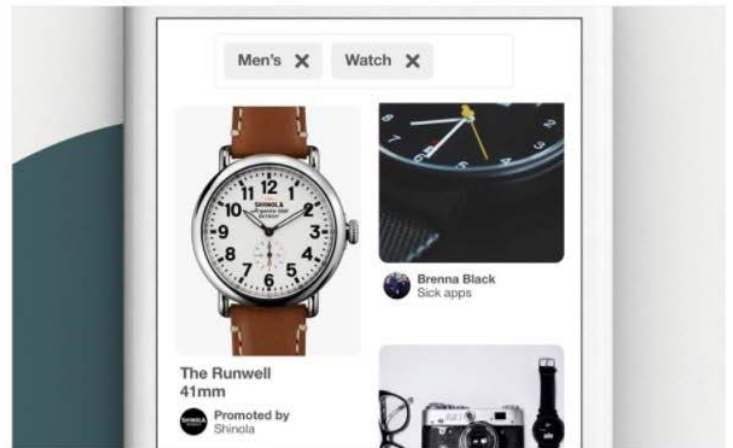
Once your account is set up, Pinterest users can shop your products directly without leaving the Pinterest platform. If you have spent any amount of time in the world of e-commerce, you know that getting your products up for sale is only half the battle.

The big challenge is getting traffic to them. And that's where Pinterest's advertising program comes in. Promoted pins are displayed in a **native format**, and they fit right in with the browsing experience that Pinterest users already know and expect.

NATIVE ADVERTISING

Native ads are advertisements designed to blend in with the platform or content that surrounds them. FCC guidelines mandate that advertisements must be labeled as such; however, savvy marketers know that many people are naturally resistant to ads. This resistance can be reduced when ads are presented in a way that is not intrusive or disruptive to the user experience.

Ads that look and feel natural



Promoted Pins don't interrupt or distract Pinners. They actually make Pinterest better, because they help people find new products and ideas. In fact, 73% of Pinners say that content from brands makes Pinterest more useful.

From Pinterest

So how does advertising and sharing your products on Pinterest bring traffic to your website? It doesn't. At least, not directly.

But the people you reach with sales on Pinterest are now your customers. Which means they have already spent money with you. That barrier is gone.

What if the package they receive from you includes a card that encourages them to register for updates, product information, or free upgrades? This is done via your site and in exchange for their email address.

If these customers are added to a specific email list (we'll get to email lists in a bit) you now have a database of people who are willing to spend money with your brand and that you can communicate with in just a few clicks.

Yes, please.

My take on Pinterest for businesses is highly conditional. *If* your business is a good fit for Pinterest, then you can make an absolute killing on their platform. Look at what your competitors are doing in that space and emulate (and hopefully improve on) their efforts.



But what if you have a service business, or you sell digital products, or your products are targeted toward a male demographic? Can you make Pinterest work for you?

Probably not, sorry.

Pinterest is what it is. It's a product-oriented, predominantly female demographic. If that doesn't work for your business, it doesn't work. If it does, you absolutely should be there.

RESOURCES

[Getting Started with Pinterest for Business](https://business.pinterest.com/en/get-started-how-to-use-pinterest)

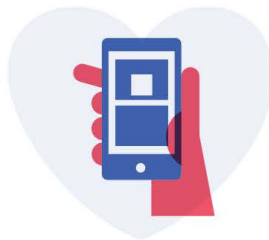
(<https://business.pinterest.com/en/get-started-how-to-use-pinterest>)

FACEBOOK ADVERTISING

Moving on to the digital advertising powerhouse that is Facebook, we can get a lot more creative with our advertising.



Two billion people use Facebook every month.



1 of every 5 minutes people in the US spend on mobile is on Facebook or Instagram.



500 million Instagrammers use the app every day.

From Facebook Business

And they aren't kidding. I could write an entire book on the topic of Facebook advertising, but in this guide we're just going to touch on the basics. There are also a million and one tips for how businesses can use Facebook as a tool, but for the purposes of our Traffic Generation Success Blueprint, we're just going to focus on the advertising arm of Facebook.

