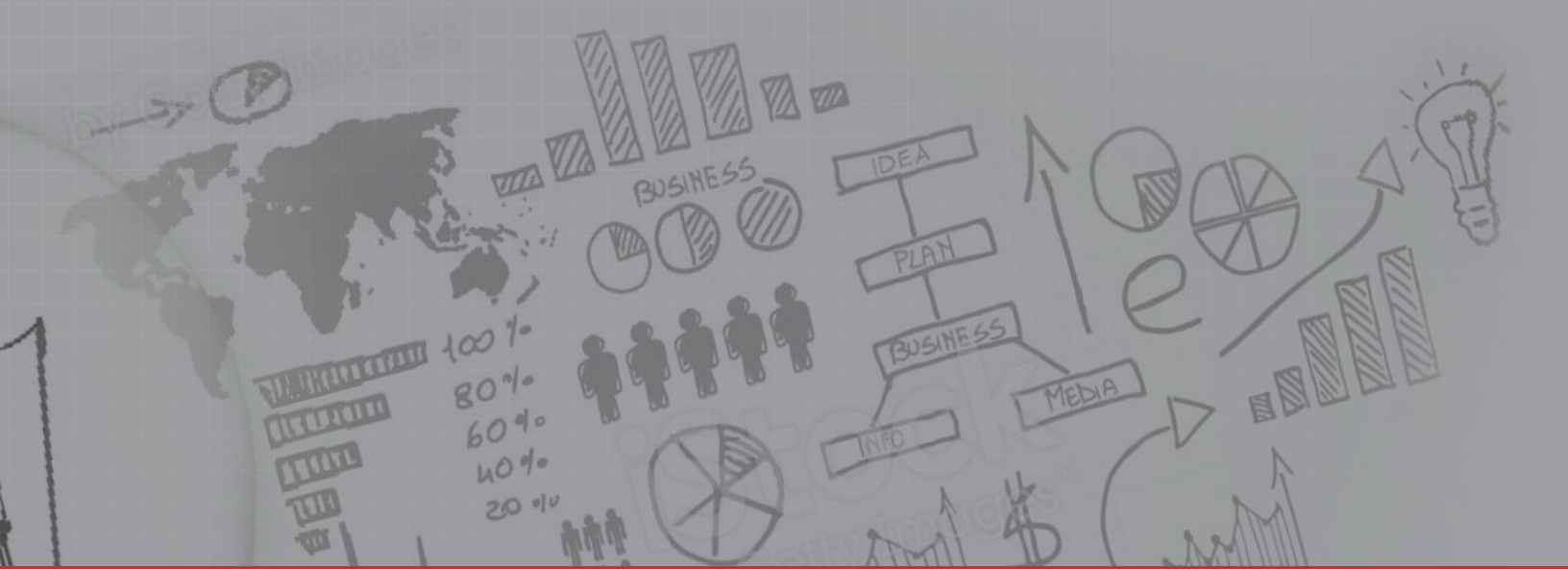


MARKETING YOUR CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

BY STAR BUILDING SYSTEMS



A look into your website, search engine optimization, email marketing, social media and digital marketing.





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INTRODUCTION

More clients. More money in the bank. More growth. This all happens through strategic marketing. It's the pulsing heart of any wildly successful business. Without it, you don't exist. In 2019, the Construction Marketing Association conducted a national survey among industry professionals to find out about marketing plans. Of the respondents, 94% of construction firms plan to increase their marketing spend, which has increased by 2% from the same survey in 2018. Marketing is important and it provides results; however, in the building industry, strategic marketing hasn't always been so popular.

Historically, word of mouth has reigned king of marketing methods. And although it's not the best method, it makes sense as to why builders have preferred it. Referrals are huge in the building empire – a kingdom built on trust, handshakes and eye contact. It's an industry steeped in tradition, and up to this point, word of mouth has been enough to fill the marketing gap in that environment. But in today's online, digitally driven world, it's not enough.

Here are the facts, or should we say...lack thereof. Word of mouth is untraceable, immeasurable and outside of your control. For instance, let's say you have been relying on your stellar reputation and word of mouth to grow your business, and so far, business is steady. FANTASTIC! Now tell us exactly how many people learned about you last month and how many times this week. Who exactly was talking about you and at what consistency? What did they say? Did you respond? And who is "they" anyway? That's the unhealthy part of word of mouth. The efficacy is invisible and unpredictable.

Your potential clients are your future, and you want to be able to reach them. Your communication should be intentional, well designed, accessible and measurable. Your audience needs to be able to find you at all times. And when they do, they need to clearly understand your services and strong points.

Control your message by designing it yourself with the help of a strategic marketing plan. Controlling your message on the right platforms allows you to track your marketing spend, understand your results and calculate your Return on Investment (ROI). This is crucial. It's how you know what's working and what's not – which enables you to adjust as you see fit. And if you do all of this correctly, you can track the results and see what works best. Billions of dollars are spent on marketing annually because of its potency and ROI. Once you see it, you'll believe it. The construction industry has historically invested more money in marketing when times are good and slashed it when things tighten up. Seems practical, right? It is, but this is counterintuitive from a marketing standpoint because marketing works best when practiced consistently over time. But the construction industry is changing and using mediums where YOU control the audience list, method of distribution, messaging and the tracking for results and analysis.

It's time to start marketing strategically on various platforms. When you do, you'll be miles ahead of your competition. Follow these simplistic tips and surge ahead. They will help you create a robust marketing campaign in the areas of Traditional Marketing, Website Development, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Email Marketing, Social Media and Digital Marketing. Please read at your leisure, enjoy, apply, improve and most of all – happy marketing.





TRADITIONAL MARKETING

We know marketing is important and provides results. But not all traditional marketing approaches are necessary in today's digital and social world. Remember that crazy billboard on your drive home that made you almost spit out your coffee? How about the cringe worthy radio spot that forced you to change the station or the magazine ad that made you really want M&Ms? I bet you remember, because these are all examples of traditional marketing. They've been around forever. They're tried and trusted, but due to the digital playground and the lack of trackable results, they're losing popularity. In saying that though, they are still a viable option for brand awareness.

