

“ LEVERAGING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR LEAN STARTUPS ”



By :

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(Among India's Top 20 Consulting Companies for Startups)



Social Media has become the new-age mouthpiece for all Brands. It is not an exaggeration to say that social media can make or break the image of a brand, right from the first day. However, contrary to popular perception, it is after all not very expensive to create a riveting social media profile and developing a brand that people love on digital.

Here, I have made my best attempt to put together some easy-to-implement strategies, which we have tested successfully over a long period of time, across various industries and clients. The idea behind successful incorporation of these strategies is to create a genuine and credible following, along with a chance to achieve virality.

A black and white photograph of a large crowd of people walking away from the camera on a city street, creating a sense of movement and a busy environment.

UNDERSTAND YOUR TARGET GROUP

Before even starting out to do something on social media, it is extremely imperative to first understand your target group and user personas in detail. As an entrepreneur, you would already be aware of the same.

The idea is to make sure that according to your Target Group, you go ahead and use the right social media platforms. For a young, millennial audience, Instagram might be the perfect platform but for working professionals to be targeted during office hours, LinkedIn might be great. Also, different platforms might be relevant for different groups of your audience and accordingly, the content will have to be tweaked as well

You might want to have a powerful Pinterest profile to display your designs, but might want to tell your brand / Founder stories on LinkedIn to attract Investors / Franchises / Business Partners. At the same time, you might want to mix it up with Google Ads and Blogs to generate qualified leads for your business.

Overall, the finer you create your user personas, clearer will be your strategy on how to crack social media for your brand building in the initial days.

With over 300 million photos uploaded daily on Facebook, you have to make sure that your content stands out. With the right use of free / affordable tools such as Canva, you have to make sure that you are able to catch eyeballs with the creatives, or post high quality real pictures. The same has to be supported with strong and impactful copy content to give your audience an insight into what you do.

The idea to make attractive social media content is to let your followers feel that they know your brand like a real person or friend. To establish a credible brand on social media, you must come across as real as possible with your brand.

VISUALLY ATTRACTIVE CONTENT

A grayscale background image showing a close-up of a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard. The laptop screen is visible in the upper left, displaying some text and icons.

MOMENT MARKETING

Moment marketing is to the digital marketing industry, what Artificial Intelligence is to the Tech Industry. Everyone wants to do it but most of the people are clueless about it.

However, Facebook and Twitter provide you with complete insights regarding the top trends on social media. It is up to you how you can make the best use of this information to come up with a social media plan. Here, the key is to be on top of social media trends and capturing the trends, rather than just creativity.

To capitalise on these trends, a good way is to use hashtags that are trending and track events that are generating news / content, such as Valentine's Day, Fathers' Day, Ice Cream Day etc. A good point to note here is not to overdo on events and trends, but to capture only the super-viral ones and knowing which one is the right one for you to hit on.

“ WE HAVE BELIEVED A LOT IN
MOMENT MARKETING AS A WAY TO
CATCH EYEBALLS. PEOPLE PERCEIVE
US AS A SOCIALLY **AWARE** AND MUCH
MORE ACTIVE BRAND CONSIDERING
THAT WE TAKE JIBES ON LATEST
HAPPENINGS, **CATCH** ON TO **MEMES**,
LEVERAGE THE ONGOING **TWITTER**
AND **INSTAGRAM TRENDS**.
IT CREATES AN OVERALL **QUIRKY**
AND **RELATABLE** IMAGE FOR US AS A
BRAND ON DIGITAL AND HELPS US **CONNECT**
WITH OUR **TARGET USERS** EVEN BETTER ”

ARUNABH SINHA
CEO & Founder of UClean

Video production is an expensive angle to digital marketing. With Digital video content getting more professional and more content-centric by the day, it is a difficult space to capture for a young startup with limited budgets.

However, a great way to still be a part of the bandwagon is Live Content. Capture your customers, their testimonials, Founder stories, office insights, through Facebook / Instagram Live.

You can also establish your brand as an influencer in the industry by doing Q&As on Live Sessions or Answer people's queries in real-time.

This will help your brand generate instant buzz, genuine engagement and might even land you a few quality leads. Just make sure that the content in your Live sessions is on-point, relevant and adds value to your followers.

LIVE STREAMING AND LIVE VIDEOS

An overhead, grayscale photograph of a meeting table. Several people's hands and arms are visible, interacting with laptops, tablets, and notebooks. One laptop screen displays 'Discussion Outline', and a tablet shows '85.00%'. There are also coffee cups and small potted plants on the table.

CONTESTS / GIVEAWAYS

One of the best ways to have more followers or engagement, is to actually have people use your product / service and give their feedback on social media. Yes, great content is important but exclusive coupons, giveaways, discounts, and promotions on your website can get potential customers to become enthusiastic promoters of your brand. Social Media contests prompting people to comment / share your content, tag their friends further helps create some really good User Generated Content for your brand.

