

Module content and topics

Social Media Marketing

Indicative study duration: 20 hrs

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Learning outcomes and evaluation criteria

Learning outcomes: • Implements marketing strategies, including packaging, social media, and other marketing tactics to promote product or service. • Creates content for social media by using different formats and techniques • Analyses social media data by interpreting key metrics • Adapts content for specific audiences by considering cultural sensitivity • Understands basic ethical considerations in social media marketing.	Evaluation criteria: • Applies qualitative and quantitative research methods by summarizing key insights through written reports and clear presentation of findings. • Analyses competitor social media strategy by identifying strengths and weaknesses through online research • Identifies core characteristics of target audiences by creating a detailed customer persona • Applies social media marketing concepts by developing a simple marketing • Creates engaging content to promote products or services on social media.
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Introduction to social media marketing

- **Strengths of using social media in marketing:** low-cost, targeted reach, direct engagement with customers.
- **Different platforms and their unique specifics:** WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok
- **Considerations for using social media for marketing in Tanzania:** languages, religion, prevalence of mobile phones over laptops/tablets.
- **The growing importance of mobile marketing:** the prevalence of mobile phone usage in Tanzania and the importance of mobile-first content.
- **The importance of authenticity and transparency:** the need for honesty, transparency, and genuine engagement with customers online.

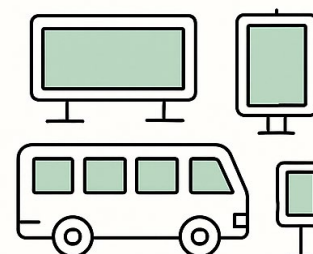
Social media presents a powerful opportunity for young entrepreneurs in Tanzania. It is a superpower that lets the business owner to connect with thousands of potential customers, talk about the products/services and build a brand that people love.

- **Everyone's on it.** Most people use YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram or TikTok. Social media allows businesses to connect with their audience, understand their interests, and introduce new products or services.
- **Free or cheap.** The low barrier to entry on social media, with minimal start-up costs often required, allows entrepreneurs to readily create profiles, publish engaging content, and develop a community of followers.

- **Visual.** The visual nature of social media platforms allows businesses to showcase their products, services, and brand personality through photos, videos and infographics.
- **Direct and personal.** Social media makes easy two-way communication between businesses and their buyers. Direct and quick customer feedback strengthens relationships and can transform casual interest into brand loyalty.

The social media landscape in Tanzania is characterized by a diverse range of platforms, each offering unique features and user demographics.

- WhatsApp, a mobile messaging application, is used for direct communication with customers and quick, informal promotions.
- Facebook has broad reach and diverse user base. It can be used as a platform for community building and targeted advertising.
- Instagram, a visual platform, allows businesses to showcase products and services through engaging images and videos.
- TikTok, a short-form video platform, can be utilized to reach a younger demographic.



Entrepreneurs must consider the cultural context of social media usage in Tanzania:

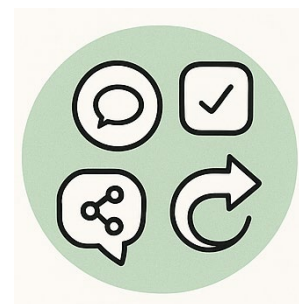
- adapting communication styles to different regional languages
- considering religious sensitivities when creating marketing materials
- recognizing the dominant use of mobile phones over laptops. Content must be created for mobile viewing with limited data availability, is easily viewable and loads quickly on mobile devices.

The long-term effectiveness of social media marketing relies on building customer trust. Transparency and authenticity are paramount for businesses seeking to cultivate strong relationships with their target audience. It includes honest communication, addressing customer concerns, and presenting products or services with genuine enthusiasm and transparency regarding their origin, sourcing, and pricing.