Newspaper, radio, television and billboards are all part of traditional marketing. We're also lumping into this category any collateral pieces. Examples of this include t-shirts for your employees, giveaways at tradeshow, etc. These are all great avenues for shouting your brand to the world, and chances are, you might currently be using one, or more, of these. Traditional marketing is popular with building companies. It places your company's brand somewhere public and tangible, and that's attractive, but keep in mind – its success can't be measured. It's guessed.

According to the 2019 CMA survey, 50% of respondents identified Public Relations as a lead traditional marketing tactic. PR is a cost effective way to achieve a solid return on investment. Email marketing, considered as a traditional marketing tool in the CMA survey, ranks high regardless, coming in at 76%.

Although the above examples can be excellent choices for exposure, some are hard on the wallet and don't elicit the action you may want. Print can get VERY expensive, as well as television and radio. Trade Shows, Promotions and Direct Mail Marketing were ranked last as popular choices for traditional marketing, not completely surprising since we operate in a 24/7 online world. So in order to be well

prepared before you dish out the cash, be sure to ask yourself a couple of questions:

1. Will the placement reach my desired audience adequately? (i.e. Is this the right magazine, billboard, radio station, time slot, etc.?)
2. Is the main message clear and to the point? If you still have more to say than what can fit comfortably into the available space in the ad, be sure to include your website and/or phone number, along with copy that urges the viewer to contact you or visit your website.



In all, traditional marketing is a good way to get your brand noticed and to build awareness, but we suspect you already knew that. That's why it's popular with builders, and we agree it's a great avenue, but only if used in conjunction with other ones. Because remember, traditional marketing's performance can't be tracked, and it also doesn't give you the opportunity to engage in a conversation with your audience. Great marketing is about talking with the people who want to buy into you, not just shouting at them. So try other things to compliment your traditional marketing.



WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

A whopping 82% of the industry will be increasing their website development, up from 72% in 2018, according to the CMA survey. Having a website is key to any modern business and can be an incredibly valuable piece of marketing real estate for a construction business. Although you might guess the obvious reasons as to why, there are some you might not have considered. A few are:

Smart Economics and Practical Application – Websites are an affordable, expected and easy way to help people find and learn about your company.

Accessibility – Your website is there when you aren't and can help sell your product and/or services. People can study your expertise at their leisure, including after-business hours. If readers like what they see and can find the necessary information about you, they may take a chance on you.

Trustworthiness – Today, without a website, you're behind the curve. If you don't have a website, the persona you deliver is one of an outdated, indifferent, unprepared and questionable business – all of which could have a negative effect.

Marketing – A website is an integral part of marketing your business, and that leads us to the design of your website – [75%](#) of users make judgments on a company's credibility based on website design alone.

There are three really good ways to create a website:

1. Build a website from scratch. This takes longer and is only necessary if you have unique performance needs for your website, such as an online app as a helpful functionality for your customers. WordPress is the most popular [content management system](#) (or website building platform), followed by Squarespace, then Magnolia, according to TechRadar.
2. Purchase a pre-built template to get the bare bones out there about your company. Using a ready-made template to begin saves time and money. Popular companies worth researching for template options and purchases are WordPress, Squarespace and Wix. Website builders such as these have programmed the software you need to make a site, allowing you to literally add slideshows, blocks of text, images or videos by dragging your mouse with the content into the template. You can easily insert your own text, pictures and videos with simple clicks. You don't need any knowledge of website coding whatsoever! So if HTML (Hypertext Markup Language – common coding language for text fonts and styles) and CSS (Cascading Style Sheet – used to layout web pages) sound incredibly stressful, don't worry!
3. Purchase a pre-built template and further customize your template. This is usually for more basic website needs, but can be edited and adjusted to be even more unique to make your company stand out from the rest.

Additionally, when designing your website, determine if you want a mobile responsive site (Hint: you want this). Internet usage on mobile devices exceeded internet usage on desktops in early 2014. Client/customer prospects are looking for information about businesses while they are on the go – and with their phone. Having a mobile responsive site is essentially when your regular website shrinks down to be small enough to display – and most importantly – displays correctly on a mobile device. Website builders and pre-purchased templates now include this feature – you just need to decide which one works best for your company, and which one you feel most comfortable using. Deciding which option is best for you is dictated mostly by the size of your company, your budget, the time you can devote to the creation and upkeep of the site and also by all the things you want your website to do.

Now technically, you can simply buy a template from any site of your choosing, fill out the needed areas and be done with your website. However, the final “look” you achieve may not be what viewers, or you, expect. Your website will work and that’s about it. It may not function how you pictured it and can reflect your lack of expertise. So why not take it a step further?

We recommend using experts to help ensure your website functions properly, and functions well for the overall user experience. Especially when building from scratch, we recommend hiring a web developer in addition to other professionals, such as a professional marketing agency, graphic designer and/or copywriter, unless you’re generating the copy yourself.

Helpful Tip: *If you can’t afford experts, your next best move would be to either locate students who are far into their studies, or a trusted enthusiast who can prove his or her work to you; however, professionals help ensure quality.*

Experts save you time and money in the long run, so it’s smart to invest upfront in their skills. Experts can also help navigate the “backend” to every template. With limited website experience, manipulating the backend to make your final “look” awesome can be overwhelming. With professional assistance you don’t have to speak techy language or feel highly adept at website design. Professional web developers know their business, and your website will be up and ready for public use in a shorter time period.

Your graphic designer will create a visual concept to communicate your ideas and captivate your consumers. If you’re not hiring a web developer to work closely with the graphic designer, the hired graphic designer should understand how to manipulate the template you purchased to tailor it to your needs and satisfaction. When considering a graphic designer (even within an advertising agency) be sure to get an overall feel for their work. To do that, ask some – or all – of the questions below when viewing someone’s portfolio.



Graphic Designer Questions

- Have you worked within the specific template purchased, or will a developer also be needed?
- How much communication do you like to have with the client?
- What is your experience with designing websites for the building industry?
- Provide an example of a website you created.
- Who was the target audience for this website?
- What was your role in creating this website? Were you involved in design strategy?
- How long did this take you? Did you meet the deadline?
- In consideration to budget, how much attention did you pay to the original quote?

