

The **marketing channels** every small business owner needs to succeed.



# Choosing the right marketing channels for your business



## **AVOID ATTRACTING CUSTOMERS WITH DISCOUNTS**

Discounts condition customers to expect discounts and offers from you that result in short-term sales and heightened acquisition costs.



## **INVEST IN CHANNELS THAT HELP YOU BUILD RELATIONSHIPS**

Establish a two-way exchange of value to foster lasting emotional relationships .



## **FOCUS ON HIGH-VALUE CUSTOMERS**

Look for opportunities to market to customers who want to connect with your brand in ways outside of simply placing an order.

# Social media marketing



Simply put, social media marketing is using social media platforms to share and curate content that helps you grow your business. With no upfront costs and more than **3.4 billion active users**, it's a lucrative marketing tool that is **used by more than 90% of businesses**.



## Why social media is a great marketing channel

- Majority of consumers want content that helps them make a purchase decision, and **40% of shoppers** do this research on social media
- Creating a social media account is free and only takes a few seconds
- There are plenty of free social planning tools that can help you build out a social content calendar to save time
- Creates dialogue between your brand and your customers, as well as between new and existing customers

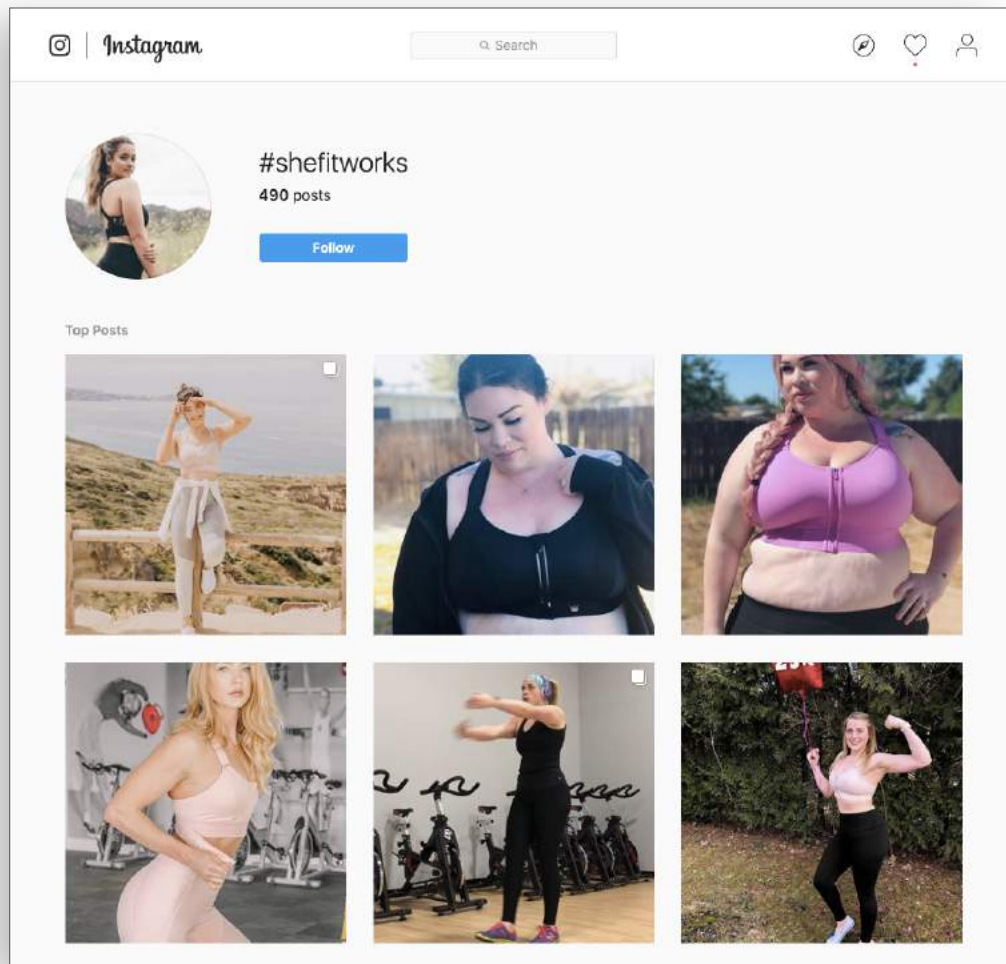


## How to use social media to grow your business

Given so many businesses are actively using social media to grow their business, it isn't really a matter of whether your business uses it or not — it's a matter of how. One of the most effective ways to use social content to acquire new customers is by showcasing user generated content. User generated content is exactly what it sounds like: social content that has been created by customers that have already purchased from you.