Furthermore, it's a fact that 79% of Facebook users engage with brands that offer interesting coupons or discounts.

Another recent trend that has grown like crazy is Influencer Marketing. While people may believe that this is an expensive mode of marketing, engaging with the right set of micro-influencers might actually be more cost-effective than other modes of marketing.

Building relationships with industry-specific social media influencers allows your brand to reach a wider audience and garner significant recognition. You can run promotional campaigns with these influencers and tap into their hyper-engaged audience.

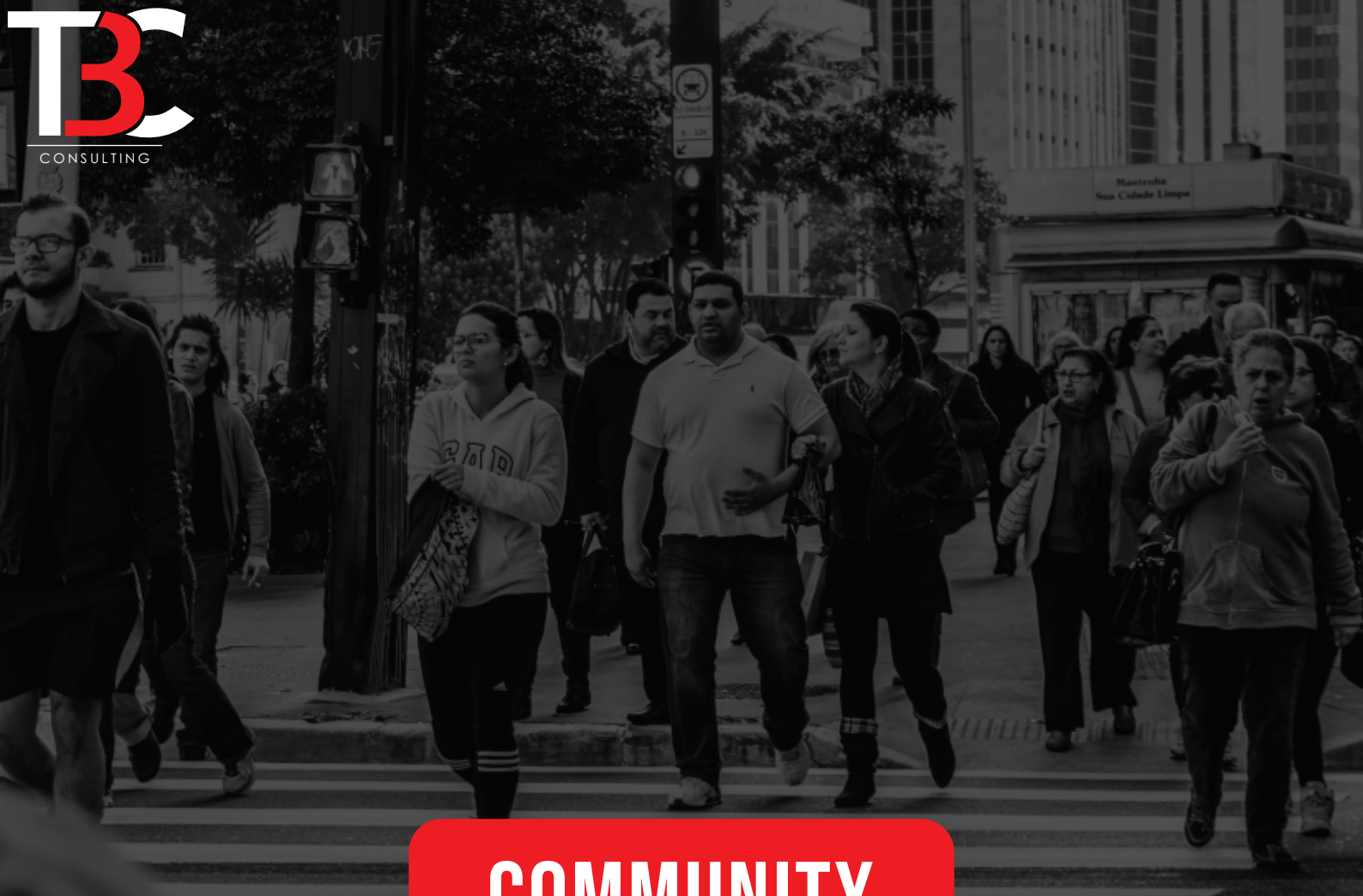
As one-third of Twitter audiences follow and engage with social media celebrities and influencers, you have the best chance to achieve credible following, if they endorse or review your product on their official account. The key here would be cracking the right deals with these influencers and have different influencers engage in different activities such as a contest with one, a photoshoot with other, a promotional post with a third one.

These influencers can end up being your Brand Ambassadors and generate additional quality content for your brand.