With consideration to a copywriter, they will be the wordsmith for your site. When looking for a good copywriter, seek someone who listens well, repeating correctly what he or she believes to be your needs and desires. If the writer is interrupting you, chances are the copywriter will write exactly what they want instead of what you want. Also, your copywriter should be a reader as much as a writer. Ask what they read – especially anything about the building world. Then, check the writer’s work for diversity. They need to be a chameleon. If the same voice resonates in every sample of their work, be prepared to receive that same voice in the work performed for you.

Lastly, when reading the writer’s portfolio, ask yourself if you’re moved by the words. Are you feeling inspired to do something? Does the wording make you angry, bored, question the education level of the writer or just downright weary? Are the words suited for the intended audience and the goal of the piece?



To help you find a solid match, here are further questions you can ask of your possible copywriter:

Copywriter Questions

- What's your writing process?
- What can you tell me about my company and the building industry?
- How would you describe good SEO (Search Engine Optimization)?
- How do you get ideas for fresh content?
- What is the most intense example you have of meeting a tight deadline?
- When writing, are you best at discovering your own topic or following the instructions of a person or team?
- What type of content have you created recently?

A website is also about image, and your image is as important as your performance. In the building industry, how your buildings look and perform is what satisfies your customers. Consider your website just like one of your buildings and choose words thoughtfully to properly describe your company and what your company provides the end user. Believe it or not, but [94%](#) of website users' first impressions are design related and [38%](#) of people will stop engaging with a website if the content layout is unattractive.



Although having a good looking website is important, it is equally important to remember that having a useful website with the right information is what truly skyrockets businesses. So work hard to create a website that answers your audience's questions, but remember, your work is never done. The best websites frequently adjust, staying fresh with exciting news, updates and changes. Your website should always be a work in progress – rarely stagnant.

Before designing your website, no matter what direction you take, whether from scratch or a pre-built template, key informational items to consider are listed below.

Information Your Website *MUST* Provide

- Description of services
- Description of products
- Contact information
- Examples of your work – photos and videos

Do not underestimate the power of professional photos on your website. When customers visit your website, they want to get to know YOU – stock photos don't help them and could give a false impression of what you have to offer. Images can also help with Search Engine Optimization (SEO), discussed in a later section. Optimized images can help to engage customers, keep them on your website longer and encourage them to pick you over a competitor.

Additional Information for Your Website

- Tell your mission and explain your history
- Provide testimonials and reviews
- Host a blog or news source about your company – a place to further engage with your audience and build loyalty. Have anything unique on it you want, but be sure to update it in a timely manner with appropriate content.
- You may want to do something on your website that other people currently aren't (i.e. create a web app just for your company), so don't be shy with creativity. The web is all about forging new pathways.

In the end – when creating your website and whether you're buying a template or creating from scratch – the major challenge is nailing down your content. Content has many definitions, but to keep it simple, content is the high quality, useful information that will be on your website. Content can be expressed using a variety of formats including text, images, video, audio and/or presentations. When used for marketing purposes, content should also incorporate your branding. It tells an engaging story and in your case – solicits action. You want more clients. Get them to call you to use your company. Get them to subscribe to your newsletter, blog or email list. Your content should be geared toward a goal of interaction by using a call-to-action. Calls-to-action provide trackable evidence that could possibly turn into new leads for your company.

So considering the slew of content options available, before you start creating, we want you to understand one, **VERY IMPORTANT thing – Search Engine Optimization (SEO).**





SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Search Engine Optimization is the process of getting traffic from the “free”, “organic”, “editorial” or “natural” search results on search engines. It includes anything that can enhance your online presence, aka your content. Once again, content is the high quality, useful information on your website that projects your brand image with photographs, videos, audio and text. Your content will help get attention. That’s why you have to distribute good content, and good content = good SEO. According to [Forbes](#), the United States will spend an estimated \$72 billion in SEO services alone, with that number reaching \$80 billion by 2020. And according to the 2019 CMA Construction Marketing Outlook survey, 58% plan to increase spend on SEO. Clearly the benefits are speaking for themselves.

All major search engines such as Google, Bing and Yahoo have primary search results, where web pages and other content such as videos or local listings are shown and ranked based on what the search engine considers most relevant to users. Consumers often explore products and service options on Google first, finding and clicking through various sites. [Consider this](#): 93% of online experiences begin with a search engine, and 81% of people perform some type of online research prior to making a purchase. **75% of people NEVER SCROLL PAST THE FIRST PAGE of search engines! Your positioning matters!**

Here is an example of the process. When a person uses Google to search for something, such as “metal building builders”, a series of results pop up on the screen. You want your company’s information to appear high in this list of results, or to “rank high”. On-page content (57%) and keyword search (50%) are the [most effective SEO tactics](#). Google [receives over 63,000](#) searches per second on any given day, and over 2 trillion searches per year.

We know. It’s a lot to digest, but there are a multitude of things you can do – SEO things – to increase your visibility online.

In addition to SEO, tracking the performance of your website, blog or other online presence can really help in growing your business. For great reporting and insights, turn to Google. Considered one of the Big Four technology companies alongside Amazon, Apple and Facebook, Google’s mission is to organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful. One way to take advantage of Google’s expertise is through the [Google Analytics Academy](#). The Analytics Academy helps individuals learn about Google’s measurement tools so businesses can grow through intelligent data collection and analysis. The best part of all this? It’s free. There are courses for every skill level, but one of the most popular is [Google Analytics for Beginners](#). With this course, individuals learn the basic features Google Analytics offers, including how to create an account, implement tracking code, analyze basic reports and set up goals and campaign tracking. These courses can be taken on your own time, at your own pace and provide step-by-step instructions on how to maximize the reporting that Google offers. This reporting will provide a great insight into how your website is found, used and will help in tracking enough information to make any necessary adjustments to improve performance.



One thing to remember is no single SEO factor will guarantee search engine rankings – the factors work in combination to increase the odds of success. Those factors include speed of your website, linking, optimization for mobile devices, choosing good titles for your blogs and tabs, avoiding duplicate content, no keyword stuffing and hundreds of more complex options. SEO is a rabbit warren of information – vast and twisting. Complicating it more is SEO changes constantly. To fully understand the process you'll need a thorough knowledge of the state of search engine art.