This content is super effective because a staggering **84% of customers trust reviews and comments** that they read online as much as they would a personal recommendation. This concept is commonly referred to as social proof, and has a huge impact on the emotional connections you're able to build with your customers. Encouraging your existing customers to share their positive experiences with your products makes it easier for new customers to have confidence in their purchase. When they see that other customers have had a great experience, they'll be more likely to trust your brand and products, motivating them to make their first purchase.

## Example: SHEFIT's #shefitworks campaign



### Why we love it:

Organizing UGC with branded hashtags is an effective way to curate positive customer experiences in one place. By encouraging their community of customers to tag and share images of them using their product on Instagram, SHEFIT has made it easier for new customers to find the social proof they need to complete a purchase. Now instead of paying to acquire new customers, SHEFIT is using customer engagement and social proof as a way of attracting a customer that's interested in quality over a discount.

# Value-add marketing



Value-add marketing is the creation and sharing of content that's geared to attract new customers. When done well, value-add marketing can be a valuable source of organic traffic, helping new shoppers discover your brand through online search engines.

Unlike paid acquisition, this style of marketing is all about giving something valuable to your customers instead of asking them for something. Combine that with the fact that content marketing produces **3X more leads** than other traditional marketing tactics and it's easy to see why more than half of all small businesses have added it to the mix.



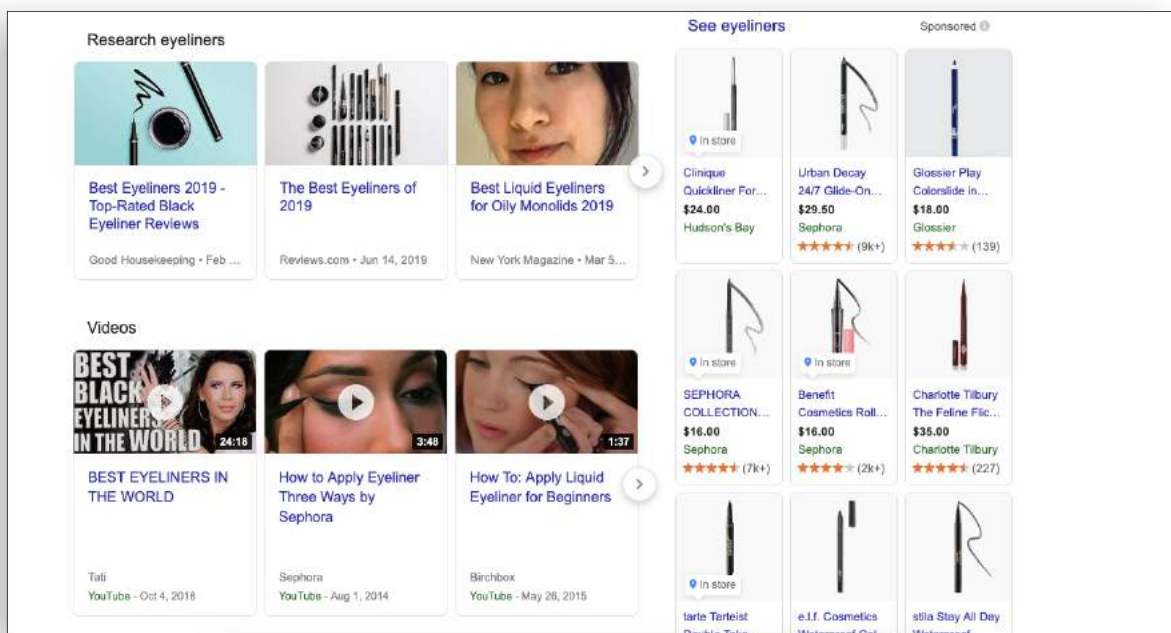
## Why value-add marketing is a great channel

