



# Comprehensive Social Media Advertising Guide

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## Introduction

Social media advertising represents a powerful way for businesses of all sizes to reach targeted audiences across various platforms. Each platform offers unique ad formats, specifications, and best practices designed to maximise engagement within their specific environment.

This comprehensive training manual is specifically designed for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) with limited social media advertising knowledge or experience. Whether you're just getting started with your first campaign or looking to improve your existing social media advertising efforts, this guide will walk you through everything you need to know to succeed.

While large corporations may have dedicated teams and substantial budgets for social media advertising, this guide focuses on practical, cost-effective strategies that work for businesses with limited resources. We've designed this manual to be both comprehensive and accessible, with step-by-step instructions, visual examples, and actionable insights you can implement immediately.

## Social Media Advertising Fundamentals

Before diving into platform-specific details, it's essential to understand the basic concepts and terminology of social media advertising.

### What is Social Media Advertising?

Social media advertising refers to the practice of using paid advertisements on social media platforms to reach specific audiences. Unlike organic social media content, which reaches your existing followers, paid social media advertising allows you to target precisely defined audiences regardless of whether they follow your business.

### Why Social Media Advertising Works for SMEs

- **Cost-effective:** Start with budgets as low as \$5-10 per day
- **Precise targeting:** Reach only the most relevant potential customers
- **Measurable results:** Track performance in real-time and adjust accordingly
- **Flexible formats:** Choose from various ad types based on your goals
- **Scalable:** Easily increase budgets as you see positive results



## The Social Media Advertising Funnel

Understanding the marketing funnel is crucial for creating effective social media advertising campaigns:

1. **Awareness:** Introducing your brand to potential customers
  - *Ad objective examples:* Brand awareness, reach
  - *Ad formats:* Video ads, image ads
2. **Consideration:** Encouraging prospects to learn more about your offerings
  - *Ad objective examples:* Traffic, engagement, video views, app installs, lead generation
  - *Ad formats:* Carousel ads, collection ads, lead forms
3. **Conversion:** Prompting prospects to take specific actions
  - *Ad objective examples:* Conversions, catalog sales, store visits
  - *Ad formats:* Dynamic product ads, offer ads
4. **Retention:** Keeping existing customers engaged and encouraging repeat business
  - *Ad objective examples:* Engagement, conversions
  - *Ad formats:* Custom audience targeting with special offers

## Key Social Media Advertising Terminology

- **Impressions:** The number of times your ad is displayed
- **Reach:** The number of unique users who see your ad
- **Engagement:** Interactions with your ad (likes, comments, shares, clicks)
- **Click-Through Rate (CTR):** Percentage of people who click your ad after seeing it
- **Conversion:** When a user completes a desired action (purchase, sign-up, etc.)
- **Cost Per Click (CPC):** Average cost you pay for each click on your ad
- **Cost Per Mille (CPM):** Cost per 1,000 impressions
- **Return on Ad Spend (ROAS):** Revenue generated for every dollar spent on advertising
- **Attribution:** How credit for conversions is assigned to different touchpoints
- **A/B Testing:** Testing different ad variations to see which performs better



## Developing Your Social Media Advertising Strategy

Before creating your first ad, it's important to develop a clear strategy that aligns with your business objectives.

### Step 1: Define Your Goals

Common goals for SMEs include:

- Increasing brand awareness
- Driving website traffic
- Generating leads
- Boosting sales
- Promoting a new product or service
- Growing your social media following
- Driving foot traffic to physical locations

For each goal, establish specific, measurable targets (e.g., "Increase website traffic by 20% over the next three months").

### Step 2: Know Your Audience

Define your target audience by considering:

- Demographics (age, gender, location, income, education)
- Interests and behaviors
- Pain points and challenges
- Motivations and goals
- Shopping habits and preferences

Create 2-3 customer personas to guide your targeting strategy. For example:

#### Persona: Small Business Owner Sarah

- *Demographics*: 35-50 years old, urban/suburban, college-educated
- *Behaviours*: Time-constrained, value-conscious, researches purchases online
- *Pain points*: Limited budget, wears multiple hats in the business, needs solutions that save time
- *Platform usage*: Primarily uses Facebook and LinkedIn, checks emails in the evening



### **Step 3: Choose the Right Platforms**

Not all social media platforms are right for every business. Consider:

- Where your target audience spends their time
- The nature of your products or services
- Your content creation capabilities
- Available time and resources

#### **Quick Platform Guide for SMEs:**

- **Facebook & Instagram:** Good for most businesses; excellent targeting options
- **LinkedIn:** Best for B2B products/services and professional audiences
- **Twitter/X:** Good for timely content, customer service, and industry news
- **TikTok:** Ideal for reaching younger audiences with creative, entertaining content
- **Pinterest:** Great for visually appealing products and inspiration-driven purchases
- **YouTube:** Effective for tutorials, demonstrations, and building brand credibility
- **Snapchat:** Targets younger demographics; good for location-based businesses
- **Reddit:** Works for highly targeted niche communities and specialised products

### **Step 4: Determine Your Budget**

As an SME, budget allocation is critical. Consider:

- Starting with test budgets (\$5-10 per day) to determine what works
- Focusing on 1-2 platforms initially rather than spreading your budget too thin
- Allocating 70% to proven tactics and 30% to testing new approaches
- Seasonal adjustments based on your business cycle

### **Step 5: Create a Content Plan**

Develop a content calendar that includes:

- Types of ads you'll create for each platform
- Messaging themes and value propositions
- Seasonal promotions and special offers
- Content refresh schedule to prevent ad fatigue

### **Step 6: Set Up Measurement Framework**

Decide how you'll measure success:



- Platform-specific metrics relevant to your goals
- Website analytics to track user behavior
- Conversion tracking for leads and sales
- Regular reporting schedule to assess performance

## **Step 7: Develop an Iteration Strategy**

Plan for continuous improvement:

- A/B testing schedule for creative elements and targeting
- Budget adjustment criteria based on performance
- Escalation process for successful campaigns
- Contingency plans for underperforming campaigns

