

BUILDING A SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

WITH THE HELP OF AI AND
OTHER TOOLS





Why Social Media Matters

"Your Website is Your Home, But Social Media is Your Open House"

- **3 + billion** people use social media globally
- **82% of consumers** trust businesses more when they are active on social media
- **90% of people** buy from brands they Follow online
- **Consumers are 4X** more likely to buy from a brand that shares their values



Social Media Strategy

- Should align with your business goals and values
- Increase Sales, Brand Awareness, Customer Engagement, Lead Generation, Customer Relationships

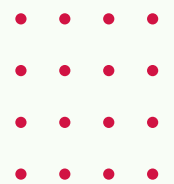


Social Media Strategy

“Before you post a single thing—know why you're posting. Social media should serve your business, not just fill your feed.” What do you want your audience to DO after they see my content?

Defining Your Goals

- Brand Awareness
- Engagement
- Sales or Leads
- Community Building



BUSINESS GOAL	MATCHING SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY	CONTENT PILLAR EXAMPLE
Increase Brand Awareness	Use Reels, trending sounds, ads, and visual storytelling to reach new audiences.	Entertain/ Engage, Inspire/Motivate
Boost Customer Engagement	Ask questions, use polls, go Live, respond to comments, and share UGC (user-generated content).	Engage, Celebrate, Humanize
Drive Sales or Leads	Promote products/services with CTAs, use link-in-bio tools, and highlight limited-time offers.	Promote/Showcase, Educate
Build Community	Show company values, behind-the-scenes, introduce your team, and share customer stories.	Connect/ Humanize, Recognize, Inspire
Establish Thought Leadership	Post insights, share articles, create carousels with tips, and offer professional POV content.	Lead/Position, Educate

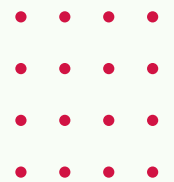


Social Media Strategy

If you try to talk to everyone, you'll end up connecting with no one. This step—defining your audience—is where strategy gets personal and powerful.

Define Your Audience

- Define Ideal Audience(s)
 - Demographics - Age, gender, location, income, education
 - Psychographics - interest, values, lifestyles
- Research
 - Customer Discovery
 - Tools - Social Media analytic tools, Google Analytics, Google Insights



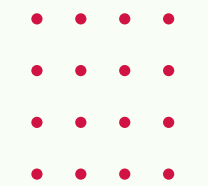


Social Media Strategy

If you try to talk to everyone, you'll end up connecting with no one. This step—defining your audience—is where strategy gets personal and powerful.

Write your Audience Profile

1. Age & location
2. What do they value most?
3. What platform are they on?
4. What do they need help with?



Define Your Audience



Start with Demographics

- Age
- Gender
- Income level
- Education, location

Helps you know where they are and what platforms they use

Example:

“If your ideal customer is a mom in her 30s living in a rural area, she’s more likely on Facebook and Instagram than TikTok or LinkedIn



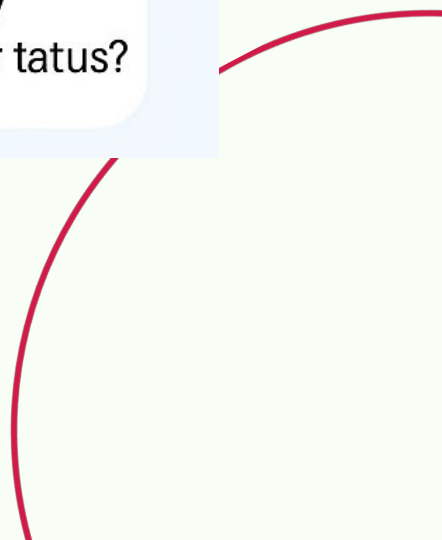
Add Psychographics

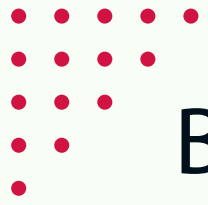
- Interests
- Values
- Lifestyle
- Buying motivations

This tells you why they buy and what type of content resonates

Example:

Are they bargain hunters or luxury lovers? Do they care about sustainability? Are they motivated by community, trends, or status?





Business Strategy

Focus on the Customer's Perspective

- It's not about what you do—it's about what they get.
- Use "you" language more than "we."

Example:

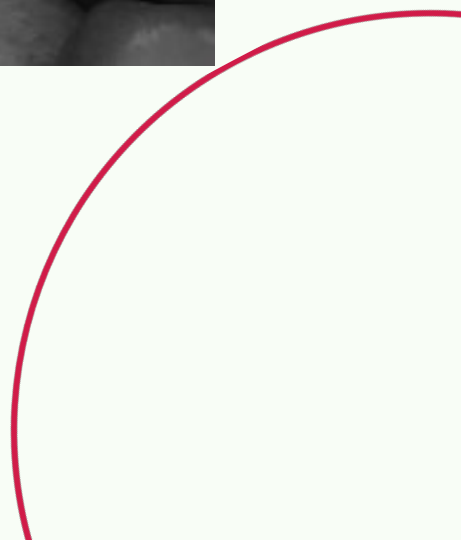
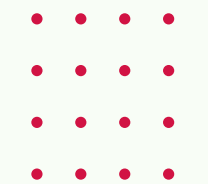
"You'll love how easy this makes your morning routine."