Using social media for marketing research and feedback

- **Role of marketing research:** research is essential for understanding the target market, making informed decisions, and avoiding costly mistakes.
- **Different types of research:** qualitative (interviews, focus groups), quantitative (online surveys with large number of participants, quick polls)
- **Strengths of qualitative methods:** gaining in-depth insights, understanding motivations, and exploring customer stories.
- **Strengths of quantitative methods:** gathering data from larger groups, identifying patterns, and measuring customer preferences using data.
- **Researching competitors' online presence:** observing what your competitors are doing is vital, identifying their strengths, weaknesses, target audience, messaging, and areas where you can differentiate yourself.

- **Social listening:** tracking what people are saying about your brand, products, and competitors online.
- **Identifying emerging trends and needs:** using social media data to spot new opportunities and understand shifting consumer preferences.
- **Using social media for quick feedback:** using polls, questions, and direct messaging to quickly gather feedback on products or ideas.
- **Using data ethically and respectfully:** the importance of using data responsibly while respecting customer privacy.



If you want to start a business, you need to know your customers. Learning about your market helps you make smart choices, create things that people really want, and avoid losing money. Social media is a great tool for doing this because it's easy to use and many people use it daily.

There are two main ways to learn about customers on social media:

- **Qualitative research:** talking to people directly to hear their stories and understand what they think and feel. You can do this through interviews (like one-on-one chats) or focus groups (group discussions). Listening carefully to what people say can give you lots of valuable information about what they like or dislike.
- **Quantitative research:** This means collecting information from many people to look for patterns and measure what people like. You can use online surveys or quick polls to ask specific questions and see what most people choose or prefer.

Social media makes it easy to see what your competitors are doing online. By checking out their social media pages, you can see what's working well for them, what their customers like, and what they could be doing better. This can give ideas about how to make your business stand out.

Social media is also great for listening to what people are saying about your business. You can track what people are saying about your products, or services, see what they really like and the areas you could improve. You can even see trends and spot new needs in the market. For example, by using hashtags and looking at what people are talking about, you might discover that there's a high demand for locally sourced products in your area.

It's very important to use all this information in a responsible way. You should always respect your customers' privacy and use the information you gather to help them, not take advantage of them. Always make sure that you are transparent and honest in all your marketing.

Planning: social media marketing strategy

- **Importance of planning:** well-defined strategy helps to achieve social media marketing goals, maximize resources and avoid wasted efforts.
- **What is a strategy?** A long-term plan that outlines how marketing in social media will achieve its objectives. It's not just posting randomly but having a clear path to follow.
- **Analysing the current situation:** SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is a tool for assessing a business's current position and identifying areas for improvement using social media marketing.

- **Selecting social media platforms:** chosen platforms should align with the target audience's preferences, content type, and campaign objectives.
- **Allocating resources and budget:** proper planning includes allocating resources such as time, tools, and budget. Focus also on low-budget social media advertising strategies.
- **Building a brand voice and tone:** creating a consistent brand voice and tone that resonates with the target audience.
- **Creating a content calendar:** plan of social media posts and campaigns, ensuring consistent and relevant messaging.
- **Contingency planning:** preparing for potential issues by having a plan for negative comments or unexpected events that might affect social media presence.

Effective social media marketing requires a well-defined plan, not just random posting. A marketing strategy serves as a business's roadmap, guiding how to use social media to achieve specific goals and maximize limited resources. It's about having a long-term vision, not just chasing short-term trends.

A good strategy should clearly outline the following dimensions:

- **Target group:** Who are the main customers? Where do they live? What are their interests? What are their needs?
- **Aims:** What do you want to achieve with social media? Is it to increase brand awareness, boost sales, or gather customer feedback?
- **Core messages:** What is the central message you want to send to your customers through social media posts? How does it connect with the customers values?

To make a strategy, an entrepreneur should start with a SWOT analysis of the business, considering its strengths (e.g., high-quality products, strong community connections), weaknesses (e.g., limited online experience, lack of resources), opportunities (e.g., growing mobile usage, new local events), and threats (e.g., established competitors, unreliable internet).

Choosing the right social media platforms requires careful planning. For example, if an entrepreneur is targeting young adults in Moshi, then TikTok and Instagram might be better choices than WhatsApp, which is more popular among other demographics.