## **Facebook & Instagram**

### **Ad Types**

#### **Facebook**

- 1. Image Ads**
  - Single image ads that appear in News Feed, right column, Marketplace
  - Good for brand awareness and website clicks
- 2. Video Ads**
  - Video content in News Feed, Stories, In-Stream, and Reels
  - Effective for product demonstrations and storytelling
- 3. Carousel Ads**
  - Up to 10 images or videos in a single ad unit
  - Ideal for showcasing multiple products or features
- 4. Collection Ads**
  - Feature a primary video or image with four smaller product images below
  - Create immersive shopping experiences
- 5. Instant Experience (formerly Canvas)**
  - Full-screen mobile experiences that open after ad click
  - Create immersive brand stories and product showcases
- 6. Lead Ads**
  - Pre-filled forms to collect user information
  - Streamlined lead generation
- 7. Dynamic Ads**



- Automatically show products from your catalog based on user interest
  - Retargeting based on product viewing behavior
8. **Messenger Ads**
- Ads that appear in the Messenger home screen or conversations
  - Direct connection with potential customers

## Instagram

1. **Feed Ads**
  - Image or video ads that appear in users' feeds
  - Native-looking content with call-to-action buttons
2. **Stories Ads**
  - Full-screen vertical format that appears between users' stories
  - Immersive, ephemeral content
3. **Explore Ads**
  - Appear in the Explore section
  - Reach users in discovery mode
4. **Reels Ads**
  - Full-screen vertical videos up to 30 seconds
  - Appear between user-created Reels
5. **Shopping Ads**
  - Product tags that lead directly to product pages
  - Seamless shopping experience

## Ad Specifications

### Facebook Image Ads

- **Feed Image Specs:**
  - Recommended resolution: 1080 × 1080 pixels
  - Aspect ratio: 1:1 (square)
  - File types: JPG or PNG
  - File size limit: 30MB
  - Text limit: 125 characters
  - Headline: 40 characters
  - Description: 30 characters
- **Right Column Image Specs:**
  - Recommended resolution: 1200 × 628 pixels
  - Aspect ratio: 1.91:1
  - Text limit: 125 characters



- Headline: 40 characters
- Description: 30 characters

### **Facebook Video Ads**

- **Feed Video Specs:**
  - Recommended resolution: 1080 × 1080 pixels
  - Aspect ratio: 16:9 to 1:1
  - File types: MP4, MOV
  - File size limit: 4GB
  - Duration: 1 second to 241 minutes
  - Text limit: 125 characters
  - Headline: 40 characters
  - Description: 30 characters
- **Stories/Reels Video Specs:**
  - Recommended resolution: 1080 × 1920 pixels
  - Aspect ratio: 9:16
  - Duration: Up to 60 seconds (Stories), up to 30 seconds (Reels)
  - Text limit: 125 characters

### **Instagram Image Ads**

- **Feed Image Specs:**
  - Recommended resolution: 1080 × 1080 pixels
  - Aspect ratio: 1:1 (square), 4:5 (portrait), or 1.91:1 (landscape)
  - File types: JPG or PNG
  - File size limit: 30MB
  - Caption: 2,200 characters (truncates at ~125)
- **Stories Image Specs:**
  - Recommended resolution: 1080 × 1920 pixels
  - Aspect ratio: 9:16
  - File types: JPG or PNG
  - Caption: 2,200 characters

### **Instagram Video Ads**

- **Feed Video Specs:**
  - Recommended resolution: 1080 × 1080 pixels
  - Aspect ratio: 1:1 (square), 4:5 (portrait), or 16:9 (landscape)
  - File types: MP4, MOV
  - File size limit: 4GB



- Duration: 1 second to 60 minutes
- Caption: 2,200 characters
- **Stories/Reels Video Specs:**
  - Recommended resolution: 1080 × 1920 pixels
  - Aspect ratio: 9:16
  - File types: MP4, MOV
  - Duration: Up to 15 seconds (Stories), up to 30 seconds (Reels)

## Targeting Options

- Demographics (age, gender, location, language)
- Interests and behaviors
- Custom audiences (website visitors, customer lists, app users)
- Lookalike audiences
- Connections (people who like your page, app, or events)
- Detailed targeting (combining demographics, interests, and behaviors)

## Best Practices

- **Facebook:**
  - Keep text on ad images minimal (Meta no longer enforces the 20% text rule, but less text typically performs better)
  - Use high-quality visuals that stand out in the feed
  - Include clear call-to-action buttons
  - Test different ad formats to see what resonates with your audience
  - Leverage video content when possible (higher engagement rates)
  - Optimise for mobile viewing
  - Use Facebook Pixel for conversion tracking and retargeting
- **Instagram:**
  - Focus on high-quality, visually appealing content
  - Maintain brand consistency across posts
  - Use Instagram-specific features like Stories stickers and interactive elements
  - Incorporate authentic user-generated content when possible
  - Keep captions engaging but concise
  - Use relevant hashtags strategically
  - Partner with influencers for expanded reach



## LinkedIn

### Ad Types

1. **Sponsored Content**
  - Native ads that appear in the LinkedIn feed
  - Available as single image, carousel, or video ads
  - Best for thought leadership and lead generation
2. **Message Ads**
  - Direct messages to LinkedIn inboxes
  - Personalised one-to-one communication
3. **Dynamic Ads**
  - Personalised ads based on member profiles
  - Includes follower ads, spotlight ads, and job ads
4. **Text Ads**
  - Simple PPC ads that appear in the right rail or top banner
  - Budget-friendly option with straightforward setup
5. **Conversation Ads**
  - Interactive, choose-your-own-path experiences
  - Multiple CTAs for different conversion paths
6. **Event Ads**
  - Promote virtual, hybrid, or in-person events
  - Drive registration directly from the platform
7. **Document Ads**
  - Showcase PDFs directly in the feed
  - Engage audiences with detailed content

### Ad Specifications

#### Sponsored Content

- **Single Image Ads:**
  - Image size: 1200 × 627 pixels
  - Aspect ratio: 1.91:1
  - File type: JPG or PNG
  - File size: Up to 5MB
  - Headline: 150 characters
  - Description text: 150 characters
  - Intro text: 150 characters



- **Carousel Ads:**
  - Image size: 1080 × 1080 pixels
  - Aspect ratio: 1:1
  - File type: JPG or PNG
  - File size: Up to 5MB per image
  - Number of cards: 2-10
  - Headline: 45 characters
  - Description text: 30 characters
  - Intro text: 150 characters
- **Video Ads:**
  - Resolution: 1920 × 1080 pixels (16:9)
  - File types: MP4
  - File size: 200MB max
  - Duration: 3 seconds to 30 minutes
  - Headline: 150 characters
  - Description text: 150 characters
  - Intro text: 150 characters

