

## **VivaFallRiver Article - Automate your marketing efforts**

Social media and customer engagement is daunting - especially if it nags at you every day of the month. You will always feel like you aren't doing enough or are thinking about opportunities that have been missed. The best way to combat this is to plan ahead - and use automated marketing to tackle the communication across social platforms and email.

### **Plan Ahead**

On a periodic basis (bi-weekly, monthly, bi-monthly) set aside time to look at the calendar ahead. Are there any specific holidays to plan for? From St Patrick's Day to National Pizza Day, there can be a pre-crafted message that works for your audience.

Some tips?

- Set realistic goals for how much you'd like to schedule.
- Idea generation can be tough. You don't have to go at it alone. Ask your colleagues and employees if they have any ideas for what customers might want to hear.
- Make it regular. Utilize a recurring campaign like "Takeout Tuesday" to offer a special or discount that could be scheduled in advance.

### **Strategies**

#### *Automating planned posts*

Since you've done all the hard work of planning your posts, scheduled posting is a natural next step. You can leverage many 3rd party tools (like Planoly or Later) to craft and schedule your posts. The tools will automatically post them at the scheduled time!

#### *Leverage co-posting to multiple platforms*

Yes, sometimes it makes more sense to have a specific strategy for each platform. But - when you are just trying to get rolling, you can post the same thing to both platforms. There are many tools out there that let you create and schedule the same creative for multiple platforms.

#### *Email marketing*

When using an email marketing platform (like Mailchimp), you can automatically send emails to new subscribers. This email list is a very powerful tool! When you are planning your social posting for the

month, don't forget to think about including an email. Just like posts they can be scheduled in advance too. Here are some ideas:

- Monthly "hello" talking about upcoming promotions or new products
- Special holiday email
- Store Updates (new hours, staff changes, COVID procedures, etc)

### **Tools**

- [Planoly](#) and [Later](#) lets you schedule to multiple social platforms. 30 posts per month are free. Great visual calendar and layout tool. *(Paid features available)*
- Facebook provides a publishing platform that enables you to create / plan / schedule posts for both Facebook and Instagram.
- Canva - online tool to more easily create images that can be used in marketing. Great templates available. *(Paid features available)*
- Mailchimp and Constant Contact are two email marketing options - but there are others as well. *(Paid features available)*