

# 5 Ways Your B2B Brand Should Think Like a B2C on Social

By [Blair Broussard](#)



I think we can all (finally) agree that social media is a necessary component to any B2B marketing plan. But necessary doesn't always equal successful. Despite the fact that 93% of [B2B marketers use social media](#) and 80% of B2B marketers have a strategy, a lot of B2B leaders believe social media is a “have to” instead of a “must have.”

Why do you think the president, founder or [insert position in C-suite here] doesn't drink the social media success Kool-Aid? I've seen it time and again: members of a tech company's C-suite step into our office for an intro chat or a proposal presentation, and the minute social media marketing is brought up they say one of two things: 1) I get it, but it isn't the best fit for my particular industry. No one will care; or 2) I know we have to be in on it, but I just don't really know what we'll get out of it, and I don't want to spend much effort there.

This reaction could be due to the fact that while 80% of B2B marketers have a strategy, only 32% of these professionals actually document it. An even more

depressing statistic is that only a quarter of said B2B companies claim social has [helped improve their bottom lines](#).

The real bottom line? Social media works for B2B companies. In fact, I agree with Jay Baer when he stated that social media works *even better* for B2B companies than B2C companies. Why? Because B2B companies traditionally have a smaller target audience and a [higher average price point](#). Most important, however, a B2B's customer decision funnel is even more influenced by word of mouth and reputation than a B2C company's. Social media should be a B2B marketer's dream! Mr. Baer puts it best when he says,

*“Turning your customers into advocates and marketers on behalf of your brand pays off a lot more when you're selling \$10,000 pieces of manufacturing equipment than it does when you're selling \$3 cans of Pringles.”*

So, the question is: How can you ensure that your social media marketing plan is really going to give you the ROI you are looking for? The answer is quite simple: think like a B2C brand. Here are five ways you can put on the consumer marketing hat to ensure B2B social media mastery:

1. **Set Goals:** Arguably the most important part of any marketing campaign is to define and set your goals and objectives. If you aren't working toward something, how will you know if social media is working at all? Begin by asking yourself the following [three questions](#): 1.) What can social media do for the bottom line? 2.) How does social media fit within our overall business strategy? 3) How do I define social jargon as it relates to our goals and objectives? For example, look at the first-click attribution and think about a customer's progress in the purchasing cycle in order to put a value to your social media channels.

2. **Make a Plan:** It's important to find out where your buyers are living and breathing when they are thinking about, well, buying something for their business. If you guessed LinkedIn and Twitter, then ding, ding, ding! You are right! The majority of B2B brands have strong [Twitter and LinkedIn presences](#). They've experienced increased website traffic, white paper downloads and even direct potential customer outreach straight from these networks. Traditionally—and this probably will not come as a shock to you—B2B audiences *do not* live on Facebook. Facebook is what people in the B2B world refer to as the “fun” social media network where they can look at a picture of their kids, grandkids and what their

coworkers ate yesterday. However, there is sometimes even a place for Facebook in B2B marketing. Let's say you want to amp up recruitment for your B2B company in Q2. One tactic we would recommend is advertising on Facebook, using creative content that communicates your company culture at its finest (for example, your last team-building activity playing Top Golf or your brainstorming session at your last retreat). But the next time you think about starting your B2B company's Pinterest page...step away from the computer.

3. Humanize the Brand: What do Oreo, Southwest Airlines and Disney have in common? Yes, they are all B2C brands, but that's not the answer I'm looking for. These three companies have managed to humanize their social media presence. This is an important component to social media success since your audience knows that the company itself isn't the one tweeting or posting on LinkedIn; there is a human behind this. (At least I hope! Please don't count on software to completely automate your efforts.) Developing the proper tone, responding to customer inquiries, monitoring and engaging with potential buyers and influencers are very important parts of social media for business. The entire concept of social media was created for transparent two-way conversations, so please go forth and tweet and post with that in mind. And before you say it's impossible for your B2B brand to have a humanized presence, see [HubSpot](#) and [GE](#).

4. Have It Your Way: Speaking of customer inquiries, a huge part of social media success lies in not just the way you respond to inquiries, but how quickly it happens. A recent Sprout Social survey that polled customers from 15 different industries stated that they expect a representative from a company to respond to a question or comment on social media within 4 hours. However, the average response time was sadly over 10 hours. If you begin to take social media engagement seriously, it could help you not only gain more customers and build relationships with key industry influencers, but it could also ensure customer loyalty. After all, we all know that a [retained customer is better](#) than a new one in the B2B world.

5. Tie It All Together (lead gen): Ok, so you've got #1-4 down. Now what? What about all of those great white papers, case studies, blog posts and more on your website? (Don't have any? You should.) It's time to make sure that all of your marketing efforts are aligned and that these wonderful pieces are being promoted via your social media channels. Ensuring that you are including links in your social content that drive users to the appropriate pages on your website is very important.

You should be including links to landing pages where there are strong calls to action and forms that can easily be tracked and relayed to the sales team.

*That's* how social media [gives you that ROI](#) you are so desperately (and should be!) seeking.

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