Marketing Your Business Using AI:
A Practical Guide to Save Small Business Owners' Time

In the rapidly evolving digital landscape, artificial intelligence (AI) has become a powerful tool for content creation. It can enable businesses to streamline their marketing efforts and reach their audiences more effectively. This publication presents strategies and insights on how companies can leverage AI to develop engaging content and messaging to attract customers.

The Growing Role of AI in Content Creation

AI is transforming the way businesses approach marketing and content creation. AI tools like ChatGPT, Jasper, and Copy.ai can assist with drafting blog posts and developing full-scale marketing campaigns. However, the real power of AI lies in its ability to augment human creativity rather than replace it. When used effectively, AI can reduce the time spent on routine tasks, enhance creativity, and improve overall productivity.

The key is understanding that AI is a tool, not a magic solution. Its effectiveness depends on how well you train it, how strategically you use it, and how clearly you define your business goals. AI is only as good as the instructions and context it receives, making user proficiency essential.

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Benefits and Challenges of Using AI for Content Creation

Benefits of AI

- **Efficiency and Speed:** AI can generate high-quality content in a fraction of the time it would take a human. AI tools can deliver quickly if you need a blog post, social media update, or ad copy.
- **Scalability:** AI allows businesses to produce more content without significantly increasing resources. This is particularly useful for social media, where frequent posting is essential for engagement.
- **Consistency:** AI can help maintain a consistent tone and style across different pieces of content, ensuring brand coherence.
- **Idea Generation:** AI can provide fresh perspectives and new ideas, helping to overcome writer's block and inspire creativity.
- **Data-Driven Insights:** Many AI tools integrate with analytics platforms, offering insights into what types of content resonate most with your audience.

Challenges of AI

- **Lack of Creativity:** AI can generate content based on patterns and data but needs humans' genuine creativity and emotional intelligence.
- **Need for Training:** To produce relevant content, AI must be trained with detailed information about your business, audience, and goals.
- **Quality Control:** AI-generated content may require human oversight to ensure it meets quality standards and accurately represents your brand.
- **Ethical Concerns:** Plagiarism, misinformation, and bias can arise if AI is used without proper oversight.

Step-by-Step Guide to Using AI for Business Content

Here is one approach to using AI to create content for your business. This structured seven-step process for leveraging AI to create content for a business mainly focuses on developing a sales funnel for an online course or product. A sales funnel can be defined as a step-by-step process that guides potential customers through different stages, from becoming aware of your product to making a purchase. The typical stages of a sales funnel include awareness, interest, decision, and action, each designed to nurture potential customers as leads and convert them into paying customers.

Step 1: Provide AI Your Business Context

Before generating content, provide AI with detailed information about your business. You can ask ChatGPT for a list of questions it needs before you start developing any content. You can also review 6 Essential Questions to Answer Before Using AI to Market Your Business to better hone your queries. The more detailed your answers, the better the AI can generate relevant and compelling content. Typically, you will receive about 30 questions such as:

- What is your business about?
- Who is your ideal customer?
- What problems do you solve for your customers?
- What are your key products or services?

Step 2: Develop Core Messaging

AI can help create fundamental messaging components that form the backbone of your marketing strategy. These include:

- **Value Proposition:** A clear statement of your product or service's unique value.
- **Customer Story:** A narrative that illustrates how your product solves a specific problem for a customer.
- **One-Liner:** A concise summary of what your business offers.
- **Tagline:** A memorable phrase that captures the essence of your brand.

One approach is to ask ChatGPT if it is familiar with a particular narrative framework. For example, you can ask ChatGPT if it understands the hero's journey narrative framework. From there, you can use this framework to develop your messaging. The idea is to use one approach and stay consistent as you create a value proposition, customer story, one-liner (elevator pitch), and tagline for your business.

Step 3: Create a Lead Generator

A lead generator is a valuable resource (e.g., e-book, checklist, or webinar) you offer in exchange for contact information. AI can brainstorm and draft ideas for effective lead magnets that attract your target audience. A high-quality lead generator sparks curiosity, addresses a small aspect of a problem your customers encounter, and positions your brand as a guide to help them enhance their lives. When potential customers download your lead generator, they receive valuable advice and insights while you grow your email list.

Step 4: Draft a Landing Page

Your landing page is where potential customers learn more and take action. AI can generate persuasive copy that highlights the following:

- The problem your product solves.
- The benefits of your solution.
- A strong call to action (CTA).

You can create your website using services like Leadpages.net, Carrd, or others.

Step 5: Build a Content Plan for Social Media

AI can help create a strategic content plan for social media platforms. This includes:

- **Content Themes:** Topics that align with your brand and audience interests
- **Posting Schedule:** Frequency and timing of posts
- **Content Types:** Text posts, images, videos, polls, etc.