Again, if this feels overwhelming, we recommend hiring a professional that is well versed in the tried and true methods of SEO. An SEO expert can understand your SEO, who can tell you when to shift your digital information to keep improving SEO.

But until you get to the point of needing/wanting a professional, there are a few basic considerations you can do on your own to get started:

- *Include keywords in strategic places on your website, such as title tags, page headings and site content.*
- *Publish custom content on your site to address relevant topics for potential customers.*
- *Streamline your site's navigation to make it easier for visitors to find the information they need and contact you.*
- *Probably easiest of all: be human. Think like your customer. What do they want and need? How can they get it? What are they interested in? How would you go about finding that information?*

One thing we should mention is we are discussing organic (free) SEO vs. paid SEO. Good, organic SEO is essentially

free and created through good content, but you also have the option to pay for SEO – which means you've put money behind your ranking in online search results. [Organic SEO](#) is about 5.66 times better than paid search ads. [Organic results](#) are also 8.5 times more likely to be clicked on than paid search results.

We've narrowed our remaining SEO tips into four main areas:

1. Choose a smart domain name.

A domain name is your website name. It can be any combination of letters and numbers; however, to improve SEO, you should include keywords that are associated with what your audience would search when they look for you. If your [domain](#) includes part of your keyword phrase, you have an edge. For example, if you construct metal buildings in Arizona, maybe your domain name could be AZConstructionBuilding.com. Short is better, but rationality should be primary. You want something that is easy to remember and also simple to write. Your URL should be reader-friendly and make sense to users. Accessibility and user experience are as much a part of SEO as keywords, so keep in mind that search engines have the ability to determine which websites are providing the best value for users. Drop the unnecessary words, like 'a', 'an' and 'the'. To search and see what domain names are taken or to purchase a domain name, GoDaddy.com is a good option.

2. Get yourself on the map to help drive local customers to your website.

If you want people coming into your actual office, it's important to get your business listed online. In terms of local SEO, this is why it's important: if you list your business, then your company's name will appear when people near you search "Metal Building Builders" online. It will appear because of the proximity between the person searching and your building.

It's important to get your business listed correctly and consistently on top online business directories, such as: Google Maps, Facebook, LinkedIn, Yelp, Merchant Circle, and Citysearch. You will also want to find respectable local directories for your business, such as your local newspaper's website and Chamber of Commerce business directory.

This is typically called "claiming your business", especially with Google My Business (GMB). GMB is free and can get you incredible exposure through Google. To optimize your GMB listing, you'll need a solid description, categories, business hours, types of payments accepted, etc. You can also upload your logo and photos of your business, product or services. The more sections you complete, the more SEO will work in your favor. Bing has a similar free option, Bing Places for Business, which you should consider using as well.

You should also be aware of your online reviews. According to [BrightLocal's](#) 2018 Local Consumer Review Survey, 91% of 18-34 year olds trust online reviews as much as a personal recommendation and 80% of 18-34 year olds have written online reviews – compared to just 41% of consumers over the age of 55. Whenever a review is left about your business, positive or negative, be sure to respond to it. This shows customers reading the reviews that you are engaged and care what your customers think. Your Facebook and Google My Business reviews are heavily weighted in public perception for online reviews. With many people using social media and search engines for information, your reviews and how you handle them can make a difference on whether or not you get the new business.

Once you've claimed your business online, make sure your contact information (name, address, phone number, business category, photos, blurbs, etc.) is the same on all sites. Also, the information you gave for all those sites needs to read the same way on your website and any other sites where you have your information listed. This helps SEO. Consistency is key.

3. Create exceptional content.

All of your SEO efforts will be supported if you produce good content. In order to nail down the types of images, videos, text, etc. you want to use on your website, you must first define the goal of your company. Have an exhaustive conversation about your missions – and most importantly – whom you want as an audience. Ask yourself these questions:

- What are the main things we offer – our areas of expertise?
- Who are we talking to? (This is your target audience.)
- What do they want to hear? (This is what you tell them using your good, truthful, original content.)



Also think about what reason(s) you are giving them to spend more than a few seconds reading your pages and if you're offering real value – something of substance that is unique, different and useful enough that they won't find anywhere else.

Answer these questions before you ever get started on your website – as well as any social media campaign or paid advertising efforts. You want to make sure you clearly define yourself and your pathway because, once you get started marketing, your audience and their interests will guide what you create.

Remember that list of keywords we mentioned previously? Your SEO will increase if you create custom content to address those terms and expand them into larger topics. Your primary keywords should push your rank, such as “metal construction business in Arizona”. You can build content around secondary keywords, such as “how to make your building efficient with insulated metal panels”. There’s really no precise number of times you should use keywords in your content – it is mostly common sense. Consider using words that you want a page to be found for and use keywords that fit naturally on the page. There’s no need to force a sentence together using keywords, if it doesn’t make sense for you or your audience.

When creating content, you want to keep your audience in mind. Following these guidelines can help you stay on track:

1. *Is what I’m saying/showing meaningful to my audience? Will they care?*
2. *Is it accurate?*
3. *Is it too shallow to be impactful – too narrow to be insightful and interesting?*
4. *Is it duplicated from something someone else already has online?*
5. *Are my own words overlapping or redundant? If so – it’s bad, bad, bad! Be original!*
6. *Are there grammatical/spelling errors? If so, your SEO will be penalized.*
7. *Are there interesting statistics I could provide to back this information, linking what I created to a more popular, well-ranked site? (This is a great way to boost SEO.)*
8. *Would anyone complain about what I created? Is that a good or bad thing?*

Having people see you as a resource and an expert will create more brand awareness and trust for your company. One other item to consider: if your site doesn’t have a blog, consider adding one, keeping it updated with industry news, helpful information and the latest company news. Remember, any construction company can write a generic blog post about “metal building construction”. So put your perspective into it – having a unique take on a subject can and will factor into your SEO. In addition to articles and blog posts, try incorporating visual content, such as images and videos, to give people an inside look at your company. This will engage site visitors, keeping them on your site for longer periods of time.