Paid advertising on Facebook has become increasingly important as Facebook itself has taken steps to suppress organic sharing and reach by brands and companies. They have done this for two reasons: the first is that Facebook needs to provide an experience that their users want. If your news feed was 100 percent ads, would you log on to Facebook every day?

Of course not.

Second, Facebook wants to make more money. Organic reach is such a great thing for businesses on social media because it is **earned media**.

EARNED MEDIA

Earned media is any exposure, mention, or media communication that your brand receives without having to pay for it. This is distinct from owned media (communication that comes directly from your brand) or paid media (communication that you have expressly paid for).

Your earned media is a missed revenue opportunity for Facebook, so they suppressed organic reach capabilities for businesses. But they made their ads platform even more powerful. That's a tradeoff I'll take any day of the week.

Organic reach is great. Its price ranges from cheap to free, and it can exceed your wildest expectations. It is also unpredictable, tough to master, and a completely open loop.

If your post/content/video/moment reaches 10,000 people, how many of those people are in your target audience? How many of those people have the problem that your product or service provides a solution to? There is no way of knowing.

A targeted, purpose-built Facebook ad campaign, on the other hand, will reach the people you designate. The level of targeting that Facebook provides really allows you to close the loop and ensure that the people you are reaching are *exactly the kind of people with whom your offer will resonate*.

There are a bunch of different campaign objectives you can choose from, but for the purposes of this guide we're going to focus on two big ones: driving traffic and retargeting.

DRIVING TRAFFIC

You're on your lunch hour or you're waiting for a bus. You're waiting in line, or you're waiting for a business call. You get out your phone, open Facebook, and start scrolling. Maybe that doesn't describe your phone habits, but for millions of people it does. Each one of those moments is an opportunity to put your message in front of someone, but not just anyone.

Facebook's ad targeting options can be lumped into three broad categories: demographics, behaviors, and interests. Within each of these categories are numerous options, and no two categories are mutually exclusive. What this means is that there are, without exaggeration, tens of millions of ways to target the billions of people on Facebook.

That may sound a little overwhelming, and it can be. The good news is that you would have to be a crazy person to try to reach all of those people at once. It is simply impossible to craft messaging that speaks to that many people. Basic ad targeting narrows your audience substantially, meaning that the numbers you're dealing with become more manageable right away.

It's not just the numbers.

Looking at a distinct audience that takes shape based on your targeting specifications is the kind of thing that marketing dreams are made of.

Select your audience based on the specs of your ideal target audience. There are too many targeting characteristics to go into detail about them here, but don't be afraid to explore. Another thing: keep track of the audiences you select. A large part of Facebook marketing is running an **ad set**, reviewing the results, then tweaking and running it again.

AD SET

There are three distinct levels of granularity when creating ads in Facebook's Ad Manager: Campaign, Ad Sets, and Ads. A *campaign* is aligned with an objective and can contain multiple ad sets. Each *ad set* can be set for delivery to a different audience and is subordinate to the campaign's objectives. Ads are the individual creatives that make up your ad sets. It's a good idea to use a variety of ad creatives for each set to test out different options and different ad configurations for different audiences, and to avoid **ad fatigue**.

AD FATIGUE

When a user sees the same ad too many times, he or she will be less responsive or receptive to the ad's message. This is known as ad fatigue, and it can be combatted by creating several variants of an ad.

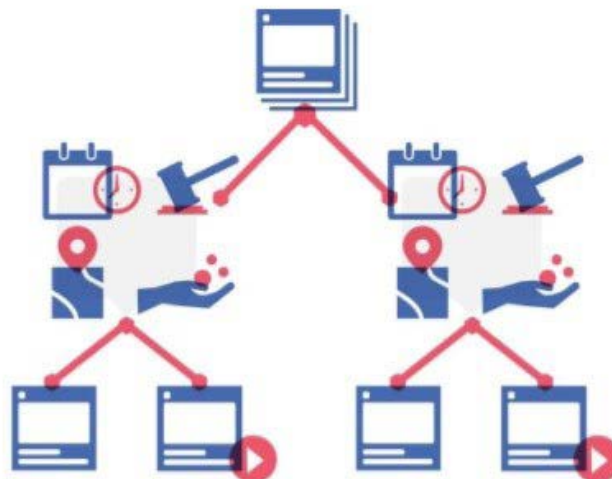
Campaign structure

There are three levels to Facebook's campaign structure: campaign, ad set and ad.