Remember, ChatGPT already knows your messaging from Step 2 and understands the problem you solve for your customers. Ask ChatGPT to create 30 posts that follow a familiar copywriting formula for social posts: problem-agitation-solution-success (PASS).

The PASS copywriting formula is a structured approach used in marketing and sales copy to guide potential customers through a persuasive journey. The acronym PASS stands for:

1. **Problem:** Identify the specific pain point or challenge your target audience is facing. This is where you show empathy and understanding of their situation. The goal is to resonate with the audience by clearly articulating the problem they're experiencing.
2. **Agitation:** Amplify the problem by highlighting the negative consequences of leaving it unresolved. Paint a vivid picture of the frustration, inconvenience, or loss caused by this issue. The agitation step deepens the emotional impact and urgency, motivating the reader to seek a solution.
3. **Solution:** Introduce your product, service, or idea as the remedy to the problem. Explain how your offering addresses the pain points and eliminates the negative outcomes. At this stage, focus on your solution's benefits and unique aspects.
4. **Success:** Demonstrate the positive outcomes your audience will experience after adopting your solution. This can include examples, testimonials, or a vision of a better, pain-free future. The goal is to leave readers feeling hopeful and confident about engaging with your offering.

Example of the PASS Formula in Action

1. **Problem:** Are you struggling to manage your social media presence while running your business?
2. **Agitation:** Spending hours daily on social media can prevent you from focusing on growth, and your engagement needs to grow. You'll be exhausted, and your business will not get the attention it deserves.
3. **Solution:** Our automated social media management tool manages your posting schedule and handles engagement, freeing up your time.
4. **Success:** Imagine seeing your business thrive online while you focus on what you love—all with minimal effort on your part.

This formula is powerful because it taps into emotions and provides a clear path from frustration to relief.

Step 6: Develop a Social Media Strategy

Beyond individual posts, AI can help outline a comprehensive social media strategy that includes the following:

- **Goals:** Increase engagement, drive traffic, or boost brand awareness.
- **Metrics:** Key performance indicators (KPIs) to track success
- **Campaign Ideas:** Themed campaigns, promotions, or challenges.

Step 7: Repurpose Content

Maximize your content's value by repurposing it across different channels. For example:

- Turn a blog post into social media snippets.
- Convert a webinar into a video series.
- Create an infographic based on a research report.

AI tools can help streamline this process by generating variations of your content quickly and efficiently.

Overcoming AI Limitations

While AI is a powerful tool, it has its limitations. Here's how to overcome them:

- **Training:** Continuously provide AI with context about your business and audience. The more you refine your prompts, the better the output.
- **Core Marketing Message:** Ensure a clear marketing message before using AI for social media. Frameworks like the "hero's journey" can help clarify:

  - The problem you solve.
  - How your product is the solution.
  - Why your product is the best choice.

- **Human Oversight:** Always review AI-generated content for accuracy, quality, and brand alignment.

Conclusion

AI is revolutionizing content creation, but its value ultimately depends on how it is used. By following a structured approach and providing clear guidance, businesses can harness AI to create compelling content, streamline marketing efforts, and connect more effectively with their audiences.

Other Marketing Resources to Help You

The Master Your Marketing workshop will teach you how to grow your business with a digital marketing plan. In this live marketing workshop, you'll learn the following:

- How to talk about what you offer so that your ideal customers pay attention.
- Why your website isn't working—and how to fix it.
- How to establish yourself as the go-to expert in your industry.
- The secret to turning prospects into paying customers.

- The self-guided Website Mini-Masterclass teaches you how to make tangible changes to your website to boost your revenue.
- In the book Five Social Media Mistakes Your Business Should Avoid, you'll learn about these mistakes that most businesses make that destroy engagement and sales. You'll learn actionable steps to give your social media a makeover and increase social engagement and sales.
- Sign up for the newsletter Traction to get easy-to-implement, actionable marketing tips delivered to your inbox.
- In the Bricks-to-Clicks Marketing Podcast, you'll learn practical marketing tips to bring in more customers and revenue. In 15 minutes or less, episodes cover the top five social media mistakes, five principles for building a thriving community, the blueprint for social media success, and the one thing to do to grow your business, nonprofit, or personal brand.
- Bricks-to-Clicks also offers One-on-One Coaching to improve your marketing.

Visit brickstoclicks.extension.msstate.edu to access these resources, or email james.barnes@msstate.edu.

Scan the QR Codes for Additional Information and Access
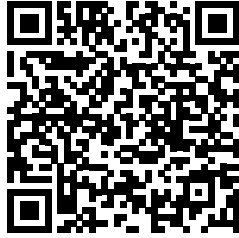
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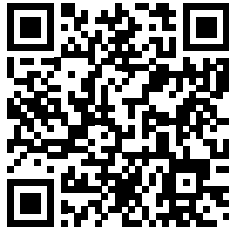
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Marketing Program

5 Social Media
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Publication 4113 (POD-05-25)

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