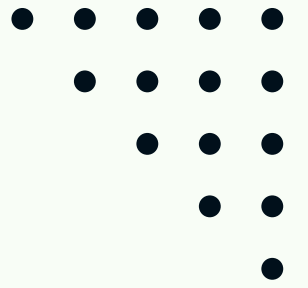
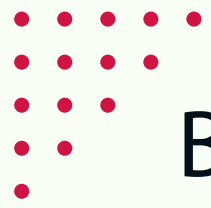
✗ "We've been in business for 10 years."

Crafting your message

*What **problem** are you solving or what **needs** are you fulfilling - for **who** - and what makes you **better than anyone else***

What are they searching for!?





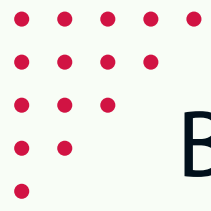
Hashtag Strategy

- Create your Brand Hashtags
- Create your common hashtags
- Research relevant trending Hashtags.
- Use location-based hashtags - #councilbluffsmallbusiness
- Invite them to interact directly with your posts by giving "likes" and relay "shares"
- Mainly for Instagram, Tik Tok, & Twitter
- Critical for Discovery, Organization, and Algorithms (Tik Tok)



**#SBDC, #SmallBusiness,
#Entrepreneurship,
#BusinessAdvice,
#LocalBusiness,
#CouncilBluffs,
#SouthwestIowa**

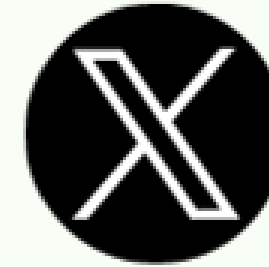




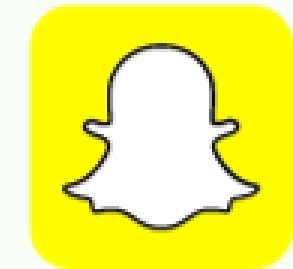
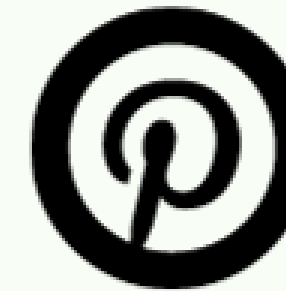
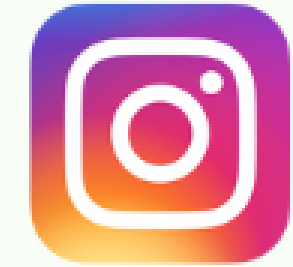
Choosing channels

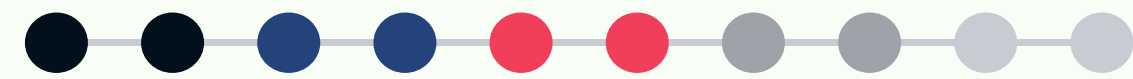
Choose the channels where your customers are at

B2B



B2C





Content Pillars & Planning

- Planning will help make it smoother, easier and less time consuming

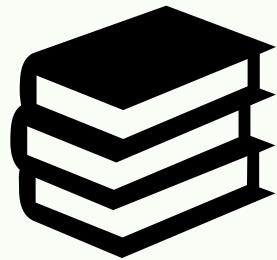


Content Plan

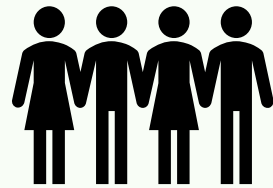
Content Pillars

What Are Content Pillars?

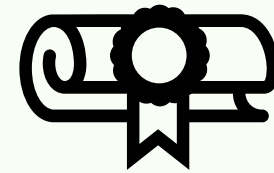
- Core themes or categories your business consistently posts about
- Align with your audience's needs AND your business goals
- Help streamline planning, create content faster, and build brand recognition



Inform/Educate



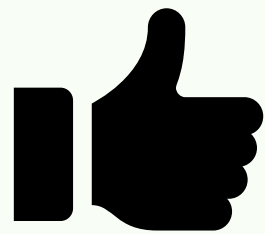
Humanize/Connect



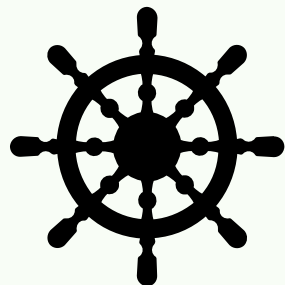
Recognize/Celebrate



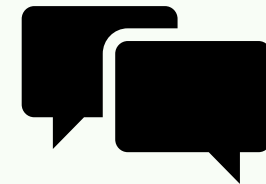
Promote/Brag



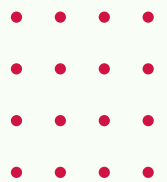
Motivate/Inspire



Position/Lead



Entertain/Engage



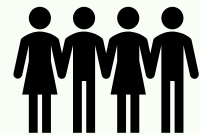


Content Pillar Example

Example: Fractional Business Executive



Inform/Educate: Share tips, frameworks, tools or industry insights that help your audience do their job better



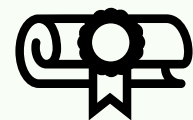
Humanize/Connect: Show the people behind the brand, your values, or your work culture



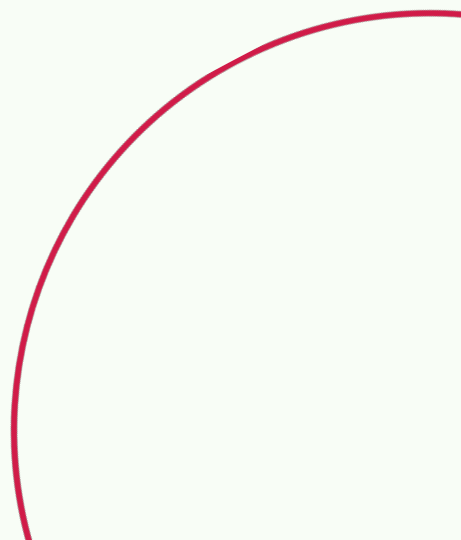
Promote/Brag: Highlight your services, offers, packages, or case studies (without sounding like a sales pitch)



Motivate/Inspire: Encourage or empower your audience to take action or believe in growth/change



Share your opinions, challenge outdated practices, or introduce smarter ways to work





DID YOU KNOW THAT NETWORKING IS A SUPERPOWER FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS? SHARE YOUR FAVORITE NETWORKING TIP IN THE COMMENTS BELOW AND CONNECT WITH FELLOW ENTREPRENEURS. LET'S BUILD A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY!