### **Message Ads**

- Message text: 1,500 characters
- Custom banner image: 300 × 250 pixels
- Company name: 100 characters
- Subject line: 60 characters
- CTA button text: 20 characters

### **Text Ads**

- Headline: 25 characters
- Description: 75 characters
- Image: 100 × 100 pixels

### **Targeting Options**

- Company (size, industry, name)
- Demographics (age, gender)
- Education (degrees, fields of study)
- Job experience (job title, seniority, skills)
- Interests and traits
- Geographic location



## Best Practices

- Focus on professional context and business goals
- Use clear, benefit-driven headlines
- Target by job function, seniority, and industry for precise B2B targeting
- Test different versions of ad copy to optimise performance
- Include stats and data points to boost credibility
- Use LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms for frictionless lead capture
- Schedule posts during business hours for maximum engagement
- Keep content professional but not overly formal
- Leverage video for higher engagement rates
- Address pain points specific to professional audiences

## Twitter/X

### Ad Types

1. **Promoted Tweets**
  - Standard tweets pushed to a wider audience
  - Appear in timeline, search results, and profile pages
2. **Promoted Accounts**
  - Suggest accounts to follow
  - Appear in "Who to follow" section and search results
3. **Promoted Trends**
  - Sponsored hashtags at the top of trending topics
  - High visibility for brand campaigns
4. **Carousel Ads**
  - Multiple swipeable images or videos
  - Showcase multiple products or tell a sequential story
5. **Video Ads**
  - Autoplay videos in-feed
  - Include 6-second, 15-second, and longer formats
6. **Text Ads**
  - Text-only promoted tweets
  - Quick to create and deploy
7. **Amplify Sponsorships**
  - Pre-roll ads before publisher videos
  - Associate brand with premium content



## **Ad Specifications**

### **Image Ads**

- Recommended size: 1200 × 675 pixels
- Aspect ratio: 16:9
- File types: JPG, PNG, or GIF
- File size: Up to 5MB for images
- Character limit: 280 characters
- Website card headline: 70 characters

### **Video Ads**

- Aspect ratios: 16:9 or 1:1
- File types: MP4 or MOV
- File size: Up to 1GB
- Duration: Up to 2 minutes 20 seconds for most ads
- Character limit: 280 characters

### **Carousel Ads**

- Number of cards: 2-6
- Image size: 800 × 800 pixels for 1:1 aspect ratio
- File types: JPG or PNG
- File size: Up to 5MB per image
- Headline: 70 characters

## **Targeting Options**

- Keywords and conversations
- Interests and followers
- Demographics (age, gender, language, location)
- Behaviours
- Event targeting
- Tailored audiences (similar to retargeting)
- Lookalike audiences

## **Best Practices**

- Keep content concise and direct
- Use strong visuals that work with or without sound



- Include relevant hashtags but limit to 1-2 per post
- Respond promptly to engagement
- Test different ad formats and copy variations
- Leverage trending topics when relevant to your brand
- Use Twitter cards to drive website traffic
- Include clear calls-to-action
- Schedule posts during peak engagement times
- Maintain a conversational tone
- Monitor and participate in relevant conversations

## TikTok

### Ad Types

1. **In-Feed Ads**
  - Native ads that appear in the "For You" feed
  - Full-screen videos with sound on
2. **TopView Ads**
  - Premium placement that appears when users first open the app
  - 60-second full-screen videos with sound on
3. **Branded Hashtag Challenges**
  - Sponsored hashtags with custom landing pages
  - Encourage user-generated content
4. **Branded Effects**
  - Custom AR filters, stickers, and special effects
  - Interactive brand experiences
5. **Spark Ads**
  - Boost organic content from your own account or partner accounts
  - Authentic-feeling promotional content

### Ad Specifications

#### In-Feed Ads

- Video resolution: 720 × 1280 pixels
- Aspect ratio: 9:16 (vertical)
- File types: MP4, MOV, MPEG, 3GP, or AVI
- File size: Up to 500MB
- Duration: 5-60 seconds (9-15 seconds recommended)



- Sound: Required
- Text: 100 characters for ad description
- CTA options: Multiple pre-set options available

### **TopView Ads**

- Video resolution: 720 × 1280 pixels
- Aspect ratio: 9:16 (vertical)
- File types: MP4, MOV
- File size: Up to 500MB
- Duration: Up to 60 seconds
- Sound: Required

### **Branded Hashtag Challenges**

- Cover image: 1600 × 900 pixels
- Video requirements same as In-Feed ads
- Challenge duration: Typically 6 days

### **Targeting Options**

- Demographics (age, gender, location)
- Interests
- Behaviours
- Device and network
- Custom and lookalike audiences

### **Best Practices**

- Create native-looking content that blends with organic TikTok content
- Focus on entertainment value rather than direct selling
- Keep videos concise with the key message in the first few seconds
- Use trending sounds, effects, and transitions
- Partner with TikTok creators for more authentic content
- Participate in or create challenges to boost engagement
- Optimise for sound-on viewing experience
- Use text overlays for additional context
- Include a clear call-to-action
- Stay current with platform trends and popular formats
- Test different creative approaches



- Consider user-generated content strategies

## Pinterest

### Ad Types

1. **Standard Pins**
  - Regular pins that are promoted to a wider audience
  - Drive traffic to your website or app
2. **Video Pins**
  - Video content optimised for Pinterest browsing
  - Demonstrate products in action
3. **Carousel Pins**
  - Multiple images in a single pin that users can swipe through
  - Showcase product variations or steps in a process
4. **Shopping Pins**
  - Product pins with pricing, availability, and direct links
  - Seamless path to purchase
5. **Collections**
  - Curated groups of pins that users can save
  - Feature multiple products in themed collections
6. **Idea Pins**
  - Multi-page content with videos, images, and text
  - Tell brand stories or provide how-tos

### Ad Specifications

#### Standard Pins

- Recommended aspect ratio: 2:3 (1000 × 1500 pixels)
- Minimum width: 600 pixels
- File types: JPG or PNG
- File size: Up to 20MB
- Title: 100 characters (60 visible)
- Description: 500 characters (50-60 visible)

