

# How to Use Digital Marketing to Reach Customers



# Introduction

The dawn of the digital age has presented many great DIY marketing opportunities that are inexpensive, yet effective. It can seem like a complex process, but with the right strategy, digital marketing is a great way to get in front of prospects early in their decision-making process. **The key is to deliver the right message, at the right time, in the right channel.**

**The following are five steps to help you get started with your digital marketing strategy:**



Understand Your Target Audience



Brainstorm What Kind of Content to Create



Maximize Your Content



Publish Your Content

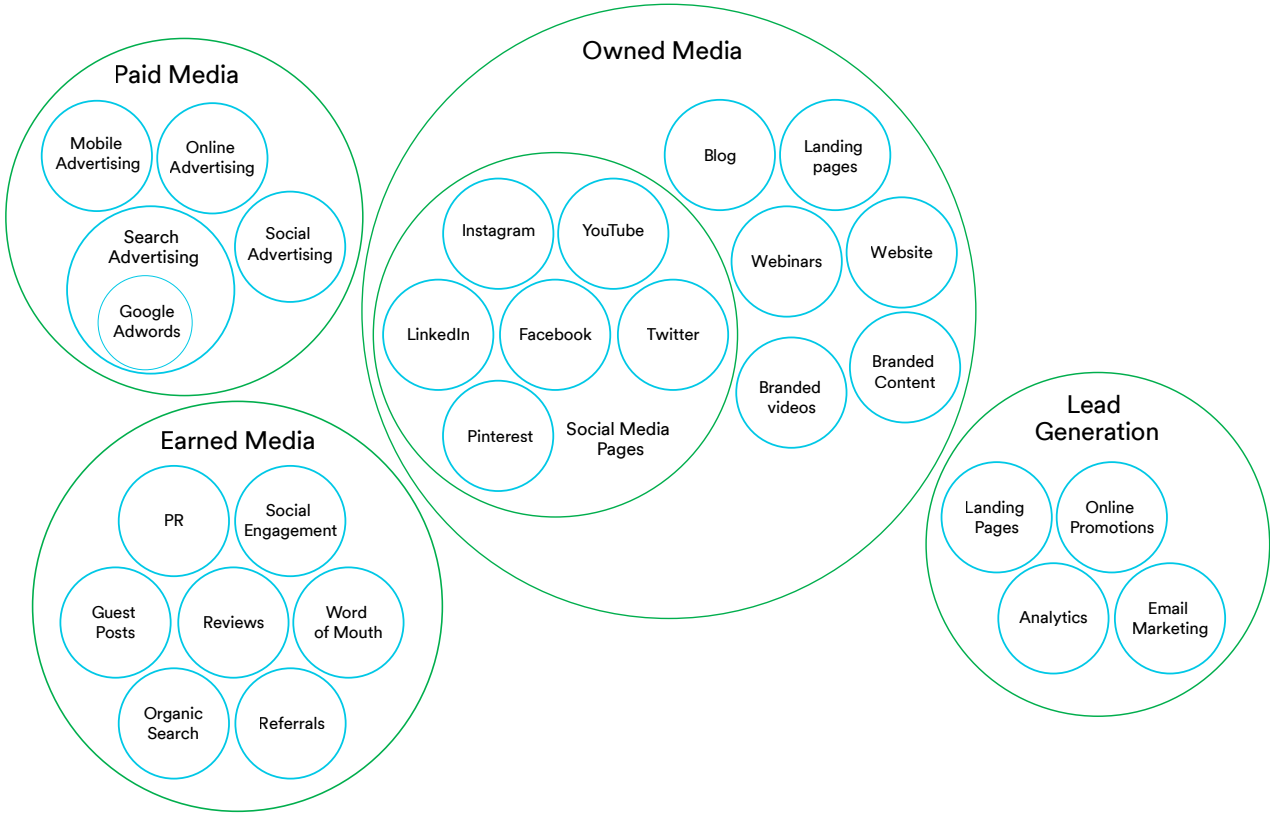


Measure Performance

This graphic outlines the vast array of digital tactics and tools that have proven successful in attracting new customers and ultimately growing a business.

The point of this article is to help you understand how to build on that foundation with some of the tools and tactics noted in this graphic. This article was written based on the assumption that you already have a website for your business. If you don't have one, you can create one yourself using online tutorials, or you can hire a marketing professional to do it for you.