- No cost to get started
- Ad costs are rising at **5X the rate of inflation**, making content marketing a more cost-effective way to help new shoppers discover your brand
- **70% of shoppers** would rather learn about a company through an article than an ad, and are more likely to seek out a product after they've read the article
- Adding value to your customer experience before asking for a sale helps build trust with new shoppers



## How to use value-add marketing to grow your business

If you run a small business online, it can be tough to really connect with your customers when you're separated by a screen. However, value-add marketing is an opportunity to build relationships with your customers, because it puts the customer first. Building out content that speaks to the needs and values of your customers will make them more likely to find your brand.



Think about the way that you make your own purchases. If you were looking to purchase a new eyeliner, which of these search results would you be most likely to click on? The top ranking organic content is all focused on answering common questions you might have before purchasing a specific product. The search results you're drawn to offer to help you make your decision instead of asking you for the sale. That's the power of value-add marketing.

## Example: Glow Recipe's The Glow Edit blog



### Why we love it:

Glow Recipe's Glow Edit is a great example of value-add marketing in action. The content and tutorials they share speak directly to the concerns their target customer group would have. Tackling topics like breakouts and protecting your skin against sun damage helps them establish themselves as an authority in the beauty space, giving new and returning customers alike the confidence to trust their expertise and, by extension, their products. It also positions them as a brand that really understands their customers' needs and is ready to help tackle them, which moves their readers one step closer to placing an order with every post they write.



# Tailored email marketing



Email marketing uses email campaigns to build relationships with potential and existing customers. This form of marketing makes it really easy to stay connected to new shoppers that have visited your site but weren't quite ready to make a purchase. It's also an incredible tool to help you distribute value-add content to anyone that interacts with your brand to drive traffic back to your site.

Considering **90% of customers** actually want to receive emails from the brands they shop with, it's a no brainer to include as part of your marketing channels stack.



## Why email is a great marketing channel

- 68% of small businesses rank it as the most effective ROI tool with a **\$44 return for every \$1 spent**
- People spend **over 30 hours a week reading email**
- Since customers have to opt in to receiving emails from you, you can assume that the ones you're reaching are more invested in your brand
- Can help you build credibility with new shoppers by helping distribute value-add marketing content