4. Keep your content fresh.

Search engines love new content. Whatever your content is, keep updating it on a regular basis. Any website, social media channel or other digital marketing platform needs to be updated regularly to gain good SEO. The more frequently you update your website with articles, downloads and new web pages, the more frequently a search engine will stop by to visit. That means you need new stories, new information, new anything on a scheduled output – it will help to create a content schedule for your posts. Once a month is too sparse and you’ll lose any SEO traction you’ve gained. Here’s our final bit of advice regarding your website:

- Regularly perform a site review of all the content on your site. Does it still make sense? Is it up to date with any changes in the industry?
- Making a change does not mean you have to build a new website. Add a page, update content on existing pages, create a new blog post.
- Watch your competition. You’ll want to have an idea of how often the industry updates so you can be sure to stay on trend, keeping your website at the forefront of search engine rankings.



EMAIL MARKETING

Now that you have a website with good SEO, you'll want people to visit your site in other ways, not just through online searches. For this, we recommend putting your time into an email marketing campaign. Advantages for email marketing include:

- Email is part of everyday life – unlike other digital platforms that people may not embrace, most people are email savvy.
- Email marketing provides solid, [trackable metrics](#), such as growth of lists, open rate, click rate, complaints and unsubscribes. You can even track your company's sales and revenue earned from your email campaigns with the right provider.

- Messages can be personalized to each audience member and provide answers that they want to hear. It can be simple, or sophisticated, with automation so that when the reader takes an action, like downloading a white paper, a follow-up email is automatically sent to that same person with information about what they just downloaded. With an auto-response feature, these can all be sent automatically, without you having to be at your computer or on your phone 24/7. All you have to do is think like your audience – what actions will they take and create automatic "if, then" scenarios.
- Email marketing is cost effective. Many email providers are free to use or have minimal costs based on how detailed you want your campaign to be. If you're not seeing results, you can try various things, such as changing the frequency of your emails, changing the copy or stop the campaign completely until you are more comfortable with the process, focusing your time in the areas that do resonate with your audience.
- When choosing a provider, make sure you pick one that will clean your email lists (meaning scrub for duplicates, errors, etc.), as well as provide analytics and automation so that there is less for you to worry about after the initial setup. [Mailchimp](#) is a popular platform that is easy to use, understand and has a free plan that will help get you started. There's even a [video!](#)

When email marketing first caught on, marketers went a little crazy, sending out emails to anyone and everyone, thus creating the dreaded spam mail. If you think email marketing is spam – keep reading. Thanks to [new spam laws](#) being enacted to protect consumers from unsolicited emails, marketers are regulated on what they can send. Due to these laws email marketing has dramatically



improved, with every person now having the right to mark emails as spam, which could possibly damage a company's reputation should they be flagged an inordinate number of times.

Now, instead of receiving unwanted emails, recipients have to "opt-in" to get emails from companies. By getting permission from the individual, you're getting recipients that are already invested in your company. They want more information and want to see what you have to offer.

After you select your provider, your next task is to build your email list, which you'll need to continually grow and update. It allows you to have constant communication with your customers.

To create your list, you'll need to ask for email addresses. There are many ways to do this – some prefer to give something away for free while others simply offer a newsletter or product updates. You can ask current customers to sign up for updates, have a sign up in your physical office, ask while at in-person events like tradeshows, make requests through social media channels or have a signup on your website. There's really no right or wrong answer on how to collect email addresses; however, it is important to have a clear purpose when asking for an address. This is again when a strong call-to-action comes into play and your copywriting will be important. Audience questions to consider when asking for email addresses include:

- What do I get when I give you my email address?
- Are you going to spam me?
- How often will you email me?
- Will I get discounts?
- Will you send me relevant offers or more junk?
- Are you going to share my information with outside companies?

Just posting "enter your email for updates" isn't going to spark your audience. Think about your personal email preferences – what do you most often subscribe to and what gets your attention? (Email series, downloads, white papers, eBooks or general updates, etc.) Most likely your customer base will have similar preferences to you.

You'll also set and manage the expectations for your email marketing efforts. If you have an engaging call-to-action and provide consistent follow-up, you'll have a positive and successful campaign. However, if you promise to communicate in a certain way once per week and you end up sending emails daily or infrequently, you won't have success with your audience. Don't be afraid to start small with your communications and increase the frequency as you get more comfortable and gain more of an audience.



Once someone provides their email address, your initial follow-up email should be sent immediately as a way to introduce yourself and detail what you plan on doing with your new subscriber's information. The easiest way to do this is to opt into using the automatic response feature offered in whatever email provider you select. An additional benefit of the auto-responder is when you want to announce something new or have a specific message to share, you've already been building a relationship with your audience over several weeks/months and are less likely to annoy your readers with an additional piece of information.