Digital Marketing Overview



As you get started building your digital marketing plan, be sure to keep your customers in mind. Remember, they are just like you: small and medium-sized business owners who are working hard to build a client base. Think about how you can help them do that by using your services. Whether it's a shop front window at a bakery or a van used by a flower shop, there are many opportunities in which wraps can help get the word out. By helping them discover those opportunities, you may assist in growing your clients' businesses, which, in turn, may grow your own.

**By thinking of yourself as a branding consultant, as well as a graphics manufacturer, you may be able to open up a new world of possibilities.**

How to think like a brand consultant

 Customer Problem	 Branding Solution
"No one knows about my business."	Let me tell you about how a vehicle wrap can <i>get attention</i> .
"I just opened a new location."	Wrapping delivery vehicles will build local awareness of your business.
"I have a limited budget."	We can help you maximize your marketing budget.
"We need to change what people think of our business."	We can help you make a splash with your new positioning.
"I need to get customers to my brick & mortar shop front."	Let us make you an eye-catching wall graphic to post on social media.

# Understand Your Target Audience

Your customers, both current and potential, are your target audience. In order to get their attention and engage with them in the digital space, you must first understand them.

*What motivates them?*

*What interests them?*

*What do they want to learn?*

*Where do they go to find it?*

If you can answer these questions, you have a better chance of strategically placing yourself in their line of sight, giving them the content they're hungry for and ultimately sparking their interest in your shop.




Customer Personas

In order to find the answers to those questions, it is often helpful to build a “customer persona”. Customer personas are fictional, generalised representations of your ideal customers. They can help you better relate to your audience as real humans and understand what is important to them.

Customer personas are fictional, generalised representations of your ideal customers.

The types of customers you’re targeting are probably like those on the right. We’ve done some work to help you understand what motivates them. For instance, one customer may want a wrap for vehicle advertising as a way to increase brand awareness, while another customer may want to add graphics to an interior wall to enhance internal environments. Another may simply want a car wrap that makes his/her new ride stand out.

PERSONA	KEY DRIVERS	KEY CHALLENGES
 <b>Multiple Locations Business Owner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Seeks products that drive business growth</li><li>▶ Wants to know how products are utilized by bigger industry peers</li><li>▶ Values the knowledge, trust and integrity of suppliers and sales people</li><li>▶ Prompt customer service</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Time starved: needs to research, evaluate and purchase products quickly and easily</li><li>▶ Wearing multiple operational hats interferes with identifying new opportunities and business growth</li></ul>
 <b>Single Location Business Owner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Needs positive one year ROI</li><li>▶ Wants automation &amp; self-sustaining</li><li>▶ Values personal, prompt service and the knowledge, trust and integrity of suppliers and sales people</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Time starved: product research, evaluation and purchase needs to be quick and easy</li><li>▶ Wearing multiple operational hats lacks enough time to dedicate to research due to higher business priorities</li></ul>
 <b>Car Enthusiast</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Acknowledges quality of the craft</li><li>▶ Values the knowledge, trust &amp; integrity of suppliers and sales people</li><li>▶ Price matters</li><li>▶ Wants personal, prompt customer service</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Time starved: needs product evaluation and purchase to be quick and easy</li><li>▶ Reliant upon your creative vision to come up with a cutting edge design</li></ul>

Borrow from the Best

In addition to the ideas we’ve laid out thus far, a little bit of creative online sleuthing will tell you even more about how to reach the types of customers you’re targeting in your community and get additional clues about their persona interests.