#### Video Pins

- Aspect ratio: Square (1:1) or vertical (2:3, 9:16)
- Resolution: Minimum 240p, maximum 1080p



- File types: MP4, MOV, or M4V
- File size: Up to 2GB
- Duration: 4 seconds to 15 minutes (15-30 seconds recommended)
- Title: 100 characters
- Description: 500 characters

### **Carousel Pins**

- Number of cards: 2-5
- Image specifications same as Standard Pins
- Each card can have its own destination URL

### **Targeting Options**

- Interests
- Keywords
- Demographics (age, gender, location)
- Audiences (website visitors, customer lists, engagement)
- Actalike audiences (similar to lookalike)
- Placements (browse, search, related pins)

### **Best Practices**

- Use vertical images with 2:3 aspect ratio for maximum visibility
- Create high-quality, visually appealing images
- Include text overlay to provide context
- Use descriptive, keyword-rich titles and descriptions
- Create seasonal content well in advance (users plan ahead on Pinterest)
- Maintain consistent branding across pins
- Link directly to relevant landing pages
- Leverage rich pins to provide more context
- Create content that solves problems or provides inspiration
- Use a mix of lifestyle and product-focused images
- Test different pin formats for best performance
- Consider the user's planning mindset (Pinterest users are often planning future activities)



## Snapchat

### Ad Types

1. **Single Image or Video Ads**
  - Full-screen vertical ads between Stories
  - Quick, attention-grabbing content
2. **Collection Ads**
  - Showcase multiple products in a tappable, shoppable format
  - Feature a primary video or image with product tiles below
3. **Story Ads**
  - Branded tiles in the Discover section
  - Lead to a collection of 3-20 Snap Ads
4. **AR Lenses**
  - Interactive augmented reality experiences
  - Face and world lenses for immersive brand engagement
5. **Commercials**
  - Non-skippable, 6-second video ads
  - Premium placement within curated content
6. **Dynamic Ads**
  - Automatically generated ads based on product catalogs
  - Personalised product recommendations

### Ad Specifications

#### Single Image or Video Ads

- Image/Video resolution: 1080 × 1920 pixels
- Aspect ratio: 9:16 (vertical)
- File types: JPG or PNG for images; MP4 or MOV for videos
- Video file size: Up to 1GB
- Video duration: 3-180 seconds (3-10 seconds recommended)
- Headline: 34 characters
- Call-to-action: 15 characters

#### Collection Ads

- Hero image/video: 1080 × 1920 pixels
- Product image tiles: 160 × 160 pixels
- Number of tiles: 4-5



- Other specs same as Single Image or Video Ads

### **Story Ads**

- Cover image: 640 × 1340 pixels
- Tile logo: 640 × 640 pixels
- Title: 34 characters
- Subtitle: 80 characters
- Individual snap specs same as Single Image or Video Ads

### **AR Lenses**

- Face lens size: Under 8MB (recommended)
- World lens size: Under 8MB (recommended)
- Duration: Typically 10-15 seconds

### **Targeting Options**

- Demographics (age, gender, location)
- Interests and lifestyle categories
- Custom audiences (Snap Pixel, customer lists)
- Lookalike audiences
- Engagement audiences
- Location categories

### **Best Practices**

- Design for vertical, full-screen mobile viewing
- Create content that feels native to the platform
- Keep videos short (under 10 seconds) and engaging
- Include sound as most users watch with sound on
- Place your brand or key message in the first 2 seconds
- Use interactive elements when possible
- Include clear call-to-action
- Leverage AR experiences for higher engagement
- Consider the playful, casual nature of the platform
- Design AR lenses that are fun and shareable
- Test both polished and authentic-feeling content
- Target strategically based on Snapchat's younger demographic
- Consider time-sensitive offers that align with the ephemeral nature of the platform



## YouTube

### Ad Types

1. **Skippable In-Stream Ads**
  - Video ads that play before, during, or after videos
  - Viewers can skip after 5 seconds
  - Best for brand awareness and consideration
2. **Non-Skippable In-Stream Ads**
  - 15-20 second ads that cannot be skipped
  - Higher completion rates but higher abandonment risk
3. **Video Discovery Ads**
  - Appear in YouTube search results, watch page, and homepage
  - Only play when users choose to watch them
4. **Bumper Ads**
  - Non-skippable 6-second video ads
  - Quick brand mentions or reinforcement
5. **Masthead Ads**
  - Premium placement at the top of YouTube homepage
  - Maximum reach in a short period
6. **Outstream Ads**
  - Mobile-only video ads that appear on partner websites and apps
  - Start playing with no sound until user taps

### Ad Specifications

#### Skippable In-Stream Ads

- Resolution: 1920 × 1080 pixels (16:9)
- File types: MP4, MOV, AVI, WMV
- File size: Up to 256GB or 12 hours (whichever is less)
- Duration: 12 seconds to 3 minutes (30-60 seconds recommended)
- Companion banner (optional): 300 × 60 pixels

#### Non-Skippable In-Stream Ads

- Resolution: 1920 × 1080 pixels (16:9)
- File types: MP4, MOV, AVI, WMV
- Duration: 15 or 20 seconds (depending on regional standards)
- Other specs same as Skippable In-Stream Ads



### **Video Discovery Ads**

- Thumbnail: 1280 × 720 pixels (16:9)
- File types: JPG, PNG, or static GIF
- Headline: 25 characters
- Description lines: Two lines, 35 characters each
- Video specs same as regular YouTube uploads

### **Bumper Ads**

- Resolution: 1920 × 1080 pixels (16:9)
- File types: MP4, MOV, AVI, WMV
- Duration: Maximum 6 seconds
- Other specs same as In-Stream Ads

### **Targeting Options**

- Demographics (age, gender, parental status, household income)
- Interests and affinities
- Life events and milestones
- Custom audiences (website visitors, customer lists)
- Similar audiences
- Keywords and topics
- Placements (specific channels or videos)