Motivate/Inspire



POSITION YOUR BUSINESS AS A LEADER IN YOUR INDUSTRY WITH SBDC SOUTHWEST IOWA. WE PROVIDE VALUABLE MARKET INSIGHTS, COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS, AND GROWTH STRATEGIES TO HELP YOU STAND OUT.

Position/Lead



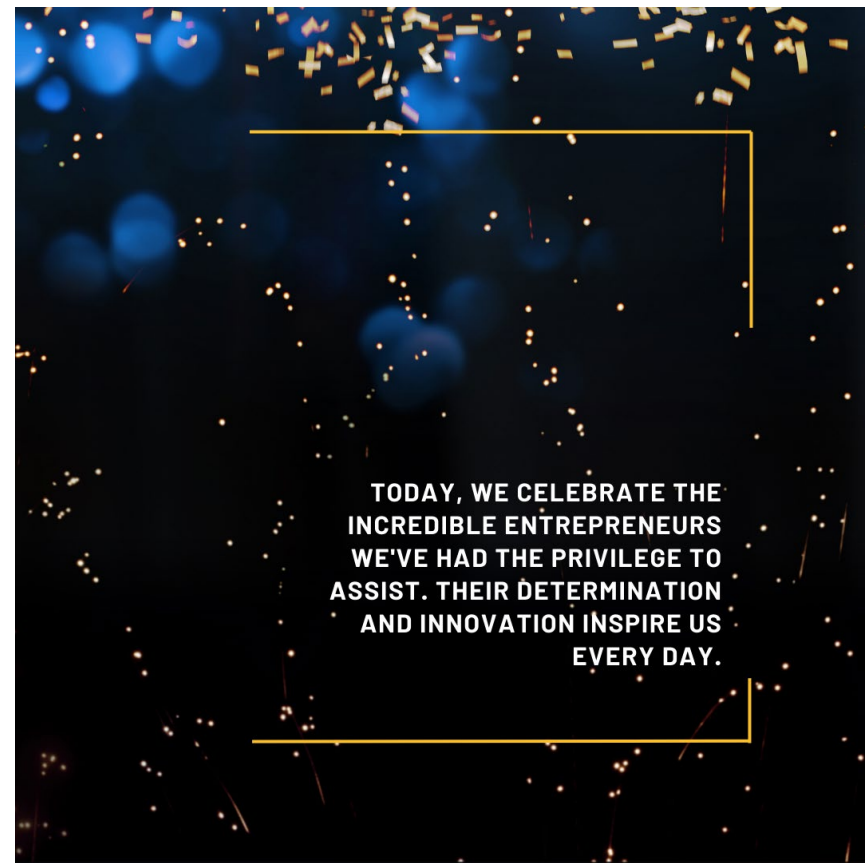
SMALL BUSINESS TIP: EMBRACE CHANGE AND ADAPT TO NEW CHALLENGES, ESPECIALLY IN THE EVER-EVOLVING WORLD OF SOCIAL MEDIA. STAY AHEAD WITH THE LATEST TRENDS TO ENGAGE YOUR AUDIENCE EFFECTIVELY.

Inform/Educate



AT SBDC SOUTHWEST IOWA, WE BUILD RELATIONSHIPS, NOT JUST BUSINESSES. CONNECT WITH US TO RECEIVE PERSONALIZED ADVICE AND SUPPORT TAILORED TO YOUR SPECIFIC NEEDS.

Humanize/Connect



TODAY, WE CELEBRATE THE INCREDIBLE ENTREPRENEURS WE'VE HAD THE PRIVILEGE TO ASSIST. THEIR DETERMINATION AND INNOVATION INSPIRE US EVERY DAY.

Recognize/Celebrate



WE TAKE PRIDE IN OUR TRACK RECORD OF HELPING BUSINESSES SUCCEED. OUR EXPERT ADVISORS HAVE GUIDED COUNTLESS ENTREPRENEURS TO REACH THEIR GOALS.

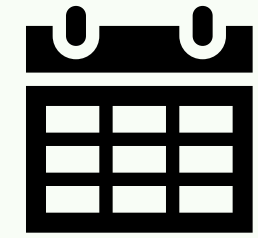
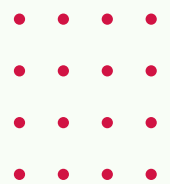
Promote/Brag