Campaign: A campaign contains one or more ad sets and ads. You'll choose one advertising objective for each of your campaigns.

Ad set: Ad sets contain one or more ads. You'll define your targeting, budget, schedule, bidding and placement at the ad set level.

Ad: The creative you use makes up an ad.



From Facebook Business

To drive traffic to your website, simply select “drive traffic” as the objective for your campaign.

Next, you have to take the prospects in your audience off of the Facebook platform and on to your site. Facebook is a crowded place, and it's too easy for your message to get lost in the noise. Plus, you have to compete with everyone else in your audience's news feed.

The best way to do this is to provide your audience with value—an ethical bribe.¹ Various forms of content that can be used for this purpose are covered in the next section, but for now let's say you want to offer a free guide. If you provide coaching services for new businesses, for example, your free guide should be designed to fit perfectly with the services you provide.

Determine your audience's pain point, and create a guide around it. If your clients are always struggling to maximize their average cart value—the average amount of money a customer spends each time they visit—then release a guide that lays out *4 Scientific Methods for Increasing Your Average Cart Value by 26%*.

This guide could be in the form of a blog post, a slide show, a video... whatever you want it to be. The point is that it has to take your audience off of Facebook and bring them to your site.

¹ I didn't come up with this clever phrase. The term “ethical bribe” comes from marketing guru Russell Brunson's book [Dot Com Secrets](#). I have to give credit where credit is due.

Once the prospect is on your site, you could provide the guide for download in exchange for their email address, use the content that you shared with them as an opportunity to retarget your audience (retargeting is covered next), or use it as a funnel entry point to capture a sale, to generate leads, or to further qualify your prospects.

Facebook advertising is here to stay.



It is an immensely powerful expression of the world's largest social media platform. Driving traffic to your website is only one of a number of campaign objectives that can be utilized. From basic content sharing to increase likes and follows, to complex on-site click-through objectives (for advanced users), Facebook continues to deliver one of the most powerful and laser-focused ad experiences for both audiences and advertisers.

RETARGETING

Facebook **retargeting** (and retargeting in general) is a marvel of the digital age.

RETARGETING

Retargeting is the process of serving contextual ads to specific users based on their actions.

At face value, it may seem like retargeting isn't much different from regular paid advertising. The key word in the above definition is "contextual." With *normal* Facebook ads it is possible to target your audience to an impressive degree of granularity. But retargeting takes this a step further.

Let's say you run a Facebook ad that offers the users you target the free guide from the last example: *4 Scientific Methods for Increasing Your Average Cart Value by 26%*. In the first day, fifteen people click on the ad and are taken to your site. Ten of the fifteen who click on the ad download your guide and provide you with their email information. Awesome, the system works.

But what about the five who visited and didn't download your free guide? Wouldn't it be great if there was a way to target just the people who visited your site but didn't download?

That's the role of retargeting.

Through retargeting, you can run a contextual ad that appears in the news feeds of just those people who visited your site but didn't download your guide. It could be a reminder (Did life get in the way? Don't forget to grab your free guide here!), or it could be a substitute offer (Have you maxed out your average cart value? Check out this unbelievable way to increase foot traffic to your business.).

Retargeting isn't just for prospects who have an incomplete action. You could also retarget the people who did download the guide. Something to the effect of "How was the guide? Do you want to put the concepts you learned about into action?"

Retargeting is crazy powerful. Let's take a brief look at how it works.

Facebook retargeting is powered by the **Facebook Pixel**. Drop the pixel into the pages for which you want to record action for later retargeting—it's that easy.

FACEBOOK PIXEL

A pixel is a snippet of dynamically generated code that tags users on your site. If they have an active Facebook account, the pixel interacts with them in the manner prescribed by your campaign, and this information is collected for later use.