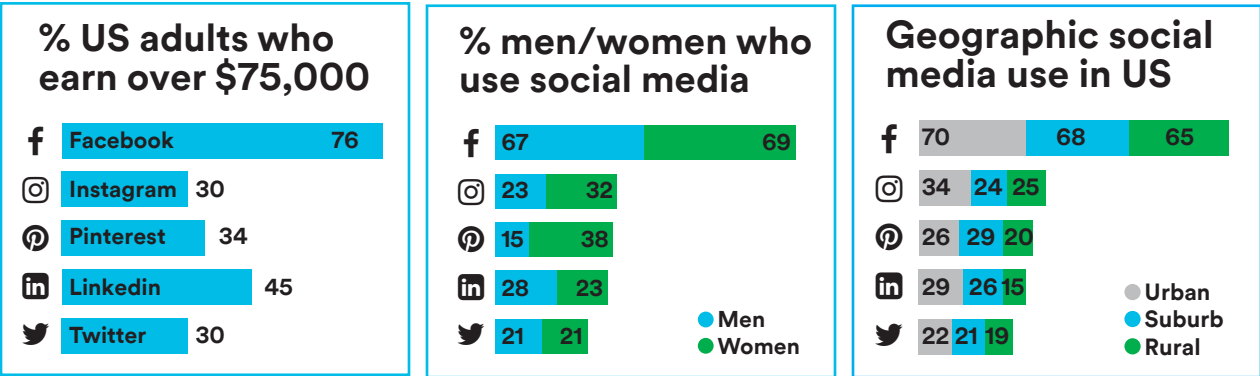
**Social media is a great place to find small businesses and/or multi-location businesses in your community and get a sense for what they’re talking about.** This is called social listening, which is a method of gathering strategic data on what is being said, who is saying it, and who is actively responding to that information. Reading through conversations on social media and digging into profile details can identify keywords, topics of interest, information sources, online influencers, job titles and sentiment about your products and service. What your personas share, like and retweet says a lot about them and their interests.

Don’t forget about your own social media profiles. They can provide valuable information about who engages with your business. Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn all offer various Audience Insights data. Here you’ll find information about gender, occupations, income level and interests that can be used to guide content messaging, as well as advertising campaigns.

You can use social listening tools like [Hootsuite](#) or [HubSpot](#) to mine larger pools

of data across the social web. You can listen to conversations people have online when they’re looking for recommendations and talking about problems they face, questions they’re asking and complaints they may have. These insights will help guide the content you create, and in turn, potentially generate awareness and demand for your services.

Who uses social media?<sup>1</sup>



### Customer Decision Journeys

Another way to get inside the mind of your target audience is by developing a customer decision journey map. A customer decision journey is simply the process a prospect uses to make a purchase decision. For most buyers, the process begins by being inspired and identifying a problem that needs a solution, followed by researching and evaluating available solutions. After the purchase has been made, the journey continues, potentially as a loyal customer or conversely, an unsatisfied one.

On the following page's customer journey, note how the business owner in this example was not initially aware of the need for a vehicle wrap. The business owner's interest was piqued by the information he/she stumbled upon while casually browsing the Internet for industry trends. This led to determining a need for it.

**To deliver the right message, at the right time, in the right channel, use customer insights to map the steps of their decision journey,** the touchpoints where you are likely to engage with customers, your business value story and the tactics you will use to deliver that story.