Content Plan

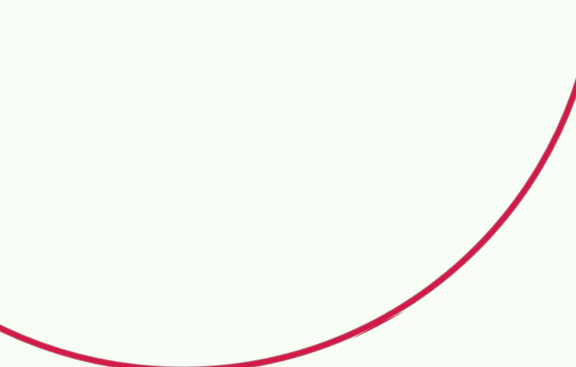
Posting Frequency from Industry experts

- **Instagram:** 3-7 posts per week on your feed, 2-5 stories per day. Consider 1-3 Reels per week to engage with the audience preferring dynamic content.
- **Facebook:** 3-5 posts per week. Facebook's algorithm favors quality and engaging content over quantity.
- **Twitter:** 1-5 tweets per day. Twitter's fast-paced nature allows for more frequent posting.
- **LinkedIn:** 1-5 posts per week. Focus on professional, educational, and company news-related content.
- **TikTok:** 1-3 times per day. Frequent posting can help capitalize on the platform's algorithm for greater visibility.



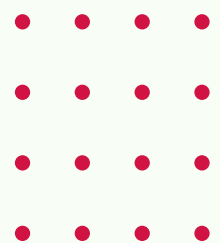
Use scheduling tools like Meta Business Suite, Buffer, or Later to batch and stay consistent.

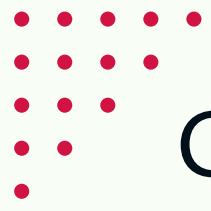




Content Types Weekly Plan

- Monday - Inform/Educate
- Wednesday - Motivate/Inspire
- Friday - Entertain/Engage





Content Plan

Creative Brief

Project Goal

- What are you trying to accomplish with this content? e.g., Build trust, promote a product, drive engagement

Target Audience

- Who are you speaking to? Demographics: (age, location, etc.) Pain points / Interests:

Key Messages & Tone

- What's the core message? What tone fits? (e.g., friendly, expert, funny, warm)

Content Pillars

- Which pillar does this content fall under? Inform/Educate Entertain/Engage Motivate/Inspire Promote/Brag Humanize/Connect Position/Lead Recognize/Celebrate

Format & Platform

- Type of content + Where it will be posted e.g., Instagram Reel, LinkedIn article, Facebook Story

Visual Style

- What does it need to look like? Fonts / colors / logos Any photos or videos?

Seasonal or Campaign

- Tie-In Linked to an event, theme, or awareness week? e.g., Women's History Month, Back-to-School

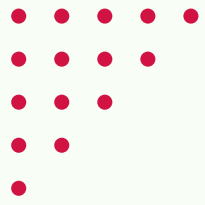
Hashtags & Keywords

- Branded Hashtags: Trending/Local Tags: Keywords to Include:

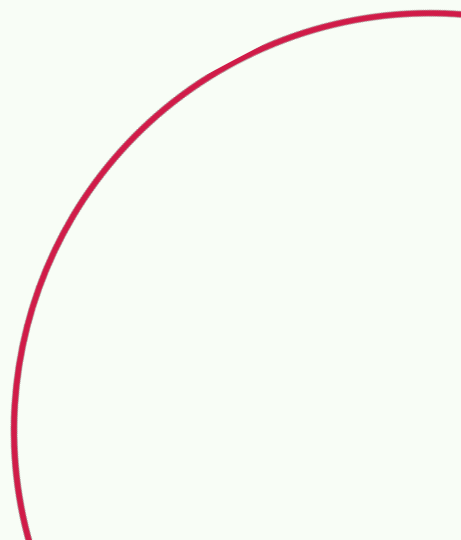
Review & Posting

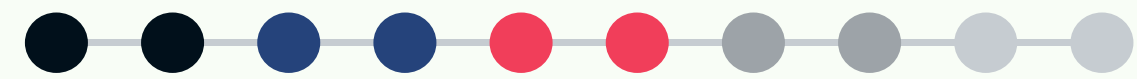
- Who needs to approve? When will it post?





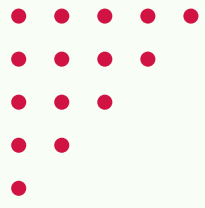
[Full Weekly Content Calendar Template - Google Sheets](#)





Platform Spotlights

- Planning will help make it smoother, easier and less time consuming



Facebook

2025 Platform Trends

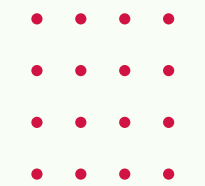
Reels and short-form videos get higher reach (yes—even on Facebook!)

Facebook Groups are being pushed more in the feed and are great for building a niche community

Facebook Ads continue to deliver strong local targeting and retargeting options
Meta's AI tools are helping auto-suggest content formats for businesses

Talking Tip:

“Don't treat Facebook like an outdated platform—it's evolving behind the scenes, especially in how video and events are prioritized.”



Best Content for Facebook

- Educational videos, behind-the-scenes photos, testimonials
- Short-form videos (Reels now appear in feeds)
- Local events, Facebook Lives, and Group content
- Posts that start **conversations** or ask questions

Audience Overview

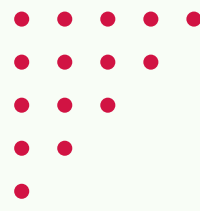
Primarily 25-65+, with strong engagement from Gen X and Boomers

Ideal for local reach, community-driven businesses, service industries, and event promotion

Great for building trust with people who want to research before they buy

Posting Frequency

- **3-5 times per week** is ideal for most small businesses
- Post types can vary: video, carousel, link, event, or simple text post
- Replying to comments is just as important as posting



Instagram

2025 Platform Trends

Reels still dominate—Instagram pushes short-form video content more than any other format

Instagram Broadcast Channels (for exclusive, follower-based updates)

AI-powered suggested content will favor consistent brand messaging

DM-based selling and lead nurturing is growing—responding quickly matters!