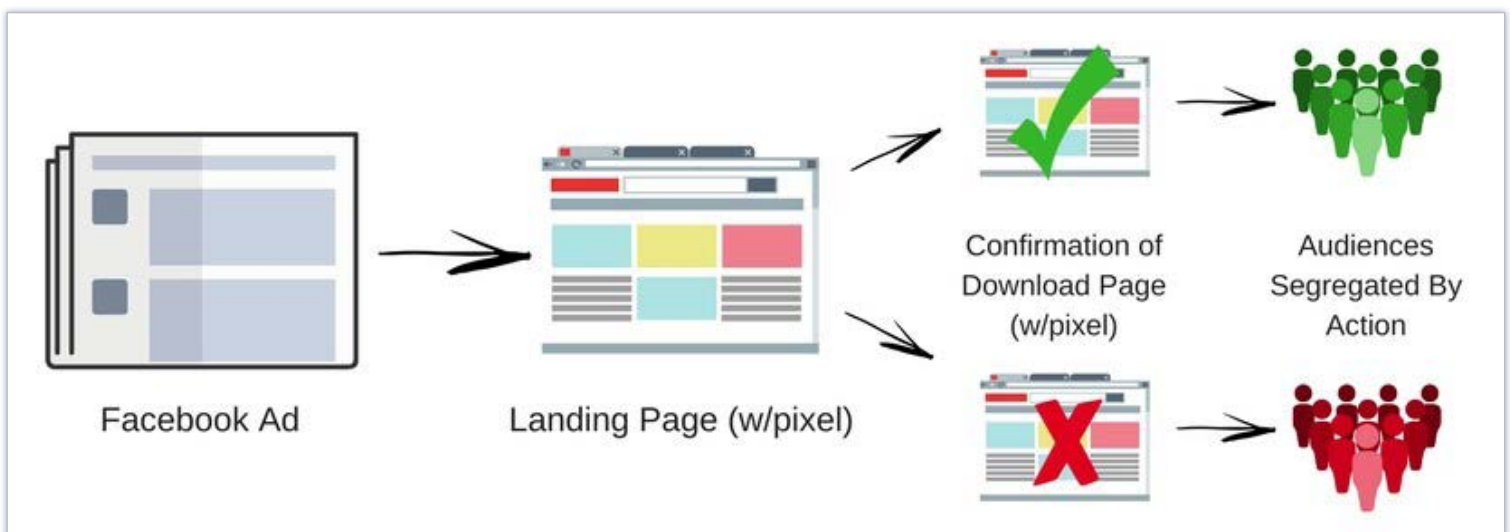
Okay, but how does it know what actions users took on your site?

Let's say we were going to build an audience of people who did what the five users did from the above example: visited the page, but did not download the guide. The Facebook Pixel code is added to two pages: the landing page where your audience is directed from the ad, and the confirmation page that they go to after downloading the guide.

With me so far?

Now we have created two actions that the Pixel can "see." This action path looks as follows:

- 1) Visit Landing Page >> 2) Visit Confirmation Page
- AND
- 1) Visit Landing Page **XX** 2) Did NOT Visit Confirmation Page



If a user visits *both* the landing page and the confirmation page, then they have downloaded the guide and they are placed in the affirmative audience. If a user visits the landing page but not the confirmation page, then they did not download the guide and are placed in another audience.

As your ad runs and your two audiences grow, you can start to create ads that use the new audiences as your targets. Because you already targeted them once for the click and are now targeting them again based on their action, you are retargeting these users.

Pretty cool, right?

Other than the fact that retargeting is starting to enter that realm of how scary it is that Facebook can track this amount of information about our behavior online, retargeting is an amazing tool that can be used to capture traffic that would otherwise be lost forever, and it can be used to reinforce the relationships that you're forging with your audience members *who did* take action.



Retargeting isn't a great fit for every product or service. Because you're running so many ad sets, it can get expensive to target all these people. If you have a high-ticket item and killer creatives, then the margin on your products can soak up some of the ad costs.

On the other hand, if you have a lower-ticket item, or a razor-thin margin, the costs of retargeting will cut heavily into your bottom line.

CONTENT OUTREACH

The phrase "content marketing strategy" gets thrown around a lot but isn't often defined. As a result, it can seem as if everyone else knows what a content marketing strategy is and you're just getting to the party late. At its heart, a content marketing strategy is simply a way to attract traffic to your site by offering them something of value in the form of content.