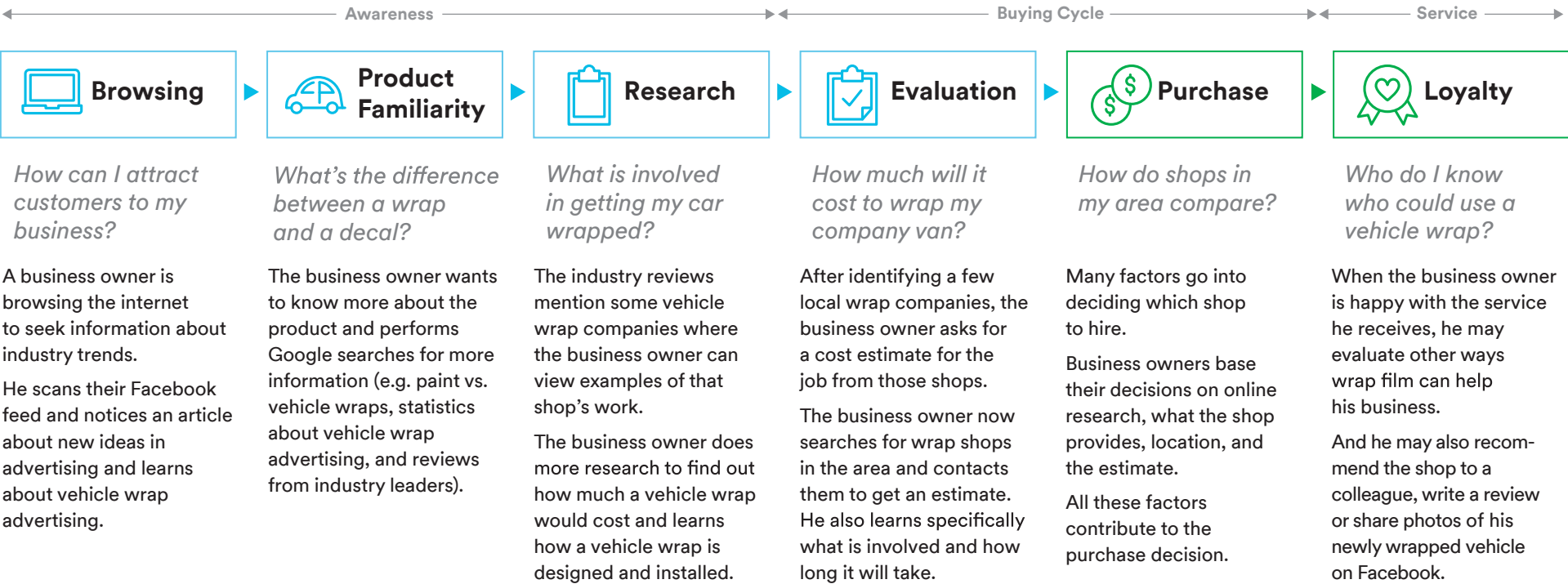
### ***The Competition***

***Just as it is important to understand your current and potential customers, it is also important to understand how your competition is trying to engage with them. You can use many of the same tactics found on page 2. In this case, social media is a beneficial tool.***



Customer Decision Journey — Business Owner

Typical steps taken when purchasing a vehicle wrap



# Brainstorm What Kind of Content to Create

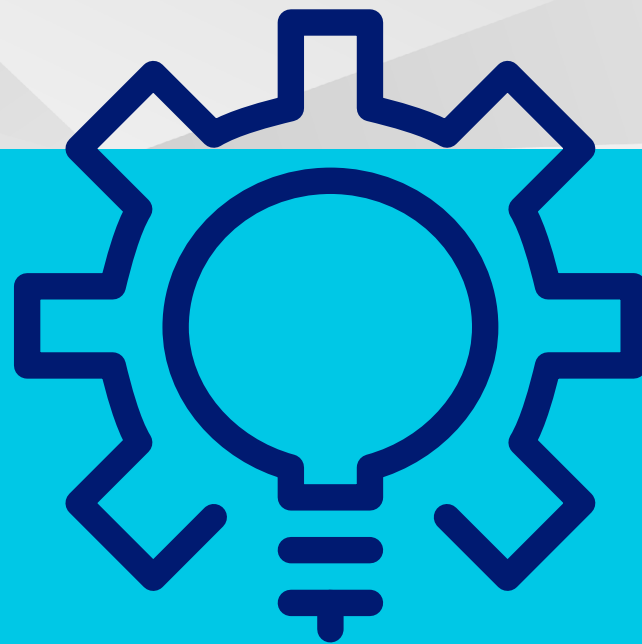
Now that you have a better understanding of your potential customers, it's time to think about what type of messaging—or content—is right for them. You may not realize it, but as you're going about your day-to-day routine, you're gathering valuable information. Ask yourself:

*What are your customers asking for today?*

*How is that different from last month or last year?*

*How do you think the industry will change in the next year?*

Answer those questions and then share that knowledge. That, in a nutshell, is the act of creating content.



Think back to the customer journey outlined on page 8: What content does your customer need? It will be different depending on where he or she is in the journey. Here are some ideas based on each journey stage:

**Awareness**

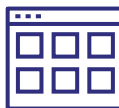
**Testimonials and case studies are great opportunities to explain how you’ve found solutions to problems and questions** presented by other customers, such as: “How can I attract customers to my business?”, “What’s the difference between a wrap and a decal?” or “What are examples of car wraps?” This could come in the form of a blog post or a video – or perhaps even an image gallery.



**Blogs:** These are conversational in nature, and usually a few paragraphs long. Topics can be informational, an opinion or a combination of both. They live on your website and can be shared on social media. A new blog should be posted on a weekly or monthly basis, and should highlight how you’ve helped a client achieve his/her goal. For example, don’t say: “I wrapped this cool car.” Say: “This is how I created a design for my client’s vehicle that really gets him noticed on the road.”