Best Content for Instagram

Reels: Short-form video gets priority in the feed

Carousels: Multi-image posts for tutorials, client wins, or step-by-step advice

Stories: Quick, casual, behind-the-scenes (great for humanizing your brand)

Before/After & Process Posts

Quote graphics and tips that add value at a glance

Audience Overview

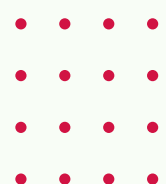
Primarily 25 - 45
(millennials and Gen Z)
Highly Engaged!

Ideal for businesses with a visual, personal, or lifestyle-driven brand

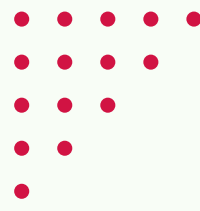
Works well for service businesses, creative industries, and Personal Branding and Innovative/visual products

Posting Frequency

- Feed:** 3–7x per week
- Stories:** 2–5 per day if possible
- Reels:** 1–3 per week
- Batch content and use scheduling tools to maintain consistency



Instagram is where people go to get inspired and feel connected. It's less 'tell me about your product' and more 'show me what it feels like to work with you'



LinkedIn

LinkedIn Carousels are now native (no need for PDFs)

Thought leadership posts are being rewarded in the algorithm

LinkedIn Newsletters help build subscriber lists directly on the platform

Video & Polls are strong for visibility and engagement

Talking Tip: "What works on LinkedIn is depth—not flash. People are craving authenticity, clear thinking, and leadership."

Posting Frequency

- 1-3 high-quality posts per week
- Mix it up: thought leadership, storytelling, carousels, and value posts
- Don't forget to comment on others posts

Best Content for LinkedIn

Personal leadership stories that show vulnerability + value

Data-driven posts that share insights, lessons learned, or frameworks

Industry commentary (your POV on trends, tools, or challenges)

Team/client features that show real people and real results

Audience Overview

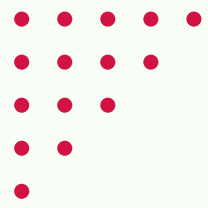
Professionals, Business Owners, Executives, Department Heads

Decision-makers in companies of all sizes

Ideal for B2B service providers, Consultants, and Thought Leaders

If you're trying to get in front of people who sign the checks—this is where they scroll during lunch breaks and between meetings

LinkedIn is no longer just a job board. It's now a full-blown B2B content platform—and the best place to build trust, share expertise, and connect with decision-makers in your industry.



TikTok

2025 Platform Trends

Short-form video dominance: TikTok has pushed even Instagram and YouTube to focus on short, creative videos

TikTok's "Shop" feature will be growing for direct sales, but still works well for B2B awareness

TikTok Ads: Excellent for retargeting with engaging video ads, especially for local businesses

User-Generated Content (UGC): Encourages followers to create content around your business or products

Best Content for TikTok

Quick Tips & Hacks: Short-form, educational content that shares value in 30-60 seconds

Behind-the-Scenes: Show your team in action, your office, or your process

Challenges or Trends: Put a business twist on viral trends to stay relevant

Client Case Studies: Simplify complex problems into bite-sized stories

Audience Overview

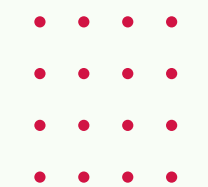
Primarily Gen Z and Millennials, but older demographics are growing

Ideal for businesses looking to reach younger professionals or creative industries

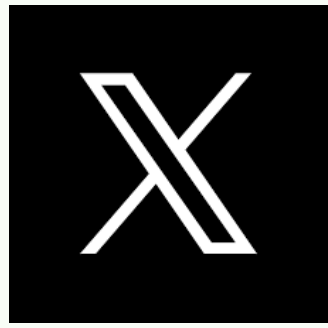
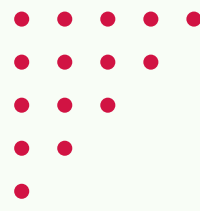
Works well for storytelling and behind-the-scenes content that makes complex topics more relatable

Posting Frequency

- 1-3 posts per day
- Short-form content thrives - don't overthink it.
- Commenting on others' tweets is just as important as posting your own



TikTok is more than just a platform for dances and trends. It's become a powerful tool for **storytelling, education, and brand awareness**. If your business can tap into the creativity of TikTok, it can go viral—even in a more conservative B2B space.



X (Twitter)

2025 Platform Trends

Rebranded as “X”, with new integrations (payments, long-form posts, and more coming)

X Pro (formerly TweetDeck) now monetized, but still useful for scheduling and engagement

Verified users get algorithm boosts—small businesses may consider verification for visibility

Communities and Spaces (audio events) still gaining traction among niche industries

Best Content for X

Thoughtful threads (multiple-tweet explainers)

Hot takes or POV posts on trending topics

Links to Blogs
Whitepapers or Podcast appearances

Event Participation -
Live tweeting, Hashtag conversations

Polls and Questions

Audience Overview

Professionals, journalists, business owners, industry experts

Ideal for real-time engagement, thought leadership, and building authority

Works best for brands with a strong POV and a willingness to be part of the conversation.”

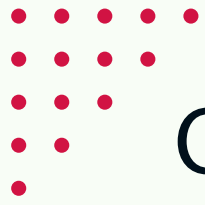
Posting Frequency

- 1-3 posts per day – but it is more about consistency
- Focus on authentic, Creative Content - better than polished videos
- Hashtags play a huge role in discoverability.