If the goal is to promote local events, Facebook and WhatsApp are great choices. The selected platforms should align with where the customers are and what type of content is most engaging on these platforms.

Proper planning also requires attention to allocating resources such as time, staff, tools, and most importantly budget. In Tanzania, where resources are often limited, creative low-budget strategies should be used. Some options could be using smartphones for creating photos or videos and using online resources to find free marketing materials and tutorials.



A well-defined brand voice is also needed. Social media posts should consistently reflect the brand's values and personality, just like how a tailor might use social media to showcase their craftsmanship or a farmer to emphasize the freshness of their products.

To keep messaging consistent and relevant, a content calendar should be used. It is a plan that consists of scheduled posts, which includes ideas, keywords, links, visuals and target dates for the content. For example, a small business could create a content calendar featuring posts about new arrivals every Monday and tips about their products on Fridays.

A contingency plan should be in place on how to manage negative comments, technical difficulties or unexpected events that might affect a business's social media presence. For example, if a customer complains publicly about a bad experience, a clear plan is needed for how to respond politely and professionally.

Creating social media content

- **What types of content work best on different platforms?** Taking the characteristics of social media platform into account in order to create engaging posts, videos, and stories.
- **Attracting followers:** using hashtags, visuals, posting consistently, running contests or promotions.
- **Optimizing content for mobile viewing:** creating content that is easily viewable and accessible on smartphones, considering limited data and bandwidth.
- **Storytelling and authenticity:** sharing the business's story, values, and the people behind it to build a more personal connection with followers.
- **User-generated content (UGC):** encouraging customers to share photos, videos, and testimonials to build social proof and create a sense of community.
- **Calls to Action (CTAs):** including clear and concise CTAs in social media posts to guide user behaviour (e.g., "Shop now," "Visit our website," "Share with your friends").
- **Adapting content for different audiences:** tailoring content to resonate with specific customer segments (e.g., creating posts that address the needs and interests of different demographics).
- **Basic social media analytics and tracking key metrics:** engagement, reach, and website traffic.

Different social media platforms are like different marketplaces, each with its own unique vibe.

To create content that truly connects with people, it's essential to understand what kind of content works best on each platform. For example, a platform like WhatsApp might be great for quick, personal messages and updates, while Instagram is a better place for sharing eye-catching photos and short videos. Understanding these differences will guide entrepreneurs in creating more engaging posts, videos, and stories.

Attracting a strong following involves strategic content and consistent presence. Employing relevant and popular hashtags can increase the visibility of your content. Eye-catching visuals, including authentic photos and videos, make posts more appealing.

Because most people in Tanzania use their mobile phones to access social media, it's vital to create content that is optimized for mobile viewing. This means using clear text and visuals, keeping videos short and ensuring content loads quickly even with limited data or poor internet connection.



Beyond just promoting products or services, social media can be used to share your business' story, values, and the people behind it. Authenticity creates a stronger bond with followers, helping your business build a more personal and loyal community.

Linking and reposting user-generated content (UGC) allows customers to share their experiences and testimonials. This builds trust and social proof, showing that others are already enjoying your products or services.

A well-crafted social media post has a clear call to action, guiding users to take the next step. This might include inviting them to "Shop now," "Visit our website," or "Share with your friends." Clear calls to action can turn a casual browser into a new customer.

Businesses should consider the preferences and characteristics of their target audience. This can include adapting their language, tone, visual styles, and content formats to ensure it resonates with specific demographic groups.

To make sure that the efforts are paying off, entrepreneur needs to understand the basics of social media analytics, keeping an eye on key metrics:

- engagement (likes, comments, shares, clicks)
- reach (how many people see your posts)
- traffic (how many people visit the website via links).

While metrics like reach and engagement (likes, comments, shares) are helpful for understanding how many people see the content and how they interact with it, they are ultimately "vanity metrics" if they don't contribute to the main goal: selling products or services and earning money.

