

How to build an online campaign

Use this step-by-step guide to create an online campaign. If you need any additional support, get in touch with us.

1. Know your goal



Before you start any campaign, you should have a goal in mind. You should be able to articulate what the desired results are and how you will determine whether or not you've been successful. We're a bit old school. We like to use the S.M.A.R.T method of goal setting. Once you've got a goal in mind, test it against the S.M.A.R.T framework. Is it Specific? Can you Measure it? Is it Achievable? How about Realistic? How can you make it Timely?

For example, your campaign goal might be to increase your website sales conversions by 4 per cent within 6 weeks.

When we put this up against the S.M.A.R.T framework, it is clearly all of those things.

6. Evaluate



This stage of a campaign is often overlooked but it's one of the most essential stages. If you own or work in a small business, you most likely wear many different hats. As a result, you probably struggle to remember what you had for breakfast on Monday, let alone the ins and outs of how the last campaign performed.

2. Create a budget



All marketing activities come at a cost, even if they are at a cost of time and resources.

Before you dive right in, set yourself a budget. It can be big or small, it really doesn't matter as long as you stick to it. You might say that you're going to invest \$300 in the campaign as well as 10 hours to build your content.

Tip: Consider your budget within the context of your goal. If you have an outrageous goal that's only achievable with a large budget, it might be time to reconsider.

3. Know your audience



Going back to our exercise on day one – who is your primary target audience? How will this campaign provide them with value? What do you want them to do as a result of this campaign?

Taking the time to consider your audience and how they might engage or respond is a worthwhile investment of your time. There's no point creating a campaign on how to use TikTok if your ideal audience is over 18. Sure, not all 18-year-olds will know how to use TikTok, but the majority will, so is that the best campaign for this specific audience?

I know evaluation sounds scary, but honestly it doesn't have to be. Quite simply, you want to list:

- What worked?
- What didn't work?
- Did you achieve your goal? If not, why? If you did, how?
- Did you stick to the budget?
- What key learnings do you have that might be useful for your next campaign?

4. What do you want to say?



So you know what your goal is and who you're talking to, but do you know what you want to say and how you're going to say?

Your campaign should have one central message or overarching theme that is consistent throughout every touchpoint. Take our Brand Isolation Transformation series for example. While we've discussed a wide range of topics over the past few days, they all stem from the central idea of working on your business in lockdown instead of in your business. Make sense?

Once you've determined what your key message is, you need to consider how you are going to communicate it. Don't forget, an online campaign can be as big or small as you like. Your campaign could be as simple as a 3-part blog series on a particular topic, or it might be a range of videos that you share across social media, or it might even be a combination of the two! You might even go big and create a podcast – the sky is the limit! Just make sure you're considering whether your idea is realistic and if you have a budget to support it.

5. What channels will you use?



You know what you want to say and how you're going to say it, now it's time to consider which channels you will use to share your campaign. Is it a social media campaign and all about the 'gram? An email campaign? A YouTube series?

When choosing which channels, you're going to use, make sure you keep it simple – especially if this is your first online campaign. Choosing one or two channels and doing it right is far more important than spreading it wide. There's always an opportunity to recreate and build on a successful campaign.

It's also worth choosing a channel or platform where you already have an audience. You don't want to be sending a campaign somewhere where there's not already an engaged community – unless your campaign is to build a community and if that is your goal, ignore what we just said!