INFLUENCER ACTIVITIES

“ INFLUENCER MARKETING
DEMOCRATIZES DISTRIBUTION AND
MEDIA REACH FOR YOUNG COMPANIES.
BUT IF BUSINESSES CONTINUE TO USE
THIS AS THEY USE OTHER MARKETING
MEDIUMS; IT'S BOUND TO UNDER-DELIVER.
2 WAY ENGAGEMENT, REAL-TIME GROWTH
HACKS AND TOPICALITY WOULD BE THE
UNIQUE LEVERS TO LEVERAGE INFLUENCER
MARKETING BETTER ”

GAURAV MEHTA
CMO of CarDekho



COMMUNITY

Being active in social media communities not only helps establish your brand credibility, but also creates the image of being an industry influencer.

Leverage social media communities to promote your startup, get instant and genuine market feedback and interact with other industry influencers. This might come across as a time taking process, which it actually is. But the overall benefits that you would be able to reap from being a part of an engaged community would be far better than spending on other, more expensive channels of marketing.

Give back to the community by answering questions, taking and initiating polls, helping people and solving their queries. This would generate respect for your overall brand and probably you, as an entrepreneur.

Last, but one of the most important keys to modern day marketing is being accessible to your audience. While the biggest of the corporates are also waking up to this aspect, you as a startup can leverage this by actively listening to your followers / customers, solving their problems and also using your social media to act as a cheaper way of customer service.

People tend to love brands when they know that they are listening. Human tendency is such that we love being heard, and social media is the best way to make your customers feel the same. Reply to their comments, DMs and thank or apologise to them, just like a normal friend would do. This would create a long lasting relationship with your followers.

ENGAGE WITH AUDIENCE



“ WHILE THESE STRATEGIES ARE ONLY AT THE **TIP** OF THE ICEBERG, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF **STRATEGIES** WHICH CAN BE IMPLEMENTED TO **CRACK** SOCIAL MEDIA BRAND BUILDING FOR **FREE** OR AT THE **LOWEST** POSSIBLE COST INVOLVEMENT. THE IDEA IS JUST TO HAVE THE RIGHT SET OF **ADVISORS** IN YOUR **NETWORK** WHO CAN **GUIDE** YOU EVERY NOW AND THEN WITH THEIR TWO CENTS.

SOCIAL MEDIA IS NOT A **DIFFICULT** SPACE AT ALL TO **BUILD** A BRAND. IT IS **CLUTTERED**. IT IS **NOISY**. AND IT HAS PEOPLE THROWING IN HUGE LOADS OF **MONEY** FOR SURE. BUT, HAVING SAID THAT, YOU CAN STILL MAKE YOUR **MARK** AND **STAND OUT** AND THE KEY TO DOING ALL OF THAT IS JUST ONE - **CONTENT**.

BE **GENUINE**. BE **REAL**. AND **LISTEN**. YOU ARE GOOD TO GO. ”



27 years old Chartered Accountant from Jaipur, Rajasthan, Pawas Jain founded one of the most successful and popular startups of Rajasthan **Blue Box Media Pvt. Ltd.** backed by Angel funds back in 2013. The digital media company worked on **The Tech Portal** (www.thetechportal.com) which was a technology tabloid with comprehensive coverage of Global tech and startup updates and had an international reach in over 50 countries.

Pawas Jain has been a Pioneer in Digital Content space in India, and started his first content venture back in 2010 with **SpringTide**, which gained mass following over the years.

Pawas then took an exit from The Tech Portal and founded his own **Content and Marketing Consulting company**, which is working on content and media products enabled with technology. His aim was to take vernacular content and Storytelling to the next level with integration of technology. **TBC Consulting** works with leading brands and startups across the country on brand building, marketing and content production. TBC Consulting has consulted over 50 brands over a period of 3 years on marketing, content, India Entry and Expansion and Business. It was recently awarded as **Top 20 Startup Consultancy Companies of 2018 by Silicon India Magazine**

The company owns multiple content platforms such as **TechSamvad, NitiSamvad, Where India Connects and BingeTales**, across different domains and sectors. The company is wholly owned by **OneH Media Pvt. Ltd.** (onehmedia.com)

He is an Investor in **Wired Hub**, which is Rajasthan's first of its kind startup club, an initiative to build a stronger and more closely knit community of startup ecosystem, and provide end to end mentorship and guidance for young entrepreneurs to help them launch their startups.

Pawas also invested in an online incubation platform **Startify, in personal capacity** which was co-founded by IIT Jodhpur students and aims to build India's largest online incubation / virtual co- working space for startups. **He has recently invested in another content and product startup from Delhi.**

Pawas currently mentors over 15 startups in VR / AR, Education, Finance and Media domains, and specifically guides them on revenue models, building sustainable businesses and tapping global markets.

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