Social media efforts need to drive customers to the business, increase awareness and bring customers into the physical shop or to the market stand. Entrepreneurs should always focus on strategies and content that lead to business results, not just numbers that look impressive on a screen.

Customer relations and customer service

- **Using social media to service customers:** answering questions, providing support, and resolving issues.
- **Building a positive online presence:** customer service is not just about fixing problems but also about cultivating a positive online atmosphere.
- **Handling negative feedback and online reviews:** emphasize professionalism and transparency.

- **Social media for customer feedback:** proactive use of social media not only to react to customer issues, but also to actively look for customer input and identify their changing needs and preferences through polls, questionnaires, and feedback request in posts.
- **Turning customers into brand ambassadors:** positive contacts and communication can lead to organic marketing through customers who become loyal promoters of the brand.
- **Private and public conversations:** some situations are better handled privately and calls for sensitivity in deciding when to take a conversation offline or move to a private channel. Young people might feel more comfortable dealing with a brand in more informal way.

Businesses can use social media to answer customer questions, offer support, and quickly resolve issues.

For example, a customer might ask about the available sizes of a product through a direct message, and a quick response can make the customer feel heard and valued. This could also be used as an opportunity for an entrepreneur to proactively promote other products and services related to the initial request.



The way a business interacts with customers on social media sends a powerful message about its values and commitment to quality. This means consistently creating helpful and engaging content, responding promptly to queries, and maintaining a friendly and approachable tone. Sharing behind-the-scenes glimpses of the work or thanking customers publicly for their support can help build positive brand perception.

Negative feedback and online reviews, when not addressed properly, can damage a business's reputation. Even though it may be challenging, always approach such feedback with honesty and seek to understand the root of the problem. A business should avoid arguing with customers and instead should try to find a solution that pleases both the business and the customer. Business could offer a refund or replacement if a customer has received a damaged product.

Businesses can use social media to ask questions, run polls, or do short surveys to understand what their customers want. This allows businesses to make improvements to their services and develop new products. For example, a clothing designer might ask for customer input on new designs using a simple poll on Instagram stories.

When a business takes care of its customers properly on social media, these customers become brand ambassadors, sharing their experiences with friends and families, spreading the word about your business, and providing organic marketing. Word-of-mouth is a powerful marketing tool both in Tanzania and other countries.

Not every conversation needs to be public. Some situations are better addressed through private messages or phone calls. If a customer shares personal information or a complex issue requires more in-depth discussion, then the interaction should be moved to a private channel to offer a more discreet and personalized service.

Ethics and code of conduct

- **Concept of business ethics:** business ethics is a set of moral principles that guide behaviour and decision-making in business operations.
- **Ethical marketing on social media:** avoiding deceptive advertising, respecting user privacy, using accurate and transparent information.
- **Respect for copyright and intellectual property:** respecting the rights of creators by using original content or obtaining necessary permissions for using others' content.
- **Transparency and honesty:** avoiding manipulative advertising tactics, fake reviews, or false claims about product benefits.
- **Handling customer data with responsibility:** businesses must collect and use customer data ethically and transparently, protecting their privacy and using it only for the intended purposes.
- **Cultural and religious sensitivities:** avoiding content that may offend religious or cultural values, respecting diversity and creating an inclusive online environment.
- **Misinformation and counterfeits:** fighting misinformation and harmful content, also to protect the business from fake products.
- **Promoting responsible and sustainable practices:** it's good to use social media to showcase the ethical and sustainable business practices.

Business ethics are the moral rules that guide how a business should behave and make decisions, both online and offline. It's about choosing what is right, fair, and responsible in all aspects of business operations.

On social media, this means conducting all marketing activities with integrity and responsibility. Business should always be upfront with customers, avoid misleading advertisements, and ensure they are open and honest.



When creating social media content, businesses must respect copyright and intellectual property. This means using original content or getting permission before using someone else's work such as photos, videos, or music. It's important to make sure the brand has permission before posting it online, avoiding the use of unauthorized content as it could lead to legal problems.