### **Best Practices**

- Hook viewers in the first 5 seconds (before skip option)
- Optimise for both sound-on and sound-off viewing
- Include clear branding early in the video
- Create content that tells a compelling story
- Use YouTube-specific call-to-action overlays
- Consider mobile viewers (over 70% of YouTube views)
- Maintain consistent messaging across different ad formats
- Test different video lengths and formats
- Leverage YouTube's targeting capabilities for precise audience reach
- Consider serialised content to build ongoing engagement
- Optimise thumbnails for Video Discovery Ads
- Repurpose successful content into shorter formats
- Use end screens and cards to drive additional actions



## Reddit

### Ad Types

1. **Promoted Posts**
  - Standard Reddit posts that are promoted to wider audiences
  - Can be text, link, image, video, or poll posts
2. **Video Ads**
  - Autoplay videos that appear in feed
  - Engage users with sound-off viewing
3. **Conversation Ads**
  - Promoted posts that encourage comments and discussion
  - Drive engagement through community interaction
4. **Carousel Ads**
  - Multiple images or videos in a swipeable format
  - Showcase multiple products or tell a story
5. **App Install Ads**
  - Specialised format for driving app downloads
  - Direct link to app stores

### Ad Specifications

#### Promoted Posts (Image)

- Image size: 1200 × 628 pixels
- Aspect ratio: 1.91:1
- File types: JPG or PNG
- File size: Up to 20MB
- Title: 300 characters
- Body text (optional): 40,000 characters

#### Promoted Posts (Video)

- Resolution: 720p minimum
- Aspect ratio: 16:9, 4:3, or 1:1
- File types: MP4 or MOV
- File size: Up to 1GB
- Duration: Up to 30 minutes
- Title: 300 characters



## **Carousel Ads**

- Number of cards: 2-5
- Image size: 1080 × 1080 pixels
- Aspect ratio: 1:1 (square)
- File types: JPG or PNG
- File size: Up to 20MB per image
- Title: 300 characters

## **Targeting Options**

- Subreddits
- Interests
- Communities
- Keywords
- Demographics (age, gender, location)
- Device and platform
- Custom audiences
- Lookalike audiences

## **Best Practices**

- Understand and respect the unique culture of each subreddit
- Be transparent about being an advertiser
- Create content that adds value to the community
- Use authentic, conversational tone
- Actively engage with comments (Reddit is discussion-focused)
- Test different creative formats and messaging
- Include clear calls-to-action
- Consider AMA (Ask Me Anything) style campaigns for higher engagement
- Leverage Reddit's upvote system to gauge content effectiveness
- Avoid overly promotional language
- Address potential criticisms proactively and honestly
- Use humor when appropriate for the audience
- Target niche communities for specialised products

## **Cross-Platform Best Practices**

### **Creative Best Practices**



- **Maintain Brand Consistency:** Use consistent colors, fonts, and messaging across platforms
- **Platform Adaptation:** Tailor content to each platform's unique environment and audience
- **Mobile Optimisation:** Design for mobile-first viewing across all platforms
- **Clear Value Proposition:** Communicate benefits clearly and concisely
- **Strong Visuals:** Use high-quality, attention-grabbing visuals
- **Authentic Content:** Create genuine content that doesn't feel overly promotional
- **Video Priority:** Prioritise video content when possible (higher engagement across platforms)
- **Sound-Off Design:** Design videos to be effective without sound
- **Text Overlay:** Use captions and text overlays to enhance comprehension
- **A/B Testing:** Continuously test different creative elements

## Targeting Best Practices

- **Define Clear Audience Segments:** Create detailed buyer personas
- **Layer Targeting Parameters:** Combine demographic, interest, and behavioral targeting
- **Retargeting:** Implement website and engagement retargeting
- **Lookalike/Similar Audiences:** Expand reach with audiences similar to existing customers
- **Exclusion Targeting:** Exclude irrelevant or already converted audiences
- **Geotargeting:** Utilise location-based targeting for local businesses
- **Platform Optimisation:** Understand which platforms best reach specific demographics
- **Audience Refreshing:** Regularly update custom audiences
- **Funnel-Specific Targeting:** Adjust targeting based on funnel stage
- **Cross-Platform Coordination:** Create consistent targeting strategies across platforms

## Campaign Management Best Practices

- **Clear Objectives:** Set specific, measurable goals for each campaign
- **Budget Allocation:** Distribute budget based on platform performance
- **Frequency Caps:** Limit ad exposure to prevent fatigue
- **Scheduled Posting:** Time ads to align with audience activity patterns
- **Regular Optimisation:** Review and adjust campaigns at least weekly
- **UTM Parameters:** Use consistent tracking parameters across platforms
- **Landing Page Alignment:** Ensure landing pages match ad messaging and visuals
- **Conversion Tracking:** Implement platform-specific tracking pixels
- **Comprehensive Analytics:** Use both platform and third-party analytics
- **Competitive Analysis:** Monitor competitor strategies and performance



## Measuring Ad Performance

### Key Performance Indicators for SMEs

Social media metrics can be overwhelming. Here's a simplified approach focused on what really matters for small businesses:

#### Awareness Metrics

- **Impressions:** How many times your ad was shown
- **Reach:** The number of unique users who saw your ad
- **Frequency:** Average number of times each person saw your ad
  - *SME Target:* 2-3 times per week is ideal; over 5 can cause ad fatigue
- **Brand lift:** Increase in brand awareness or perception (measured through surveys)
- **Video views:** Number of times your video was viewed
- **View-through rate:** Percentage of people who watched your video to completion
  - *SME Benchmark:* 15-25% is average; over 30% indicates strong content

#### Engagement Metrics

- **Click-through rate (CTR):** Percentage of people who click after seeing your ad
  - *SME Benchmark:* 1-2% is considered good for most industries
- **Engagement rate:** Percentage of people who engaged with your ad (likes, comments, clicks)
  - *SME Formula:*  $(\text{Total engagements} \div \text{Total reach}) \times 100$
- **Social interactions:** Total likes, shares, comments
  - *SME Note:* Comments are typically more valuable than likes
- **Average watch time:** How long people watch your videos
  - *SME Target:* At least 15 seconds for a 30-second video
- **Page/profile visits:** Number of people who viewed your profile after seeing your ad
- **Follower growth:** Increase in page followers attributable to your ads

#### Conversion Metrics

- **Conversion rate:** Percentage of ad clicks that result in a desired action
  - *SME Benchmark:* 2-5% is average for most industries
- **Cost per conversion:** Average cost to achieve one conversion
  - *SME Formula:*  $\text{Total ad spend} \div \text{Number of conversions}$