Content could be written word in the form of blog posts, articles, how-to guides, checklists, or tip sheets. Content could be images in the form of a photo gallery, slide show, or lookbook. It could also be video that entertains, inspires, or educates. And content types don't stop there. There are calculators, generators, and converters too.

Whatever content you choose, it must be relevant to your audience, your product, and your brand. And here's the most important part: just because you're giving your audience something for free, it doesn't mean that you aren't getting something out of the deal.

People love free things. For many of us, myself included, getting something for free releases a shot of dopamine that gives us that warm and fuzzy feeling. Businesses have been using free promotions since the beginning of commerce for this very reason.

When grocery stores give away free samples, they're using the quality of their food to entice shoppers to purchase. The sample is free, but it has a chance to convert shoppers into customers, so it provides value to the grocery store.

Content marketing is often more *quid pro quo*. It can be similar to free samples in the grocery store in the sense that you as the business are using the quality of the content you share—how much value is in the content—to entice your audience to take action.

More directly, however, a standard content outreach strategy to capture traffic is carried out as follows:

When we were discussing Facebook ads and retargeting, I mentioned a fictional guide, *4 Scientific Methods for Increasing Your Average Cart Value by 26%*. The guide was used to entice people away from Facebook so that we could retarget them with our Pixel.

That's one way to leverage a **content asset** like a guide, but another, more straightforward, method is simply to share the guide, or excerpts of it, for free.

CONTENT ASSET

A content asset is any form of content that has been produced by a business for the purposes of attracting traffic, engaging with their audience, or generating leads.

A good example is a blog post. The post could be *12 Reasons Your Average Cart Value Is Getting Smaller*, an article that discusses reasons a business could see a shrinking average cart value. A person who is facing this issue will type their query into their favorite search engine, and up will pop your blog post.

Once they are on the page, they begin reading. Your post is full of insight and value, and when they get to the end they are prompted to allow you to add even more value, also for free. If your reader enters his or her email address and opts in to your mailing list, right away you will send them the full guide *4 Scientific Methods for Increasing Your Average Cart Value by 26%* as a **content upgrade**.

CONTENT UPGRADE

A content upgrade is additional content or value that can be unlocked by readers, usually by submitting their email address or other contact information.

It doesn't have to be just an email address. It can be name, phone number, organizational role, and company size. It can be name, email address, and the number of cats they have in their house. Whatever information is pertinent to your business goals—here is where you capture that.

A brief word of caution: the ask—the thing that you ask your audience for—should be commensurate in value with what you are giving them. Don't ask for someone's social security number and then tell them they have an index card's worth of information on the way. Also, the less information you ask for, the better your conversions will be, so keep it simple.

Now you have held up your end of the bargain—the guide was free and packed with value—and now you have another contact that you can follow up with, send offers to, and convert. By the way, this is all handled with software automation. Plug-and-play software suites will do all the behind-the-scenes work for you. The only thing you have to do is write the guide.

Here's the best part about a content outreach strategy.

Not only do you have another contact, you have a contact that has already received value from you and is familiar with the ways in which you—or your brand—are experienced and knowledgeable in your field.

And when it comes to finding a solution for their problem, who do you think they will think of first?



That sounds great, but how does it drive new traffic to my website?

USING CONTENT TO DRIVE TRAFFIC

The blog post we wrote in the last section, *12 Reasons Your Average Cart Value Is Getting Smaller*, speaks to people with a specific problem. But let's say the solution that we sell fixes more problems than just a slumping average cart size. We want to talk to people who have those other problems too, right?

So that means we write another blog post.

We'll call it *6 Ways to Drive More Dollars Per Transaction in Your Retail Space*. Everyone could use more money, and one of the suggestions will be to increase your average cart value. The content upgrade for this post will be—you guessed it—*4 Scientific Methods for Increasing Your Average Cart Value by 26%*.

Because this post is about a different, broader topic, it will attract different traffic. Additionally, because the content upgrade is about improving your bottom line, it works for this post as well as your other one.

Now with two posts you have more content to attract more traffic. Of course, don't just leave it there. You will always get better results if you go out and put your content in front of people. Ads are one way to do it, but you can always share content on social media.