Entrepreneur should avoid manipulative tactics like using fake reviews or making false claims about products. Exaggerating the benefits of a product or hiding its limitations can damage customer trust and lead to a negative reputation. Returning customer is the best customer.

When collecting customer data, businesses must do so with responsibility. Always respect users' privacy by clearly explaining what type of information you are collecting, how you'll be using it, and by getting their consent before doing so. This also means using that information solely for the purpose it was collected and not sharing it with other parties or misusing it.

Social media also connects people with many different backgrounds.00, Businesses should be careful when creating content. This involves being sensitive to cultural or religious values. Content should always be respectful, inclusive, and mindful of diversity within the community. It

is important to consider what language to use, what are acceptable images, what should be avoided in a visual.

By promoting ethical and sustainable practices on social media, businesses can attract customers who value transparency and responsibility. A business that sources its materials locally or uses eco-friendly packaging can use social media to showcase those aspects, attracting customers who are passionate about sustainability and social responsibility.

Suggested activities and exercises

Customer interview questionnaire

- Design open-ended questions to understand customer needs, preferences, and pain points.
- Focus on questions that relate to a specific product or service.
- Include questions about their current buying habits and how social media influences their purchasing decisions.
- Practice conducting mock interviews with fellow students.
- Summarize findings and identify potential areas for improvement for a sample business.



Implementation

- Duration: 1-2 sessions
- Individual or pair work
- Deliverables: written questionnaire, summary of findings
- Use peer evaluation by other students to give feedback

Report on a competitor's online presence

- Select a local competitor and identify their social media channels.
- Analyze the competitor's content strategy, posting frequency, engagement rates, and target audience.
- Identify the competitor's strengths and weaknesses.
- Propose strategies on how a business can differentiate itself and gain a competitive edge.

Implementation:

- Duration: 2-3 sessions
- Group work
- Deliverables: Written report, oral presentation.
- Use peer evaluation by other students to give feedback

Online survey

- Design a short online survey using a free tool like Google Forms.

- Include a mix of multiple-choice and open-ended questions to collect both quantitative and qualitative data.
- Focus the survey questions on understanding potential customers and their preferences.
- Practice gathering survey responses from friends or family members.
- Summarize survey results using charts and graphs.

Implementation:

- Duration: 1-2 sessions
- Individual work
- Deliverables: online survey, short presentation of findings
- Use peer evaluation by other students to give feedback

Customer persona

- Select a product or service and imagine a typical customer.
- Give the persona a name, background, demographics, interests, online behavior, and purchase motivations.
- Use findings from online survey and customer interviews
- Create a visual representation of the customer persona using drawings or images.
- Explain how this persona would influence the content or marketing of this business.



Implementation:

- Duration: 1-2 sessions
- Individual or pair work
- Deliverables: written customer persona profile with visual element.
- Use peer evaluation by other students to give feedback

Social media marketing strategy

- Select a hypothetical or real business from their local community.
- Define clear, measurable marketing goals and metrics (e.g., increasing website traffic, generating leads).
- Identify target audience characteristics and their preferred social media platforms.
- Identify main messages and themes
- Identify basic tone of voice (e.g., friendly, authoritative, casual)

Implementation:

- Duration: 2-3 sessions
- Group work
- Deliverables: written social media marketing plan.
- Use peer evaluation by other students to give feedback

Social media content creation

- Choose a different social media platform (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, TikTok).
- Create 2-3 different types of content: a post with text, an image or a short video, a product description.
- Optimize content for mobile viewing and limited internet bandwidth.

- Use clear language, relevant hashtags, and compelling visuals.

Implementation

- Duration: 1-2 sessions
- Individual or group work
- Deliverables: 2-3 social media posts.
- Use peer evaluation by other students to give feedback

Assessment criteria/methods

- Team participation and contribution
- Quality of deliverables
- Quality of team presentation
- Quality of peer evaluations
- Presentation skills
- Use of IT tools

Further reading

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