Trending | Relevent



While X (formerly Twitter) isn't for every business, it's still a powerhouse for thought leadership, real-time conversations, and connecting with niche audiences—especially in tech, finance, and professional services.



Other Platforms to consider.

Threads

- What it is: Meta's response to X (Twitter), focused on light, conversational content
- Good for: Brands with strong Instagram presence or a friendly, thought-driven voice
- Use for: Commentary, quick updates, community prompts
- Not ideal for: Driving website traffic or visual storytelling



Pinterest

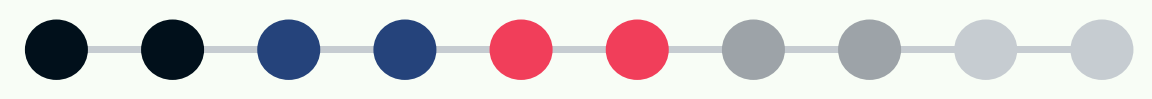
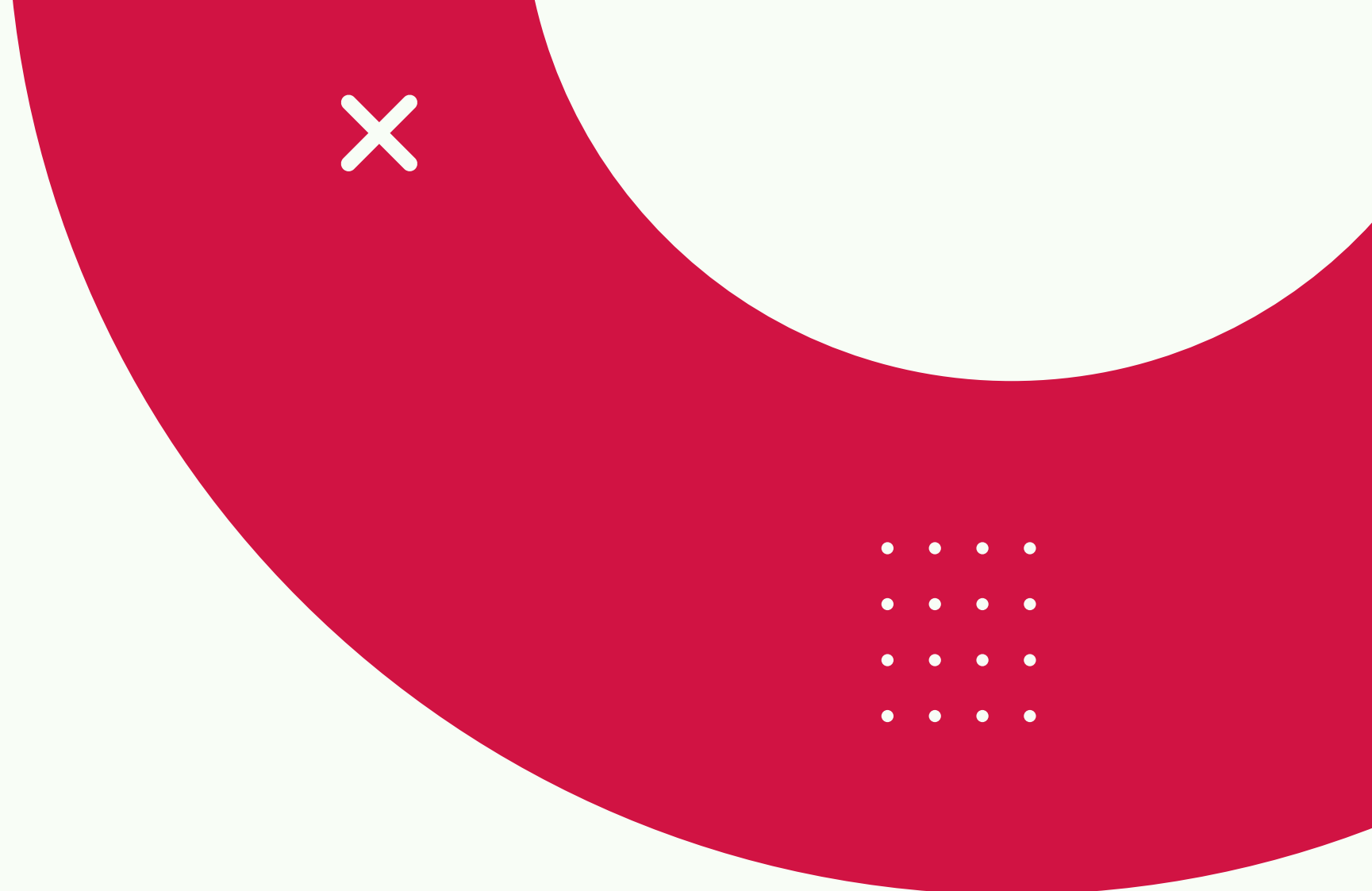
- What it is: Visual search engine, not a traditional social network
- Good for: Product-based businesses, lifestyle brands, design, food, DIY, wellness
- Use for: Evergreen content (blog posts, lead magnets, tutorials)
- Great for: SEO, long-term visibility, and traffic to websites
- Trending in 2025: Idea Pins (multi-page, video-heavy format)



YouTube / YouTube Shorts

- What it is: Long-form and short-form video platform (also the 2nd-largest search engine!)
- Good for: Educational content, demonstrations, storytelling, series content
- Use for: Building authority, tutorials, customer stories
- 2025 Trend: YouTube Shorts are being prioritized, similar to Reels/TikToks
- Tip: Repurpose Reels and TikToks into Shorts!