Another way to increase exposure is to repurpose your blog posts as posts on content sharing and learning sites such as Quora and Medium, with links that lead back to your site. Join Facebook groups where your customers would hang out. Visit forums and other blogs that address the same topics.

Don't spam anyone with sales pitches, but join the conversation and offer helpful advice. Link back to your post with the content upgrade. Plus, if your post really does offer value, your readers will share it in their circles and it will be amplified that way as well.

Once you get in the groove of things, simply rinse and repeat.

Be strategic in the posts you create. Write posts that address different topics, all of which relate to problems that your target customers have and that your products fix.

You know your value proposition and you know the problems your customers face. If you sit down and think about it, you'll be surprised at how many angles you can come up with—each one of those angles is one (or more) blog posts that will grab traffic to your website!



I love content marketing strategies. They're a great way to deliver value and build relationships with your target customers. What I *especially* love about content marketing strategies is that they can be used to accomplish a wide range of business goals.

Content can be the first point of contact for new prospects who become leads. It can be a continuing point of contact for existing customers that helps guide them through your sales funnel. Content is a great way to build your contact list for a successful email marketing strategy. It can be used as a sales tool to pre-frame offers, a teaching and discovery tool, an audience magnet, and a traffic generator.

That's a lot of benefit for a low cost.

RESOURCES

[The Content Marketing Institute](http://www.contentmarketinginstitute.com)

(www.contentmarketinginstitute.com)

[Quora](http://www.quora.com)

(www.quora.com)

[Medium](http://www.medium.com)

(www.medium.com)

EMAIL MARKETING

In the face of messaging apps and video chat, email almost seems as archaic as the snail mail it was billed to replace. Not the case. While communication apps come and go, email has had impressive and tremendous staying power as a medium of communication.

But the email marketing of today is vastly different from that of the mid to late '90s. Gone are the "spray and pray" days of email marketing. In those days, emails were all sent as one-off blasts. Everyone in the database was sent the same message, and this meant that the email marketers of the day were essentially throwing it all against the wall and seeing what stuck.

As you can imagine, that had... mixed results.

Modern tools save time on the part of marketers through automation and increase effectiveness with mailing list segmentation.

Modern email marketing is

- Inexpensive
- Effective
- Valuable
- Measurable
- Scalable

A solid email marketing campaign is built on an extensive contact list. If you don't already have contact information for your customers, that's okay, but you should start collecting it right away. Compared to all the other parts of the process, acquiring qualified contacts for your subscriber list can be discouraging.

Integrated, total-solution software packages offer the capability to add opt-in elements to different parts of your site, as well as the capability to build **squeeze pages**.

SQUEEZE PAGE

A squeeze page is a page with a single purpose, usually to convert traffic to opt in to your email list. Squeeze pages have a dedicated, singular purpose, and their design reflects this; effective squeeze pages don't have much in the way of copy, images, or links. Instead, they are focused on the action that you want your audience to take—in this case, opting in.

Remember Facebook ads?

A tried-and-true digital marketing tactic involves creating something of value to give away free to your audience in exchange for their email address. This "valuable asset" must address a pain point that your audience has. For example, if you sell pet accessories designed to calm stressed-out pets, a good valuable asset to offer your audience would be a guide to identifying and eliminating pet stressors around the home.

If I own a dog that is really stressed out all the time, I will be very interested in a free guide that helps me help my dog.

The Facebook ad leads to your squeeze page, where your audience can get the free guide you promised them by entering their email address. Once they complete that action, they are added to a list in your contact management software. Later, you can follow up with them to discuss other ways they can help reduce stress in the lives of their pets, along with the features and benefits of the products you offer, discounts, promotions, etc.

Here's the thing about those follow-up messages.

They can be automated, scheduled, and timed to **drip** content and offers to the people who have signed up to be on your mailing list. Bring your subscribers back to your website by sharing content with them that links back to your presence. Showcase products, offers, or events to expand the reach of your website right into the mailbox of your subscribers.

DRIP FEED

A drip feed is one that slowly releases content or other messages over a period of time instead of in a single message or email blast.

That's great news, but that's the beginner level.