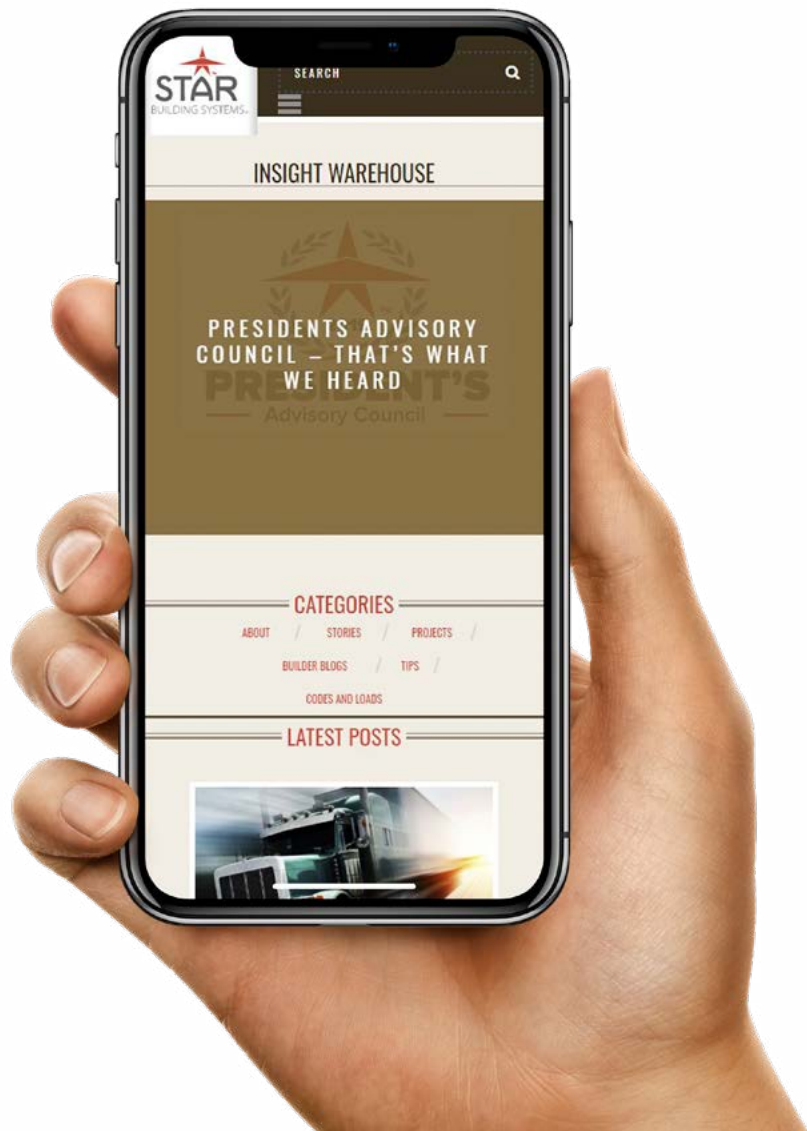
If you're going to provide a [newsletter](#), consider sharing the specifics up front and be crystal clear about the topics your newsletter discusses and the frequency at which you distribute it. The most compelling newsletters often combine messaging and updates with lists of products, services or images, balanced by personal messages or updates from company employees. Remember, you aren't looking for a large subscriber list that is inactive. The goal is a more active, smaller group that really cares about your company and the newsletters you're sending.

Your selected email provider will most likely include reporting tools for analytics, allowing you to determine if your information is resonating with your audience. Important analytics to consider are open rate, click through rate (CTR) and unsubscribes. Open rate will give a clear picture of your relationship with your customer – if the number is low, people are deleting your email without reading it. Your company may want to rethink expectations, how they're being managed and what the value is that is being provided. If CTR is low, your message isn't targeted enough or just isn't getting through. By improving your copy, you should see CTR begin to increase. If your unsubscribe rate is high in relation to your opt-in rate, you'll need to find out why people are leaving and take action based on your results. The good thing with email marketing is that you can easily rework your plan and try a different approach if you're not seeing the results you want.

The last thing to do for your email list is to categorize or segment the recipients into more targeted groups. "Blast and batch" emails are not the best use of email marketing any longer. A blast and batch approach means you're emailing everyone on your contact list the same information. Segmenting allows you to track where recipients are in the sales process and also provides

them with tailored content. Segmenting helps you reach more people effectively in accordance with their specific interest. For example, you can segment a larger list into the following categories, based on how or what they have opted into:

- *Customers*
- *Product Updates*
- *Newsletters*
- *Daily Emails*



Another example of segmenting would be if you own a building company that constructs both metal and wood buildings. It would be ideal to segment your customers based on the type of building they usually create, and speak to them differently.

Now that your list is in order, you need to create interesting, original content for your emails. A great way to create content and gather ideas for future content is to keep a running list of topics, information or story ideas. Write things down as they come to you – you'll be amazed at the amount of interesting stories that live within you. Your co-workers, employees and industry partners are most likely full of intriguing thoughts and ideas as well. Use your surrounding resources to build content that is unique to you, your brand and your company.

Keep in mind, the content should be helpful to your recipients and benefit them in some way. For example, as a builder, your subscribers most likely will enjoy anything that strongly affects their building – like cost effective tips,

energy efficiency design methods and popular design structures. Also anything of the odd or exciting nature will always get people's attention – a crazy, touching or funny building story, unique building designs or anything that sparks your audience's interest.

If you need help, you can find great examples of email marketing content online. You can use these examples to plan how you want to deliver your message and decide how you want to structure your storytelling. Remember to include the call-to-action in your content – you want your reader to do something, **which will most likely be to contact YOU.**

You don't want to get greedy – refrain from overloading your recipients with constant emails. You don't want your readers to lose interest in you or find the email unhelpful. If they do, they'll unsubscribe. Lastly, be sure to connect your email marketing to the rest of your marketing efforts such as your social media channels.