Tools That Save You Time



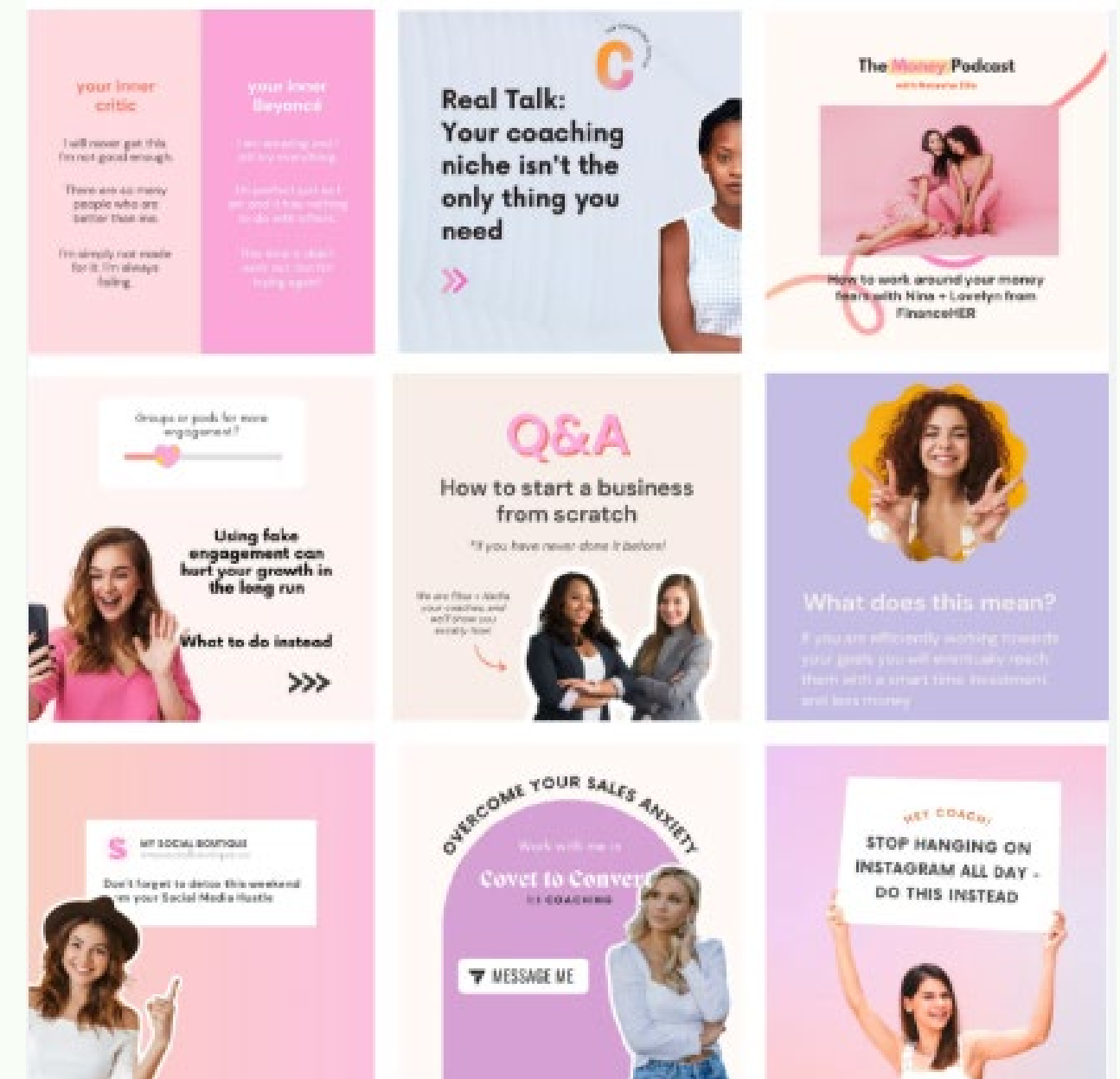
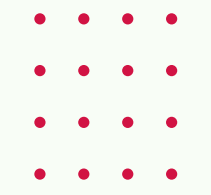


Social Media Tools and Time Saving Tips

Design Tools – Create Faster On Brand Content

Primary Tool: Canva

- Pre-sized templates for every platform
- Use Brand Kit to save colors, logos, and fonts
- Bulk Create to generate multiple posts from a spreadsheet
- Resize one design across platforms (e.g., Instagram to Facebook post to Story)
- Bonus Tips: Create a template for each content pillar
- Organize folders by pillar or campaign





Social Media Tools and Time Saving Tips



Scheduling Tools

Meta Business Suite - Free

Great for Facebook and Instagram. Includes scheduling for Reels, Stories, and Posts. Integrated into your Meta business account.

Later - Free Plan Available

Ideal for Instagram, TikTok, and Pinterest. Free plan includes 1 social set and 10 posts per profile per month. Paid plans unlock analytics and more posts.

Buffer - Free Plan Available

Simple, easy-to-use platform. Free plan allows up to 3 channels and 10 scheduled posts per channel. Great for solopreneurs.