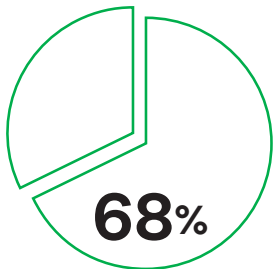


**Case studies:** Case studies tell the story of a successful project and a happy customer. They can be a few paragraphs or a few pages. They live on your website, as well as social media.



**Image gallery:** As you complete projects, add them to your website with tags so customers can easily find what they are looking for. For example: vehicles, walls, interior, exterior, etc. Image galleries should live on your website, as well as social media.

**Making a personal connection<sup>2</sup>**



**of buyers who see a personal value will pay a higher price for a service.**

<sup>2</sup> 106 More Amazing Social Media and Marketing Statistics for 2014 and 2015  
<http://www.business2community.com/social-media/106-amazing-social-media-marketing-statistics-2014-2015-01151764> - CQ7sqBIHYAIRuM0K.97

### Buying Cycle

When customers want to understand costs for a potential wrap, keep in mind that they may be asking for quotes from multiple companies. What content can you provide that will help them select you?



**Customer reviews** could help new customers understand the benefits of working with you versus your competition.



**Your Story:** Telling your story could also help make a personal connection with the potential customer. Help your customers see your passion about your business, as well as your commitment to helping them grow their businesses.



**Thought-leader pieces:** As the name suggests, these articles contain the insights of a trusted figure in the industry. They're usually at least a full page in length. They can be submitted to an industry publication and/or live on your website.

### Loyalty Phase

Make it easy for your new customers to spread the word about their experiences with you. Ask them to write a review. Consider using their projects as case studies or testimonials for future customers to reference.

Leverage the voice of your customers in content that you publish on social media.

### Why It's Worth Your Time

This kind of digital marketing and content strategy has a real effect, and the numbers speak for themselves. A 2016 Content Preferences Survey of B2B Buyers showed:



**73%** of respondents viewed a case study during their research



**96%** want more content from industry thought leaders



**47%** of buyers viewed 3–5 pieces of content before contacting a sales rep

# Maximise your Content

As you begin the process of writing and crafting your content, there are strategic ways to help make sure it reaches as many eyeballs as possible. Using the insights you gathered during the customer journey mapping process, your goal is to create the right type of content that will help your customers make their decisions. Ask yourself:

*What is your target audience searching for?*

*What types of phrases are they typing into Google?*

*What are the specific words they are using?*

Answering these questions will also help you identify commonly used keywords. Strategically sprinkling those keywords throughout your content will improve search engine optimization (SEO).



SEO basically helps Google weed you out from the competition and improves your position on the page when someone is looking for services you provide. Data shows only 10% of searchers go past the first page of Google to find what they're looking for, so ensuring your content lands on page one is critical.

### High-value Keywords

Keywords are only useful if they have high search volume. You want your content and website to be found, so using keywords with search volume is important. Google allows users to see the average monthly search volume and average bid cost for a search term using their Keyword Planner.



See Google's Keyword Planner  
for high-value search terms

The results will help you select the right keywords to incorporate into your content and to help you budget for an AdWords advertising campaign.



Top Keywords for  
car wraps search<sup>3</sup>

car wrap vinyl  
car wrap cost  
car wrap colours  
3M vinyl car wrap  
car wrap advertising  
vinyl car wrap near me  
car wrap material  
vinyl wrap sheets  
car wrap prices  
car wrap near me  
matte black car wrap