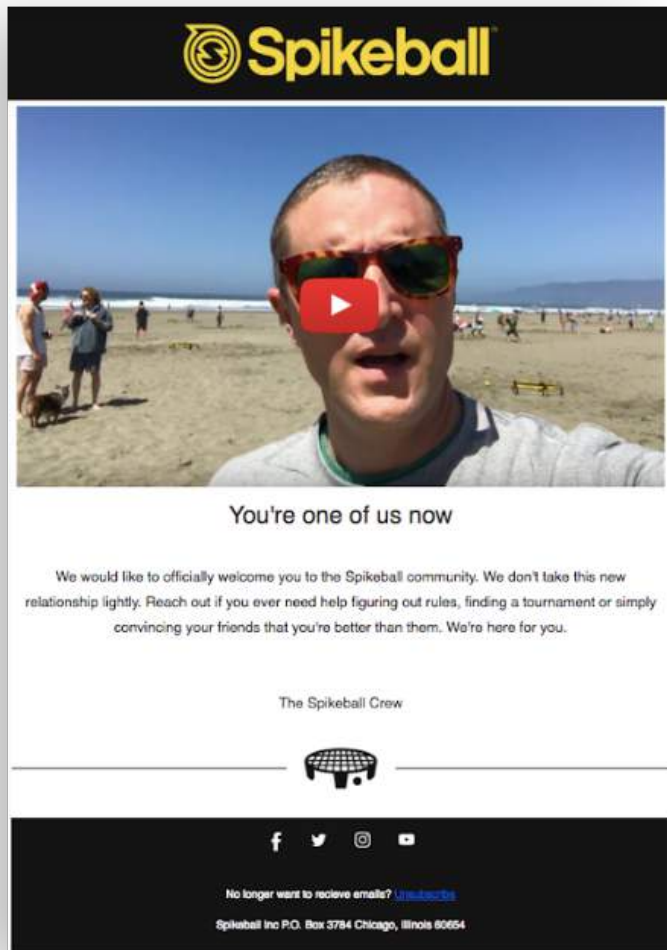


## How to use email marketing to grow your business

Starting out with email marketing can seem a bit daunting because there is so much you could do. This makes it tough to decide where to get started. The good news is that often the most effective email marketing is the simplest.

In fact, the most common uses small businesses use email marketing for are newsletters, exclusive promotions, and welcome series. This means that building out your email marketing strategy could be as simple as introducing a welcome series that is sent to every new newsletter subscriber, or inviting customers back to your store for a special offer. When they see you've taken the time to send them a personalized email, you'll show them that you're interested in more than just their purchases and lay the foundation for a relationship that exists at every step of their journey with your store — not just at checkout.

## Example: Spikeball's newsletter welcome email



### Why we love it:

This welcome email newsletter from Spikeball is a great example of how simple and effective a welcome series can be. We love the balance they've found between useful information and personality. By focusing on their brand voice, they've struck a balance between useful information and personality,

humanizing the content and making every new subscriber feel like they're part of a larger community of like-minded people. When customers know you're not only there to help them out with purchase decisions but also to include them in a larger community of shoppers dedicated to your brand, they'll be more likely to place an order as a way of getting engaged and staying connected.

# Referral marketing



Referral marketing is all about finding ways to encourage your happy, loyal customers that already know and love your brand to share your business with their friends and family. These customers they refer are then **4X more likely to make a purchase** than someone who discovers your brand organically, making your existing customers an incredibly effective marketing channel!



## Why referrals are a great marketing channel

- **74% of customers** cite referrals as a key factor in their purchase decisions
- Referred customers have a **significantly lower acquisition cost**, making them a cost effective way to grow your business
- Referred customers have a **higher lifetime value** than those acquired through other channels, meaning they'll spend more with your brand over time
- The customer retention rate for referred customers is roughly **20% higher** than customers acquired through other channels