- **Return on ad spend (ROAS):** Revenue generated for every dollar spent on advertising
  - *SME Target:* Aim for at least 3:1 ROAS (3 dollars earned for every 1 dollar spent)
- **Cost per acquisition (CPA):** Cost to acquire one customer
  - *SME Formula:* Total ad spend ÷ Number of new customers
- **Value per visit:** Average revenue generated per website visit
  - *SME Formula:* Total revenue ÷ Number of website visits
- **Cart abandonment rate:** Percentage of users who add items to cart but don't purchase
  - *SME Action:* Target these users with special offers

### Retention Metrics

- **Repeat purchase rate:** Percentage of customers who buy more than once
- **Customer lifetime value (CLV):** Total revenue expected from a customer over time
  - *SME Formula:* (Average purchase value × Average purchase frequency × Average customer lifespan)
- **Retention rate:** Percentage of customers who remain active
- **Churn rate:** Percentage of customers who stop doing business with you
- **Email/SMS sign-ups:** Number of new subscriber acquisitions from ads

### Simple SME Dashboard Template

Metric	Platform 1	Platform 2	Weekly Goal	Weekly Actual	Action Required
Impressions					
Clicks					
CTR					
Conversions					
Cost/Conversion					
ROAS					

### Understanding Attribution Models in Simple Terms

Attribution determines which marketing touchpoints receive credit for conversions:

1. **Last-Click Attribution:** Gives 100% credit to the final ad click before purchase



- *SME Use Case:* Good for simple sales cycles with immediate purchases
- *Example:* A customer clicks your Facebook ad and immediately buys a product
- 2. **First-Click Attribution:** Gives 100% credit to the first ad interaction
  - *SME Use Case:* Good for brand awareness campaigns
  - *Example:* Customer discovers your brand via Instagram, later returns directly to buy
- 3. **Linear Attribution:** Distributes credit equally across all touchpoints
  - *SME Use Case:* When multiple touchpoints matter equally
  - *Example:* Customer sees your Instagram ad, later clicks Facebook ad, then converts
- 4. **Time-Decay Attribution:** Gives more credit to touchpoints closer to conversion
  - *SME Use Case:* For longer sales cycles with multiple touchpoints
  - *Example:* Customer journey spans weeks with increasing importance of later touchpoints
- 5. **Position-Based Attribution:** Gives 40% credit to first interaction, 40% to last, 20% spread among middle touchpoints
  - *SME Use Case:* When both discovery and final decision are most important
  - *Example:* Initial brand discovery and final promotional offer are key conversion drivers
- 6. **Data-Driven Attribution:** Uses algorithms to determine credit based on your data patterns
  - *SME Use Case:* Advanced option once you have significant conversion data
  - *Note:* Usually requires more data than most SMEs have initially

**Recommended for most SMEs:** Start with last-click attribution for simplicity, then consider position-based once you have more data and multiple campaigns running.

## Tracking Setup Guide for Non-Technical SMEs

### Basic Tracking Setup (1-2 hours)

1. **Set up Google Analytics:**
  - Create a Google Analytics 4 account
  - Add the tracking code to your website (usually via your website platform's integrations)
  - Set up basic conversion goals (purchases, form submissions, etc.)
2. **Install Platform Pixels/Tags:**
  - Facebook Pixel: Install via your website platform's integrations or Google Tag Manager



- LinkedIn Insight Tag: Add to your website for conversion tracking
- Twitter Pixel: Install for Twitter campaign tracking
- Pinterest Tag: Add for Pinterest campaign tracking
- TikTok Pixel: Install for TikTok campaign conversions

### **Implement UTM Parameters:**

Example UTM URL:

yourwebsite.com/page?utm\_source=facebook&utm\_medium=social&utm\_campaign=spring\_sale

- UTM Source: Platform (facebook, instagram, linkedin)
- UTM Medium: Type (social, email, cpc)
- UTM Campaign: Campaign name (spring\_sale, new\_product)
- UTM Content: Ad variation (video1, carousel2)

### **SME-Friendly Analytics Tools**

- **Google Analytics:** Free, comprehensive website tracking
- **Meta Business Suite:** Free analytics for Facebook and Instagram
- **LinkedIn Campaign Manager:** Built-in analytics for LinkedIn campaigns
- **Twitter Analytics:** Free insights for Twitter performance
- **Hotjar:** Heat mapping to see how users interact with your landing pages (free basic plan)
- **Google Data Studio:** Free dashboard creation for campaign visualisation

### **Simplified Weekly Reporting Routine**

1. Schedule 30 minutes every Monday morning
2. Review key metrics from each platform's native analytics
3. Compare to previous week and goals
4. Make one or two specific adjustments based on data
5. Document what you changed for future learning

## **Budget Planning for SMEs**

### **Social Media Advertising on a Limited Budget**

As an SME, budgeting for social media advertising requires strategic thinking to maximise impact with limited resources.



### Minimum Viable Budgets by Platform

- **Facebook/Instagram:** Start with \$150-300/month
- **LinkedIn:** Start with \$200-400/month
- **Twitter/X:** Start with \$100-250/month
- **TikTok:** Start with \$100-300/month
- **Pinterest:** Start with \$100-250/month
- **Snapchat:** Start with \$100-250/month
- **YouTube:** Start with \$200-500/month
- **Reddit:** Start with \$100-250/month

### SME Budget Allocation Framework

1. **For total monthly budgets under \$500:**
  - Choose 1-2 platforms based on your audience research
  - Allocate 80% to your primary platform, 20% to secondary
  - Focus on a single campaign objective at a time
  - Run ads for at least 3-4 weeks to gather meaningful data
2. **For total monthly budgets of \$500-2,000:**
  - Expand to 2-3 platforms
  - Allocate 60% to primary platform, 30% to secondary, 10% to testing
  - Target 2-3 campaign objectives
  - Consider retargeting campaigns to capture interested users
3. **For total monthly budgets of \$2,000-5,000:**
  - Use 3-4 platforms with specialised content for each
  - Implement full-funnel approach (awareness, consideration, conversion)
  - Allocate 50% to primary platforms, 30% to secondary, 20% to testing
  - Develop more sophisticated targeting and segmentation