# Publish Your Content

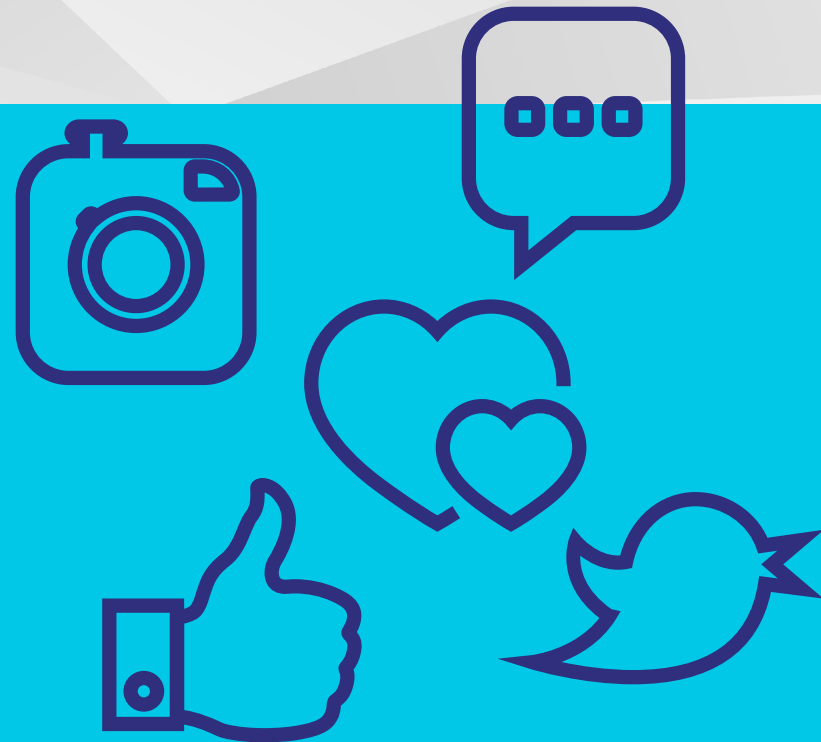
After you've developed and maximized your content, you're ready to publish it. This is the stage at which you determine where and when to push out your message, as well as how much money to put behind your message. Ask yourself:

*How much time do you have to write something?*

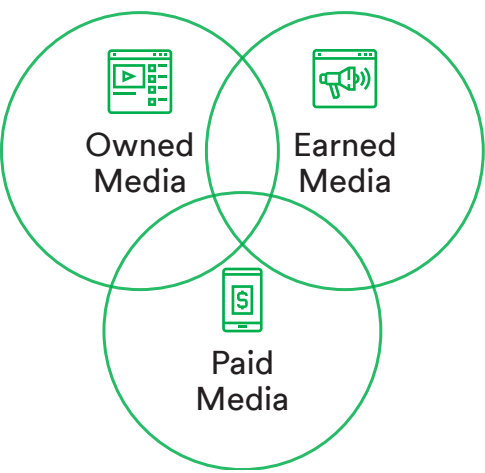
*A few minutes or a few hours? Every day or every month?*

*How much money do you have to spend?  
(Don't worry if the answer is zero!)*

For a marketing plan to be successful, consistency is key. Before you start down a path, it is important to put your plan down on paper and commit to it.



As we showed you in the introduction, there are three basic channels through which to send your message: owned, earned and paid media. There are pros and cons to each method. Consider hiring a marketing professional to help you get started.



Owned media

**Owned media is original content you create**, including the story about your business and all other materials published in the online channels you own and manage, such as your website, social media channels, blogs and emails. Consistency is key with owned media, specifically social media. More on a social media in a minute.

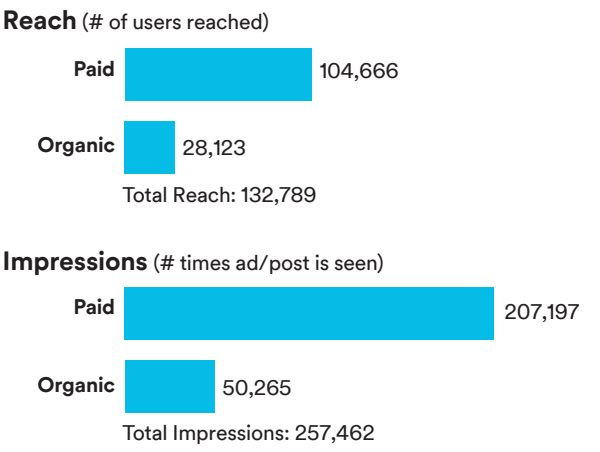
Earned media

Earned media is exposure your content earns when it is shared by readers or influencers. Trade publications and news outlets also fall into this category. **You do not pay for earned content, however, you often must spend time working to secure earned media opportunities.** That can include reaching out to a trade publication to pitch a story about your shop, submitting a thought-leader piece to an editor, connecting with influencers in hopes of getting them to share your content with their followers, or reaching out to local business reporters regarding news about your company.

Paid media

Unlike earned and owned media that’s free, paid media, as its name would indicate, is purchased. **Paid media consists of advertising space that is purchased in publication channels**, such as Facebook ads, print ads and paid email lists. Some business owners question the value of organic vs. paid social media. In reality, paid social advertising is becoming a must-have to

Average Boosted Ad on Facebook\*





ensure your content is seen. Ever-changing algorithms and content saturation is why a paid social strategy should be considered when you're developing your content plan.