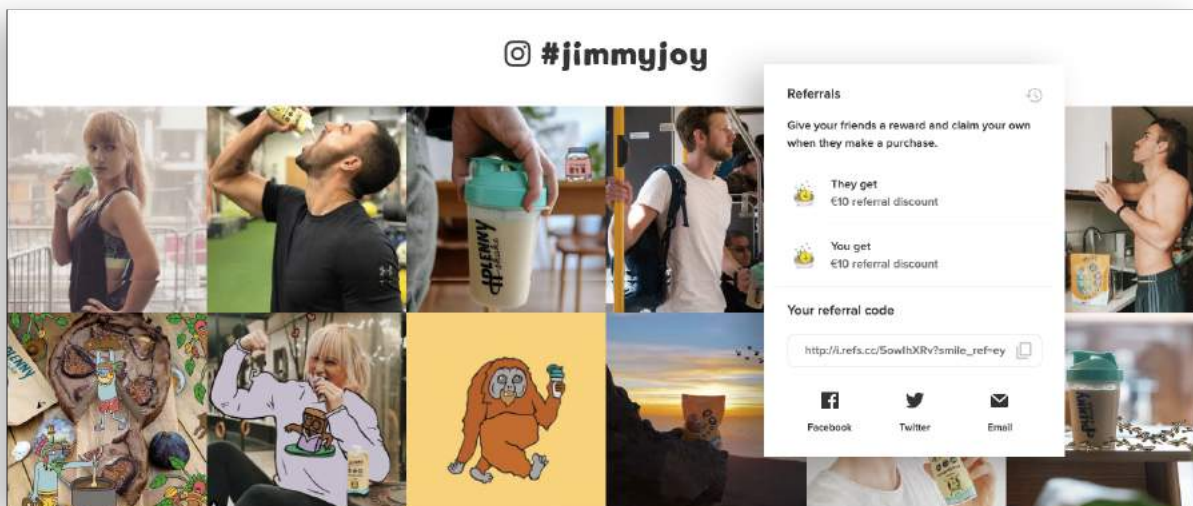


## How to use referral marketing to grow your business

Finding ways to drive more referrals can help you acquire more customers and inspire more engagement from the ones you already have. Customers will be more likely to refer their friends to your brand when they know there's something in it for them and the friend that they are referring, which is what makes referral rewards so effective.

Not only do referral rewards add value to your experience for existing customers, but they also help you start your relationship with a new shopper on the right foot. A referral reward immediately adds value to a referred shopper's experience. When they experience this value, they'll be more likely to return to make another purchase, helping you acquire customers that you're **20% more likely to retain** than those you've gained through other acquisition strategies.

## Example: Jimmy Joy's Give \$10 Get \$10 referral program



### Why we love it:

Nutrition brand Jimmy Joy gives every customer a compelling reason to share their brand with their friends with a \$10 referral reward. By adding value to the shopping experience for every referred customer they create a reciprocal relationship where they have just as much to gain from a purchase as you do. It's this value that will make them more likely to place an order.

# Conversational commerce tools



Conversational commerce is a topic that's become increasingly popular in the ecommerce space. It refers to the intersection of online shopping experience and messaging apps. At its core, conversational commerce is designed to make it easy for your customers to connect with your team.



## Why conversational commerce is a great marketing channel

- 99% of customers who visit a site for the first time aren't ready to buy, adding live chat could be a way to help them answer questions or provide recommendations
- Roughly **30% of customers expect live chat** as part of their customer experience
- Customers who place an order after they've interacted with a brand through live chat have a **10% higher average order value** than those that do not and a **40% higher conversion rate**



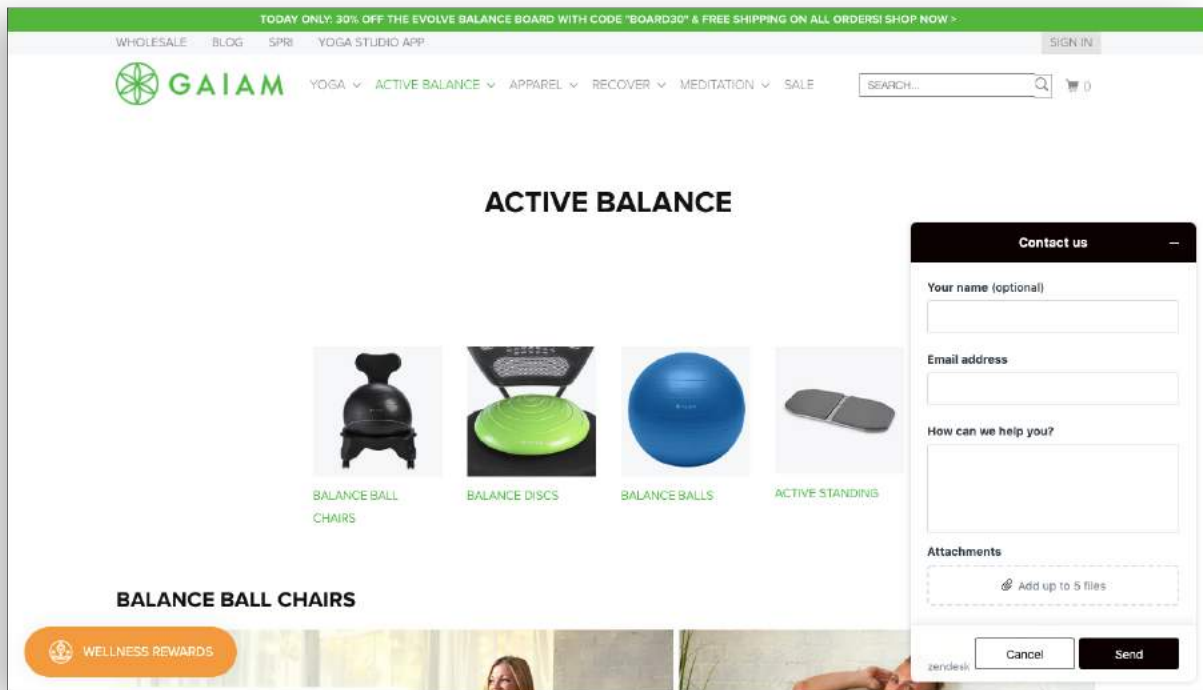
## How to use conversational commerce tools to grow your business