### Bidding Strategies for Beginners

1. **Cost Per Click (CPC):** Pay when users click on your ad
  - *Best for:* Driving website traffic, beginners who want predictable costs
  - *Typical SME starting bid:* Use automatic bidding to learn platform averages
2. **Cost Per Mille (CPM):** Pay per thousand impressions
  - *Best for:* Brand awareness campaigns with compelling creative
  - *Caution:* Can be expensive if your targeting isn't precise



3. **Cost Per View (CPV):** Pay when users view your video
  - *Best for:* Video content with strong messages in the first few seconds
  - *Platform note:* Most effective on YouTube and TikTok
4. **Cost Per Action (CPA):** Pay when users complete a specific action
  - *Best for:* Experienced advertisers with established conversion history
  - *Recommendation:* Start with CPC and transition to CPA after collecting data

## Maximising ROI for SMEs

- **Start with conversion-focused campaigns:** Generate revenue first, then reinvest in awareness
- **Use hyper-local targeting:** Reduce costs by focusing on your immediate business area first
- **Leverage business attributes:** Minority-owned, woman-owned, or veteran-owned business status can provide advertising credits on some platforms
- **Take advantage of platform credits:** Most platforms offer \$50-100 in free advertising for new advertisers
- **Focus on existing customers first:** Create custom audiences from your customer list for higher conversion rates
- **Reuse and repurpose content:** Transform one video shoot into multiple ad formats and lengths
- **Schedule ads strategically:** Run ads only during business hours if you need to respond quickly to inquiries

## Budget Management Calendar

Create a quarterly budget management calendar:

- **Month 1:** Testing phase - try different platforms and ad formats
- **Month 2:** Optimisation phase - refine based on Month 1 data
- **Month 3:** Scaling phase - increase spend on what's working

## Cost Benchmarks by Industry (as of 2024)

- **E-commerce:**
  - Facebook/Instagram: \$0.70-\$1.20 CPC
  - Pinterest: \$0.90-\$1.50 CPC
  - TikTok: \$1.00-\$1.50 CPC
- **B2B:**
  - LinkedIn: \$5.00-\$8.00 CPC



- Facebook/Instagram: \$1.50-\$2.50 CPC
- Twitter/X: \$2.00-\$3.50 CPC
- **Entertainment:**
  - YouTube: \$0.10-\$0.30 CPV
  - TikTok: \$0.50-\$1.00 CPC
  - Snapchat: \$0.30-\$0.50 CPC
- **Financial Services:**
  - Facebook/Instagram: \$2.00-\$4.00 CPC
  - LinkedIn: \$6.00-\$9.00 CPC
  - Google Display: \$1.50-\$3.00 CPC
- **Local Services:**
  - Facebook/Instagram: \$1.00-\$1.75 CPC
  - Google Local: \$2.50-\$4.00 CPC
  - Yelp: \$3.00-\$5.00 CPC

Note: These benchmarks are approximate and subject to change based on competition, targeting, quality of creative, and other factors.

## Content Creation on a Budget

Creating high-quality content without a large budget or dedicated team is a common challenge for SMEs. Here are approaches to create effective ad content with limited resources.

### Low-Cost Content Creation Tools

- **Canva:** Free/affordable design tool with templates for all social platforms
- **Pexels/Unsplash:** Free stock photography resources
- **Capcut/InShot:** Mobile video editing apps with professional features
- **Headliner:** Convert audio to video content with automated visuals
- **Veed.io:** Online video editor with subtitles and effects
- **Descript:** Audio/video editing that's as easy as editing a document
- **Simplified:** All-in-one design, video, and social media management

### DIY Content Creation Tips

- **Smartphone Photography Basics:**
  - Use natural lighting when possible
  - Follow the rule of thirds for composition
  - Use portrait mode for product photography

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- Clean your phone lens before shooting
- Shoot during "golden hour" (hour after sunrise/before sunset) for warm, flattering light
- **Smartphone Video Tips:**
  - Always shoot horizontally for YouTube and horizontally for TikTok/Stories
  - Use a simple tripod for stability (\$15-30)
  - Record in a quiet location with minimal background noise
  - Keep videos under 60 seconds for social ads
  - Use caption tools to add subtitles (85% of social videos are watched without sound)
- **User-Generated Content Strategies:**
  - Create a branded hashtag for customers to share experiences
  - Offer small incentives for customers who share content featuring your products
  - Always get permission before repurposing customer content
  - Feature customer testimonials as simple text-based ads
- **Content Repurposing Framework:** From a single piece of core content (e.g., one video interview), create:
  - Multiple short clips for different platforms
  - Quote graphics from key statements
  - Blog post transcription for your website
  - Audio clip for podcast platforms
  - Behind-the-scenes photos for Instagram

## SME Content Calendar Template

Week	Content Theme	Primary Platform	Secondary Platform	Budget Allocation
1	Product highlight	Facebook/Instagram	Pinterest	\$100
2	Customer testimonial	YouTube	Facebook/Instagram	\$100
3	Limited-time offer	Facebook/Instagram	Email	\$150
4	Educational content	LinkedIn	Twitter	\$100

## Content Testing Framework for SMEs



When creating multiple ad variations, test one element at a time:

1. **Headlines:** Create 2-3 variations with different angles
2. **Images/Videos:** Test 2-3 visual approaches
3. **Call-to-Action:** Test different CTA button text
4. **Ad Format:** Test single image vs. carousel vs. video

Run each test for at least 3-4 days before making decisions.