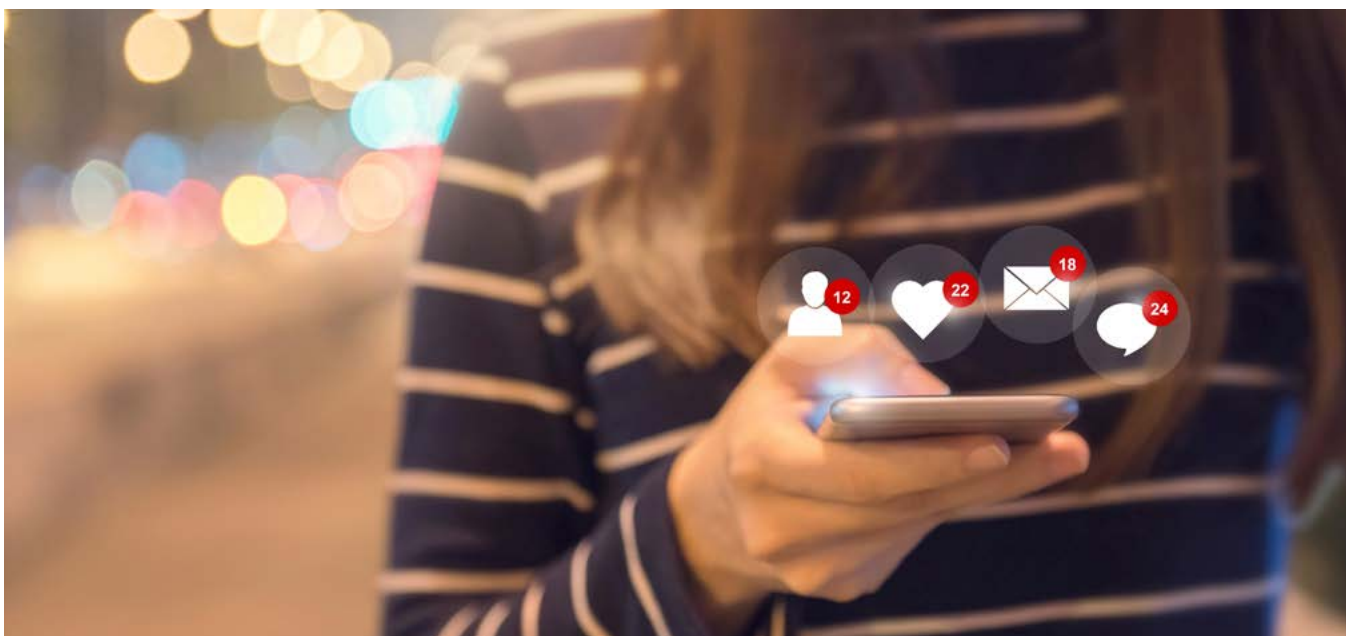
SOCIAL MEDIA

We probably don't have to tell you how popular social media is today. It's huge. With multiple social media channel options, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube and Pinterest, there are opportunities for you to interact and engage with your audience for free. Over 60% of brand marketers say social outreach is becoming far more vital to promotional campaigns, and nearly 3 in 4 saw spikes in website traffic after spending just 6 hours a week on social networks. And although the building industry does not attract as many technophiles as others, all industries are progressing toward utilizing social media, and remember, it's about your audience – not your industry. With [77%](#) of consumer-facing businesses and 43% of B2B-focused firms acquiring customers just on Facebook alone, you can see why it is important to have a social presence. Are your end users on social media? Are the people who could increase your sales and polish your reputation on social media? Probably so, and if not, they will be eventually. So you should be there too.

Social media channels are excellent at increasing brand loyalty, creating engagement, generating piles of hot leads, managing your reputation, creating a community

and making sales. Studies have shown that social media has a [100%](#) higher lead-to-close rate than traditional, outbound marketing methods. Social media is a way to hear what your consumers think about your product – for free. It's a platform for gaining insight into your reputation and a perfect tool for identifying areas of needed improvement. It allows you to be a fly on the wall when people are talking about your product, and in turn, gives you the opportunity to engage with them. Social media marketing can work wonders if you put time into it and interact with your audience.

In order to get started with social media – just like your website – be sure to have a clear business goal to see if your social media channels are helping you reach that goal. For example, if your business goal is to sell 10 buildings by the end of the month, then your social media goal should help you reach that business goal. If you receive 20 engagements from customers inquiring about your services on social media and you follow up with them online, by phone, etc., and five of those 20 people end up purchasing a building, you know that social media helped you reach 50% of that business goal.





This is a simplified example, but it can show you how to choose your key performance indicators and how your social media efforts should aid your entire business goals. After measuring, you'll know which channels to focus on more than others and where you are actually gaining business. The important thing is finding the right mix of hard sell posts saying call me about your next building and interesting content.

When it comes to social media, there are three ways people describe the marketing tactic surrounding it. These three areas are known as **owned, earned and paid**.

Owned refers to your Facebook page, or your YouTube channel, or any social media channel that is free. You can edit your owned channels at will. You don't pay a dime for

them. All the content is yours to create and manage.

Earned refers to something slightly different. It refers to the reaction you get from your owned channels. Earned is anything people say about brand, product or services, and it also doesn't cost a dime.

Earned is a great way to get additional content, such as testimonials and photos, for free. You can even take earned a step further and find key influencers to talk encouragingly about your company. Remember, while word of mouth may be somewhat dated and unmeasured, social media is the digital version of word of mouth and it CAN be measured. People listen to those they trust. That's why it's important to find influencers and build a relationship with them. The hope is that they will support your brand.

Paid refers to the things you've actually had to pay for in order for them to be shown on your social media channels. Paid are the messages you want to spotlight – the highly important messages: a big sale on building materials or an event at your company. You use paid to get certain information in front of a larger audience and amplify your message. Also, and this is the most important thing to keep in mind with paid posts – you can select the audience you want to target based on age, gender, interests, etc. You can easily talk to the people you want if you use paid.



Here are a few more suggestions to consider when creating a social media presence and how to track success:

1. *The best way to capture your audience's attention is with simple and short messaging.*
2. *Determine where your audience will be located in the social media realm and whom you want to target. Be visual! Use photos, videos, infographics, colors, etc. instead of just text. For example, based on your product, you may be able to create valuable, interesting videos. If so, YouTube, Instagram and Pinterest are very useful, due to their visual nature. If you are very focused and known in the community, Facebook may be a better option. Don't be afraid to tailor your communications to each social channel and determine your voice for each.*
3. *Create your social media goals based off your overall business goal, and determine your key performance indicators to see if social media is working. Success can also be measured in how your audience responds to messages and how much interest you're creating for your brand with social media.*
4. *Create a content schedule and consider your resources. If you are a one-man shop, it's better to choose only one social media channel to focus on before branching out, like only Facebook or only Instagram. This will keep you from becoming overwhelmed, because remember, it's all about updating your content on a regular basis.*
5. *Tailor your content to each social media channel. If you're running Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages, post content that is different to each channel. Your followers and the type(s) of content they are looking for is not the same on every social media channel. For example, if you want to promote a blog you posted to your website about a new completed project, consider posting the link to the blog post on your Facebook page, but a picture with no link to your Instagram page.*
6. *Find a tool that lets you auto post. Some great ones are Hootsuite, Sprout Social and Buffer.*
7. *Keep constant conversation – what other people say about you boosts your credibility as much as what you say. Also don't be afraid to position yourself as a thought leader. Provide your audience with content that will encourage them to come back again and again, thus becoming their source for industry information.*
8. *Engage with influencers and other businesses. Share posts from others that are relevant to your business and social media pages. Tag other people and pages in your posts when appropriate. Involving others in your posts is a great way to gain more organic interactions with your content.*
9. *Make sure that you utilize the analytics on each channel to see how your social media is doing and how much engagement you have. Each channel has some form of analytics. Use them. If you want to dig deeper, there are options you can purchase for social media analytics.*

One last thing to consider is the 60/20/20 rule, where 60 percent of your time should be spend engaging your audience in some way, 20 percent should be sharing relevant content for your audience and 20 percent should be spent talking about your brand.