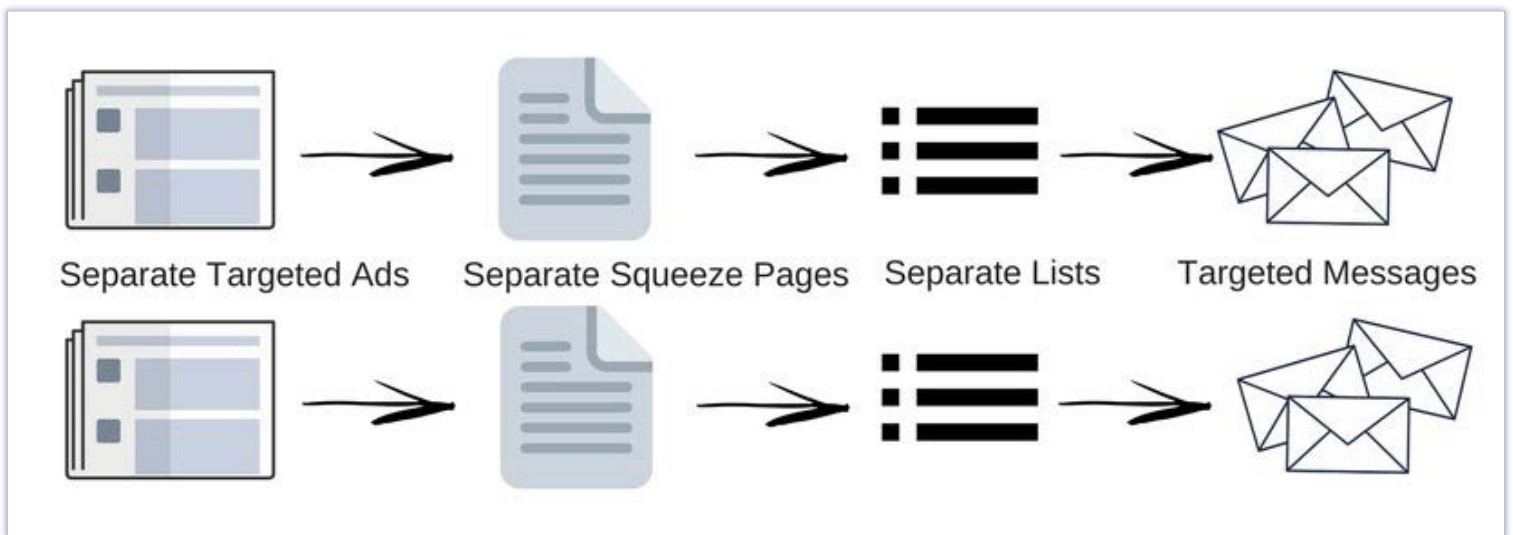
Using the method above, you are still kind of spraying and praying your message—albeit to people who have already demonstrated interest. If you sell products that de-stress pets, you have probably come across customers who didn't even realize that the animals they share their homes with were stressed. If that's the case, a Facebook ad that targets pet owners and offers them tips for dealing with stressed-out pets won't resonate in the way that you want it to.

The beauty of Facebook advertising coupled with email marketing and automation software plays out as follows:

Instead of running one ad with one asset that leads to a single squeeze page and puts your subscribers on a single list, duplicate your efforts. Write a second guide, this one helping pet owners interpret the strange behavior of their pets and helping them diagnose it as pet stress. If I'm a dog owner who has been perplexed by my pet's activity at any point, I might be interested in a free guide that helps me bridge the communication gap.

Clicking this second Facebook ad will take your traffic to a *different* squeeze page so that they can get this new guide designed to teach them how to identify the signs of stress in their pets. Clicking through and opting in puts them on a separate list from the other leads who have requested the first guide—the one for people who are *already* aware that pet stress is an issue.

Now that you have two lists, you can send each list different messages tailored to the stage they're in in relation to the buying process. These messages can be written once, scheduled, then left on autopilot and triggered to be sent when someone requests the guide that is appropriate for them.



Imagine a world where you can do all this: ask your prospects to self-identify their stage in the buying journey, gain their trust and earn credibility by providing them with something of value right away, and then craft messages that can confidently speak to their interests and needs.

With modern email marketing tactics and techniques, not only does that world exist, but all of those actions can be carried out while you sleep!

