



# HUNDREDS OF FOLLOWERS, BUT LOW ENGAGEMENT?



How to take your social media game to the next level

By Lisa Mancuso

You've worked hard to gain followers on social media. Now it's time to make those efforts pay off. [Get your audience invested in your content](#) by inspiring

them to share and comment on your posts, and you're on the way to successfully expanding your business's reach.

Increasing engagement among followers is key to growing your brand. "Just publishing things is not highly effective anymore," notes Laura Pence Atencio, social media strategist and founder of Aurora, Colorado-based digital marketing company [Social Savvy Geek](#). She advises small business owners to create content that's mobile-friendly and to be strategic about the type of information they put out there.

"The No. 1 thing is to start with a plan," Pence Atencio says. Read on for tips on how that plan can spark meaningful conversations with potential customers.

**Create videos that captivate.** Using video in your Facebook posts is one of the most important steps you can take to get your followers to interact. "If they're watching a video they're engaged, even if they don't say anything," Pence Atencio says. Create an original video that illustrates the products or services you offer or [takes viewers behind the scenes of what your company does](#). "Your average consumer will only watch seven seconds of a video—unless it grabs and holds their attention," Pence Atencio says.

She suggests that business owners [create videos](#) of varying lengths for different audiences. "I have a 30-second teaser video for cold audiences. I have a 1:30-second video for warmer audiences. I have a 30-minute video for my actively engaged audience." Then, be proactive about getting your audience involved. "Wrap up with asking people questions that they can engage with so they'll comment," Pence Atencio adds.

**Give them something they want.** Whether it is words or video, maintaining a blog is a critical piece of your online marketing. Take quotes or images from your blog and share as posts, which then brings followers back to your website. But don't stop there. [Have something your audience wants](#), such as a cheat sheet, checklist, or workbook that they will get in exchange for their first name

and email address. Then further the conversation via email, says Pence Atencio.

**Make your posts meaningful.** Pence Atencio suggests using the 70-20-10 rule: 70 percent of your content is written by other people on topics that appeal to your audience; 20 percent should be original content (your blog or video) with a call to action; and 10 percent should be a sale or a promotion. Always include a branded image with any text you post. Images are more likely to inspire comments and reactions than text, Pence Atencio says.

**Post when people are most engaged.** Don't just randomly post things throughout the day. Know when your audience is likely to be online and when they're likely to respond. A lot depends on the platform you're using. For example, Pence Atencio recommends posting up to 25 times a day on Twitter, and for Facebook she's found that two to three times a day works best. Social media management programs such as [CoSchedule](#) and [Hootsuite](#) can select the best times to post based on when your audience has been most responsive in the past.

**Boost popular posts.** People are more likely to comment on content that other people are commenting on. Instead of boosting random [Facebook posts](#) with the hopes that you'll inspire likes, boost posts that are already getting comments to create an even bigger impact. If a post is extremely popular, use [Facebook Ads Manager](#) to turn that post into an ad.

Increase your social media engagement by putting a good plan in place and giving your audience an incentive to respond. Then be ready to keep the dialog going. "You should know in advance what you're going to be doing so you can put proper time and effort into it to be effective," says Pence Atencio.

*Lisa Mancuso is an experienced writer and editor who covers business, entrepreneurship, and women's issues.*

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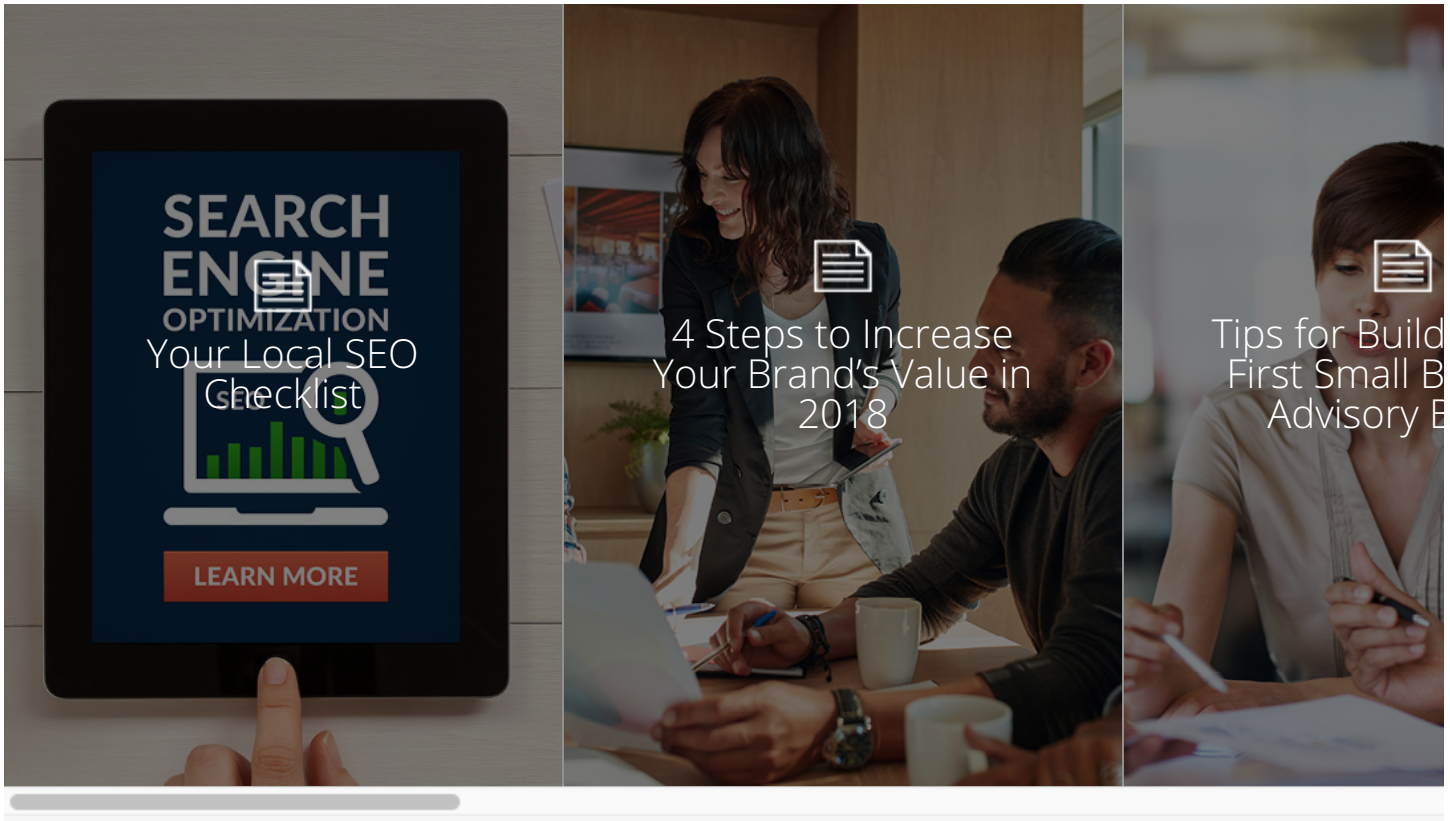
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