Planoly - Free Plan Available

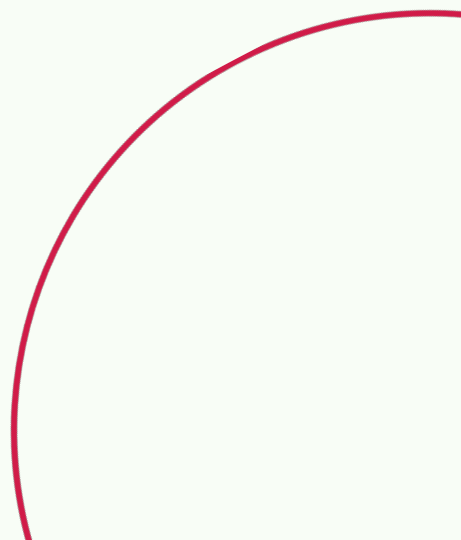
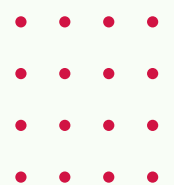
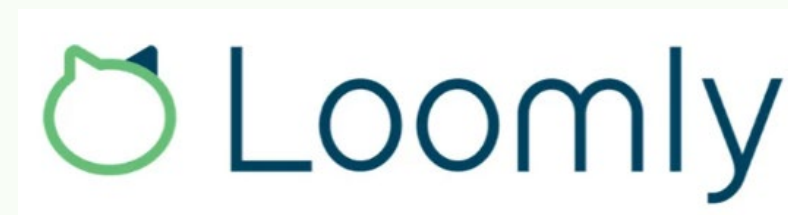
Visual planner for Instagram and Pinterest. Free plan includes 1 user and 1 social profile with limited uploads. Paid plans include Stories and product tagging.

Loomly - Paid Only (7-day free trial)

Built for teams and approvals. Includes post ideas, scheduling, analytics, and collaboration. No ongoing free tier.

Hootsuite - Paid Only (30-day free trial)

Robust all-in-one platform for managing multiple accounts. Best for businesses handling multiple brands or needing strong analytics. Free plan was discontinued.





Social Media Tools and Time Saving Tips

Workflow Tips

- **Batch by Pillar:** Pick one day per month to create 3-5 posts per content pillar

- **Repurpose:** Turn one blog into 5 social posts (stats, quote, tips, etc.)

- **Use a Calendar Tool:** Google Sheets, Trello, Notion, or your scheduler's built-in calendar

- **Set a 'Social Media Power Hour'** weekly: Schedule, respond, tweak content

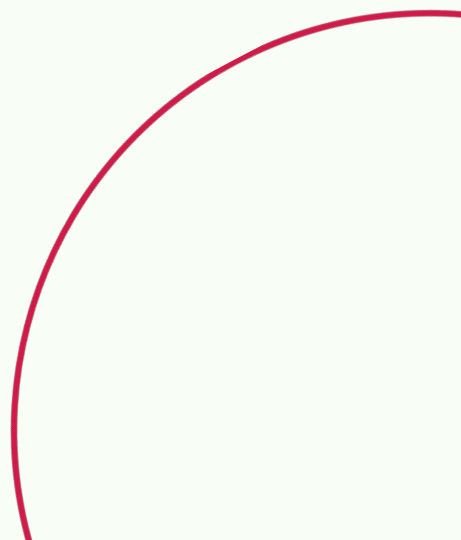
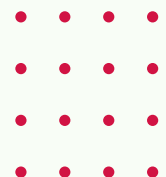
Example Workflow:

- 1. Week 1:** Gather ideas + prompts

- 2. Week 2:** Create + design in Canva

- 3. Week 3:** Upload and schedule

- 4. Week 4:** Engage + review analytics





AI – Your Personal Assistant

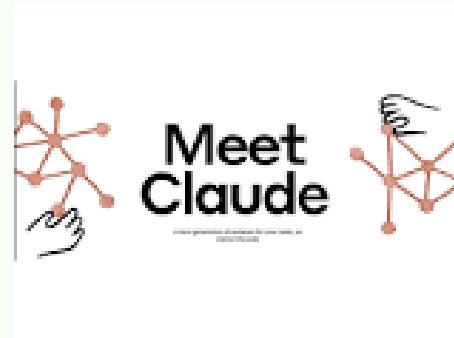
- Needs direction and guidance
- You lead conversation



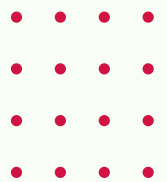
AI

Generative AI Tools

Large Language Models Chatbots



Integrations - The Wild West





AI

Prompt

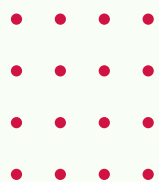
I own a business in Southwest Iowa. I am a boutique collecting other small businesses unique gifts. My mission is to offer sustainable beautiful products made or sold by small businesses. These include housewares, clothing, baby gifts, etc. can you create a creative brief for me for a social media plan for a year including special seasons and holidays.



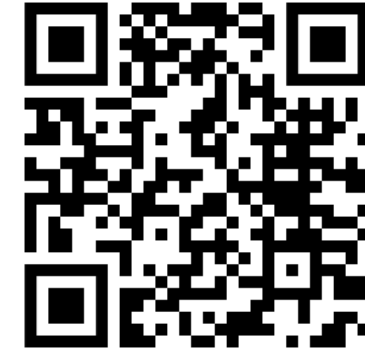
Sample Chat



Prompt Worksheet



ABOUT ME



Sue has over 20 years of experience working with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), where she helped countless businesses with their business strategy and digital marketing needs. Now, she has embarked on her own venture with *Just Sue Creative*, a business that focuses on **website design, SEO services, branding, content creation, and comprehensive marketing solutions.**



Sue Pitts, Founder
JustSueCreative.com
Sue@JustSueCreative.com
712-269-9977



Just Sue

“

I've spent years advising businesses on how to strategically align their digital and business strategies, only to watch them not fully execute it. Now, I want to not only do it for them but ensure strategy and education are woven into every step.

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