Email marketing can be discouraging for first-timers who may not have a large list or a clear plan to increase the number of contacts on their lists. If there are a dozen people on your mailing list, then your marketing efforts won't be very effective. It's that simple.



But once you get those puzzle pieces figured out (and it is a lot easier than you may think) email marketing can prove to be a staple of your business marketing efforts. There may have been a time when marketing emails were sent straight to the trash folder, but if you are making a genuine connection with your subscribers—and you're genuinely providing them with value—then they will *look forward* to receiving your emails.

YOUTUBE

YouTube is a behemoth. It's a social media platform, so that puts it in the same broad category as Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, etc., but its unique nature almost puts it in a category of its own. There are about 300 hours of video uploaded to YouTube every minute to a potential audience of 1.3 billion people.

That being the case, how can your content stand out from the crowd? And more importantly, how can you use content on YouTube as a tool to drive traffic to your website?

YouTube as a tool revolves around **user intent**.

USER INTENT

User intent is the purpose that each individual has in mind when they access a platform, service, or site. It is often signaled through search queries.

No one logs on to YouTube with the intent to watch a million hours of random videos.

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT CONTENT TO PRODUCE?

Spend time hanging out where your audience hangs out! Practice **trendspotting**, join Facebook groups, and visit forums and niche websites that relate to your audience.

TRENDSPOTTING

Trendspotting is a predictive technique that involves keeping pace with an industry sector or product, collecting as much information as possible, sorting through it, and extrapolating predictions about the future based on these efforts.

Strike up conversations with people in your target audience. What challenges do they face? What is their awareness of the problem that your product or service solves?

This information is not only helpful in guiding the creation of content and free resources that you will use to entice traffic to come to your website, join your mailing list, etc., but it can also uncover new opportunities for untapped market segments, product spin-offs, and ways to outmaneuver your competition.

It might not always be a good idea to lead with the fact that you have something for sale, but sharing your expertise with people is a great way to engage with your target audience, gain credibility, and learn more about the pain points they have.

Determining what content to produce for YouTube isn't much different from the same decision-making process that goes into producing other kinds of content for a content outreach strategy. The exception being, of course, that the content you produce for YouTube will always be videos.

In the same way that other content you produce must provide value to your audience, the videos you upload to YouTube must also be value-forward. Remember, you have to provide your audience with value if you're going to convince them to leave YouTube and visit your site—they have to believe that you will have more value waiting for them when they do.

This is where the concept of user intent comes into play. In the same way that we wrote blog posts for specific problems that our target customers had, to be effective on YouTube we need to create videos related to things people might search for.

Do some research. Search for the kinds of things that your customers would use to find you or to find your competitors.

How-to videos, video tutorials, and other guides are all great starting points, but the biggest hurdle for many businesses isn't *what* to produce; it's *how* to produce it. Busy business owners don't have a lot of time in their schedules to dedicate to shooting videos.

That may be true, but there is a veritable army of freelancers out there standing by to [animate videos at an affordable rate](#). An easy way to produce a quick video is to pull out the finer points of one of your blog posts, turn that into a script, and send it off to a freelance animator who'll transform it into a short whiteboard video. Use a link in the description of the video to a content asset that lives on your site, and bam! You've just tapped into the largest video-sharing site in the world.



YouTube has tremendous potential for brands to be discovered, but only if they provide value first. No one goes to YouTube to see sales pitches. Even if you don't use YouTube as a method for generating traffic, it's a great video player all the same. It's very easy to upload videos, the site experiences no downtimes or outages, and it has an immediately recognizable logo.

Many sites simply upload all of their videos to YouTube, then embed them (YouTube makes this very easy) on their own site as an alternative to relying on other video players that may suffer from clumsy controls or long load times.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The bottom line is that if you don't have a website right now, you're missing out on a massive opportunity to accomplish your business goals. And if you already do have a website and it isn't performing the way you want it to, there is no shortage of methods you can use to drive traffic to it.

The contents of this guide are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to truly leveraging the power of the internet to grow your business, but that doesn't mean that you can't get started right away putting the information outlined here to good use.

No matter your business growth goals, the sheer power and scale of the digital space means that you can make a real difference in your future.