Keep in mind that paid social media posts don't have to be an enormous investment. For instance, five pounds could increase the reach of a Facebook post by 1,000 followers.

### Social media

It is an undeniable fact: social media has become an integral part of our society. Nearly all of us spend time looking at our phones, and it's often because we're checking our social media feeds.

**With so many eyes on social media, it is an obvious place in which to insert your business and your content.** As you build your plan, remember that no two social media channels are the same. Each platform serves different purposes for different content and different audiences.

You can find online tutorials on how to set up a social media account or ask a friend who's savvy in social media. Study the various social feeds of your competitors and industry influencers to get a sense of which channels are used the most among your target audience and what kind of content belongs on those channels.

The whole point of social media is to connect with people in your community and have conversations with them. The more you engage, the more those personal

relationships develop and grow. While it is an important tool, keep in mind that with the good can come the bad. Trolls are people who write negative comments on the pages of others. Keep an eye out for them and have a plan for how you'll deal with them in a way that won't inflict more harm.

Of the many channels to consider, here's a look at three of them:



#### Facebook

Adults use this social media channel more than any other. Your Facebook page can serve as a platform to convey news and information about your shop, as well as highlight the people and personalities that make your shop run.



Instagram

Perhaps one of the most user-friendly social media platforms, an Instagram post is simply a picture with a caption. It can be linked to your Facebook page and your Twitter feed, so you can upload the picture to all three channels at one time. **This is a great platform for showing off your latest wraps projects**, and the medium has traffic from customers, graphics installers, shop owners and manufacturing companies alike.



YouTube

YouTube is a social channel designed specifically to host videos. Video has emerged as a very effective tool in any digital marketing strategy. Currently, more than one billion YouTube users watch hundreds of millions of hours every day.



# Measure Performance

After you've posted and published your content, it's important to watch how it performs by monitoring engagement and activity.

*Who liked it?*

*Who shared it?*

*How does it compare to previous posts?*

*How can you make it better for next time?*

Answering these questions will help guide your decisions on what kind of content to create in the future.



## Measure Performance

There are a number of ways to measure performance. Your social media channels offer metrics right there on the page. Google Analytics allows you to watch what your customers are doing on your site, where traffic is coming from and much more to help you understand your customers better. To start, you need to create a free Google account, and then create a free Google Analytics account.

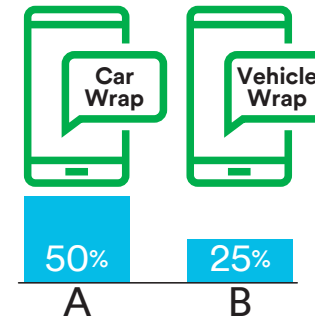


***Google Analytics allows you to watch what your customers are doing on your site, where traffic is coming from and much more.***

Remember, the data from your analytics reports will only tell you what happened, not why it happened. If you're not sure why one piece of content performed better than another, you can conduct research through methods like A/B testing, which involves swapping out creative design or content to see how one performs compared to the other. However, sometimes it is impossible to know exactly why one piece of content was a success and another fell flat. It is often a matter of trial and error, especially as you're just getting started. Try to look for patterns where you can, and as you get to know your audience, you'll gain a better understanding of the content to pursue and the content to avoid.

## A/B Testing

Swap out design or content to see which performs better. For example, you can see if your customers respond more to “car wrap” or “vehicle wrap”.



## Conclusion

At 3M, we know our success depends on your success. Marketing in today's digital world is complex, and we want to help you take on the challenge. Getting started can often feel like an overwhelming task, so start small. As you get the hang of it, you can continue to grow and evolve.

Remember, every little bit helps. Don't be afraid to try new things, and most importantly, try to have fun with it. If you truly enjoy the addition of digital marketing to your business practices, there's a better chance you'll stick with it, potentially bringing more customers through your door.



## 3M Commercial Solutions Digital Marketing Resources

If you found this article to be helpful, we invite you to check out the following articles, all aimed at helping you build your graphics manufacturing business.

- ▶ [How to Grow Your Wrap Business](#)
- ▶ [Managing Your Wraps Business's Bottom Line](#)
- ▶ [A Guide to Digital Printing](#)



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