## Step-by-Step Platform Setup Guides

### Facebook Business Manager Setup Guide

1. **Create a Facebook Business Manager:**
  - Go to [business.facebook.com](https://business.facebook.com)
  - Click "Create Account"
  - Enter your business name and email
  - Follow prompts to complete setup
2. **Set up Facebook Pixel:**
  - In Business Manager, go to "Data Sources" > "Pixels"
  - Click "Add" and name your pixel
  - Choose installation method (recommended: use Google Tag Manager)
  - Verify installation using Facebook's Pixel Helper Chrome extension
3. **Create Your First Campaign:**
  - In Ads Manager, click "Create"
  - Select campaign objective (e.g., Traffic, Conversions)
  - Define your audience targeting
  - Set your budget (start with daily budget of \$10-20 for testing)
  - Create your ad (upload images/videos, write copy, add URL)
  - Review and publish

[Detailed guides with screenshots for other platforms would follow a similar step-by-step format]

## Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them

### Top 10 SME Social Media Advertising Mistakes

1. **Targeting Too Broadly**
  - *Problem:* Wasting budget on irrelevant audiences



- *Solution:* Start with narrow targeting focused on your ideal customers
  - *Example:* Instead of targeting "everyone interested in fitness," target "women 25-44 interested in yoga and wellness within 10 miles of your location"
2. **Inconsistent Branding**
- *Problem:* Confusing customers with different messaging across platforms
  - *Solution:* Create a simple brand style guide for visual consistency
  - *Template:* Include logo usage, 2-3 brand colors, 1-2 fonts, and tone of voice guidelines
3. **Neglecting Mobile Optimisation**
- *Problem:* Poor performance on mobile devices where most social media is consumed
  - *Solution:* Always preview ads on mobile before publishing
  - *Checklist:* Text is readable, buttons are easily clickable, videos work without sound
4. **Focusing on Vanity Metrics**
- *Problem:* Celebrating likes and shares while ignoring conversion metrics
  - *Solution:* Align metrics with business goals (sales, leads, etc.)
  - *Tool:* Create a simple monthly dashboard with both engagement and business metrics
5. **Insufficient Testing**
- *Problem:* Assuming what works without data
  - *Solution:* Always run A/B tests, even with small budgets
  - *Framework:* Test one element at a time (headline, image, audience)
6. **Ignoring Ad Fatigue**
- *Problem:* Running the same ads too long, decreasing performance
  - *Solution:* Refresh creative every 2-4 weeks
  - *Strategy:* Create variations of successful ads with minor changes
7. **Poor Landing Page Experience**
- *Problem:* Good ads leading to confusing or slow landing pages
  - *Solution:* Ensure landing pages directly relate to ad promises
  - *Tool:* Use Google PageSpeed Insights to check mobile loading times
8. **Neglecting to Set Up Proper Tracking**
- *Problem:* Unable to measure true ROI
  - *Solution:* Install conversion tracking before running campaigns
  - *Guide:* Step-by-step pixel installation instructions for each platform
9. **Setting and Forgetting Campaigns**
- *Problem:* Not optimising based on performance data
  - *Solution:* Schedule weekly 30-minute review sessions
  - *Template:* Simple optimisation checklist for regular review



#### 10. Inadequate Budget Allocation

- *Problem:* Spreading budget too thin across platforms
- *Solution:* Focus on mastering one platform before expanding
- *Rule of thumb:* Need minimum \$100/month per platform for meaningful data

## Legal and Compliance Considerations

### Advertising Regulations SMEs Need to Know

#### 1. Privacy Regulations

- **GDPR** (European Union):
  - Requires explicit consent for data collection
  - Impacts targeting and retargeting capabilities
  - *SME Action Item:* Include clear privacy policy and cookie notices
- **CCPA/CPRA** (California):
  - Gives consumers right to opt out of data sales
  - Requires privacy notices and data disclosure
  - *SME Action Item:* Add "Do Not Sell My Information" option if you serve California customers
- **COPPA** (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act):
  - Restricts collection of data from children under 13
  - *SME Action Item:* Don't target ads to children under 13

#### 2. Disclosure Requirements

- **FTC Guidelines:**
  - Requires clear disclosure of advertisements (#ad, #sponsored)
  - Prohibits false or misleading claims
  - *SME Action Item:* Ensure all influencer partners properly disclose relationship
- **Testimonial Rules:**
  - Customer testimonials must reflect typical results
  - *SME Action Item:* Include disclaimers if featuring exceptional results

#### 3. Industry-Specific Regulations

- **Financial Services:**
  - Additional disclosures required for financial products
  - *SME Action Item:* Include required disclaimers in ad copy or landing pages
- **Healthcare:**



- Restrictions on claims about treatments and outcomes
- *SME Action Item*: Avoid making medical claims unless properly substantiated
- **Alcohol/Cannabis**:
  - Age targeting requirements and content restrictions
  - *SME Action Item*: Set appropriate age targeting (21+ typically required)

## Social Media Platform Policy Compliance

- **Facebook/Instagram**: Restrictions on before/after images, prohibited content categories
- **LinkedIn**: Professional context requirements, restricted content
- **Twitter/X**: Sensitive content policies, political advertising requirements
- **TikTok**: Youth-oriented content restrictions

## Simple Compliance Checklist for SMEs

- ✓ Up-to-date privacy policy on website
- ✓ Compliant cookie consent mechanism
- ✓ Clear disclosure of sponsored content
- ✓ Substantiation for all product claims
- ✓ Age-gating for restricted products
- ✓ Platform-specific policy review before campaigns

## Industry-Specific Strategies

### Retail & E-commerce

- **Platform Focus**: Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, TikTok
- **Key Ad Types**: Shopping ads, collection ads, dynamic product ads
- **Content Strategy**: Product demonstrations, user-generated content, limited-time offers
- **Targeting Approach**: Interest-based, lookalike audiences, retargeting website visitors
- **Success Metrics**: ROAS, conversion rate, average order value

### Professional Services

- **Platform Focus**: LinkedIn, Facebook, Google
- **Key Ad Types**: Lead generation ads, testimonial videos, thought leadership content
- **Content Strategy**: Educational content, client success stories, professional credentials
- **Targeting Approach**: Job title, company size, industry targeting



- **Success Metrics:** Cost per lead, consultation bookings, inquiry quality

## Food & Beverage

- **Platform Focus:** Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat (for local)
- **Key Ad Types:** Video ads, location-based promotions, carousel ads
- **Content Strategy:** Visual menu highlights, behind-the-scenes content, special promotions
- **Targeting Approach:** Location-based, interest targeting, mealtime dayparting
- **Success Metrics:** Store visits, coupon redemptions, online orders

## Health & Wellness

- **Platform Focus:** Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Pinterest
- **Key Ad Types:** Video tutorials, testimonial content, carousel features
- **Content Strategy:** Educational content, transformation stories (within compliance), service highlights
- **Targeting Approach:** Interest-based, demographic targeting, lookalike audiences
- **Success Metrics:** Class/appointment bookings, lead generation, engagement

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