When planning the content you want to post on your social media, it may be a challenge to come up with ideas for posts on a regular basis. Planning your posts and keeping a monthly content calendar can help keep postings consistent and organized so you can avoid having to come up with post ideas on the fly. A monthly content calendar can help keep postings consistent and organized so you can avoid having to come up with post ideas on the fly.

Some content ideas you can keep on your social media calendar are:

- *Blog posts from your website*
- *News and articles from online sources like [Building Design + Construction Network](#) and [Metal Building Manufacturers Association](#)*
- *Events and holidays*
- *Project highlights*
- *Employee birthdays, anniversaries or highlights*
- *Infographics*
- *Customer testimonials*
- *Company news*

The key to growing social media pages is engagement. If you're not posting engaging content on a regular basis, you will have a hard time gaining new followers or interactions on your social media pages. If you're unsure what posts perform the best, use analytics provided by each social media channel to analyze what content performs well for your business and use past analytics as a guide for new content planning. If you follow these social media tips, you will gain followers in no time and will start seeing results

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DIGITAL MARKETING

While the previous sections covered many ways to promote your business in the digital world, there are more ways to boost your presence through digital marketing tactics. When you have a great organic presence built and want to continue seeing growth, you can consider building a digital marketing campaign to place advertisements across different platforms. A few of the more common digital marketing tactics are paid social media ads, search engine marketing and programmatic advertising.

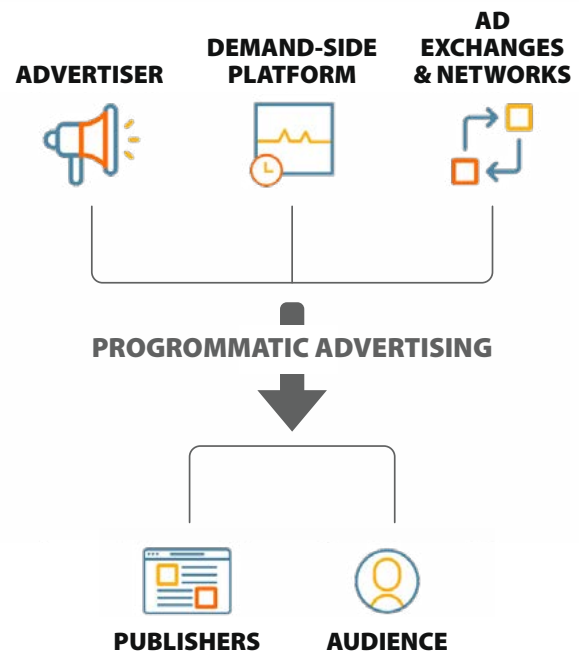
All of these will require a budget behind them, but with the extensive targeting options and large audiences, you will be surprised at how far your dollars will go with digital marketing tactics.

Paid Social Media Ads: Facebook is a great place to start a digital marketing campaign for businesses of all sizes because of the easy to use platform and the fact that more than one million people are active on Facebook. Facebook also allows the ability to place ads on Instagram and their Audience Network. Facebook Audience Network is an off-Facebook, in-app advertising network for mobile apps. Advertisers can serve up their ads to customers who are using mobile sites and apps other than Facebook, extending their reach beyond the platform while still getting to use Facebook's exceptionally powerful ad system.

Search Engine Marketing, or SEM, is the placement of ads on search engines like Google and Bing. Advertisers bid on keywords that users of services such as Google and Bing might enter when looking for certain products or services, which gives the advertiser the opportunity for their ads to appear alongside results for those search queries. These ads, often known by the term pay-per-click ads, come in a variety of formats. Some are small, text-based ads, whereas others, such as product listing ads are more visual, product-based advertisements. Search engine marketing's greatest strength is that it offers advertisers the opportunity to put their ads in

front of motivated customers who are ready to buy at the precise moment they're ready to make a purchase, which is why search engine marketing is so effective and such an amazingly powerful way to grow your business. Google also offers a service similar to Facebook's Audience Network, called the Google Display Network. The Google Display Network can help you reach people while they're browsing their favorite websites, showing a friend a YouTube video, checking their Gmail account, or using mobile devices and apps. Google offers free training on search engine marketing through the [Google Academy for Ads](#). There are other paid resources for learning more about SEM like [LinkedIn Learning](#) and [WordStream Advisor](#).

Programmatic Advertising is the automated buying and selling of online advertising. This automation makes transactions efficient and more effective, streamlining the process and consolidating your digital advertising efforts in one technology platform. Programmatic platforms have been growing their inventory and database such that any format and any channel can be accessed programmatically today,



including mobile, desktop, tablet, audio, digital outdoor and connected TV. Targeting tactics are used to [segment audiences](#) using data so that advertisers only pay for ads delivered to the right people at the right time, and depend less on the “spray and pray” method of digital advertising. Computers and [algorithms](#) make the ad buying, placement and optimization process more efficient, remove mundane activities and cut down on time to market. Programmatic advertising is typically bought through a demand-side platform or DSP by a vendor who can help make recommendations on targeting and tactics based off your business goals. Examples of companies who provide services for programmatic advertising are Centro and Diligent. It is also very common to hire an experienced

digital marketing professional or agency when running campaigns across several platforms to help manage all aspects of the campaign and possibly be able to negotiate better rates than if you bought advertising directly because of the relationships they build with vendors.

Digital marketing tactics are great for a variety of goals like brand awareness, website traffic and selling products or services. The ever evolving aspects of digital marketing can make it seem like a daunting task to learn and implement in your marketing strategy, but the cost effectiveness and many options can make it a great, new way to find new customers and partners for your business growth.



CONCLUSION

Overall, with your building company endeavors, we wish you great success and longevity. And we believe the best way to make this happen is by marketing yourself well. Marketing today is all about finding more effective ways to connect with and inspire your audience. It requires

rethinking how you communicate with current and prospective customers. So please utilize what you've learned, and shout your name out to the world. Your current clients and new prospects will appreciate it, as will your bottom line – we promise.