The first step to building relationships with your customers can be as simple as inviting them to join a conversation. Conversational commerce tools like live chat make it easy for new shoppers to connect with your team to ask more questions or seek out product recommendations to help make their purchase decision simpler.

Better yet, each conversation your team has with new shoppers helps them establish a personal connection with someone on your team. When it's this easy to start a conversation with your brand, you'll foster a sense of trust that shows customers you're interested in helping them, not just trying to secure the next sale. It's this personal relationship (and the trust that comes with it) that makes website shoppers who use chat **4.5X more valuable than those who do not use it.**



## Example: Gaiam's live chat



### Why we love it:

Gaiam makes it really easy for new customers to start a conversation with their brand, which shows them they want to get the most out of their experience. New shoppers may be looking to get into a new sport and could be intimidated by the wide selection of yoga equipment. By offering live chat they make it easy for these shoppers to connect with their team to learn more about which mat or balance ball might be right for them, making the product selection more inviting and less overwhelming.

# Suggested reading

Looking for more info on any of the marketing channels mentioned in this guide?

We've pulled our favorite resources to help you learn even more about how to get started.



## Social media

11 Social Media Tips for Small Business Owners

10 Ways Small Business Can Improve  
Their Social Media Presence



## Value-add marketing

How Content Marketing Can Help Your  
Small Business

Content Marketing for Small Businesses



## Email marketing

Getting Started with Email Marketing

Email Marketing 101



## Referral marketing

The 3 Most Effective Rewards  
for Referral Programs

How to Build the Best Referral  
Program Possible



## Conversational commerce tools

9 Companies Using Live Chat in Creative Ways

2019 State of Conversational Marketing

# Sources

## **Buffer**

“The 25 Top Social Media Management Tools for Businesses of All Sizes”

## **Campaign Monitor**

“How to Reach Potential Customers with Email Marketing and Retargeting”

## **Entrepreneur**

“5 Tips for Better Email Marketing Performance”

## **Hootsuite**

“130+ Social Media Statistics That Matter to Marketers in 2019”

## **HubSpot**

“9 Companies Using Live Website Chat in a Creative Way”

## **ICMI**

“The Stats Behind Chat: It’s Popular and Growing”

## **Neil Patel**

“8 Reasons Every Small Business Should Utilize Content Marketing”

## **Neil Patel**

“How to Leverage User-Generated Content to Boost Sales”

**PostFunnel**

“What Do Your Customers Really Want to See On Your Social Channels?”

**Saasquatch**

“17 Surprising Referral Marketing Statistics”

**Shopify**

“Conversational Commerce”

**Skubana**

“How to Leverage Email to Turn Customers Into Advocates [with Templates]”

**Small Business Trends**

“53% of Businesses Use Content Marketing”

**Statista**

“Social media marketing usage rate in the United States from 2013 to 2019

**SuperOffice**

“21 Reasons Live Chat Can Help You Grow Your Business”

**Talkable**

“Why Referral Marketing is the Most Cost-Effective Customer Acquisition Strategy”

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