Marketing your store online

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Introduction

The PayFast Guide to Going Online is a comprehensive ebook to help aspiring entrepreneurs such as yourself turn your hobby into a successful online business.

In this fifth chapter of the guide, we offer expert marketing tips on how to get your online store's name out there to attract business. This includes advice on how to create SEO optimised website content to attract organic website visitors, how to effectively incorporate social media into your digital marketing strategy and more.

Once your online store is up and running it's time to get your name
out there to attract business.

PayFast's Digital Marketing Manager's pro tip for staying on brand

"Once you reach this stage of marketing your online store you should already know your
brand inside out. Create a document outlining your brand promise, your brand essence and
your tone to make sure your marketing efforts will always be consistent in reflecting your
brand, as well as connect with your audience."

Outline your **brand promise, your
brand essence and your tone**
to make sure your marketing
efforts will always be consistent

Track and monitor analytics

Constantly monitor page views, user behaviour and conversions on
your website by using tools like Google Analytics, which will give
you insights into what you can do to tweak copy, images or
navigation to improve the shopper's experience and to attract new
visitors. Social platforms also have their own analytics tools that
can help you gather more information on your audience, which will
further help you to optimise your content, website and ads.

Not sure what you want to track and measure? Think of your business goals and start from
there. If you want to make sales, then tracking sales would be your main goal. If you want to
collect leads, then collecting leads will be your goal. If you want to grow your brand's share of
voice then impressions, social media engagement and reach would be your goal. If sales or
leads are your goal, always be sure to include a level of brand awareness in your strategy so
that your brand is continuously being shown to new people, without trying to sell anything
to them.

Use social media to your advantage

Register business accounts on the relevant social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok and Twitter as well as Google so that you can promote your products, engage with your community and get product and service reviews - these go a long way in building trust amongst your intended customer base.

Contacting people who leave good reviews to get a testimonial that you can use in your content plan is also a good way to build trust with your audience. These can then be used in your ads as well, to help build trust with your target market. You can also list your products on marketplaces and engage with potential customers in relevant Facebook and LinkedIn groups, forums or Twitter trends.

Paid services are another way to attract traffic to your website such as Google Ads and paid ads on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube and Tiktok. Here it's important to make sure you have worked out a budget for yourself that is based on what you can afford, and aligns with your business goals. Sometimes you need to make a small loss on advertising spend to find out what works - will that be your approach, are you able to do this? Otherwise set up a budget for yourself and stick to it, you can control daily spends and sometimes lifetime spend on the platforms when you set up the ads. Just remember to do your research into who your customer base is so you use the right marketing platform to target the right demographics.

Macro Mixes pro tips for using social media

- Optimise your Instagram community by posting consistently, engaging with similar brands and followers, adding shoppable posts, swipe ups and valuable content.

- Nurture your Facebook Community to build brand loyalty and trust.

- Use email marketing to constantly build your customer list that you can use to consistently send out valuable content.

To find out more about Macro Mixes, visit **macromixes.co.za**

Create and share the right content

Do research on the social platforms you will be using, some of them have nuanced usage and all of them work with their own algorithms. It's important to have an understanding of what type of content works on your chosen platforms.

On social platforms video content or animated GIFs generally works the best followed by static imagery and then links or text. Try to plan your content and ads ahead of time so you know what you'll be doing and when. This will give you time to write the copy and prepare the videos or images.

It's important to continuously test different types of content to see what gets the most engagement. With trial, error, time and making sure you're measuring your results, like with Google Analytics, you'll find what works and what doesn't. It's worth remembering that in the digital marketing world, people's interests change frequently, so what may be working well one day won't be the next. Throughout it all, do your best to post consistently while being genuine and true to your brand demographics.

Remarketing pro tip: Compile a database

It's extremely beneficial to put together a database of all of your loyal customers (and potential new ones who are willing to sign up to your mailing list) so that you can send out marketing emails to them promoting new products or specials. An easy way to do this is to add a newsletter sign up pop up on your website or to collect email addresses during social competitions.

**Add a newsletter sign up pop up on your website to collect email addresses**

Sign up to our newsletter

Keep SEO top of mind

SEO is an important tool for promoting your website online, so it's important to do research on the core needs of SEO. The easiest way to start optimising your website is to build it in a user friendly way with intuitive navigation, easy to scan copy (think bullet points, headings and bolding important words) and clear product images and descriptions.

Upload content that is relevant and optimised with keywords that your target customer base would search for online - try to keep it to approximately 300 words for shorter form content, and around 1,800 words for longer form content. Having a blog is a great way to stay on top of trends and attract users to your site, as it's easy to include important keywords and phrases that will appear on search engines. You can also post your blog content on your social network pages to get it in front of people.

Remember that you'll need to stick out from your competition - it helps to do some competitor research to see what you're up against, but also to get some inspiration for ideas. Your imagery is a great way to help you stand out - try to make it count. There are free tools out there such as Canva which have templates you can use to build eye-catching imagery to go with your content, social posts and ads.
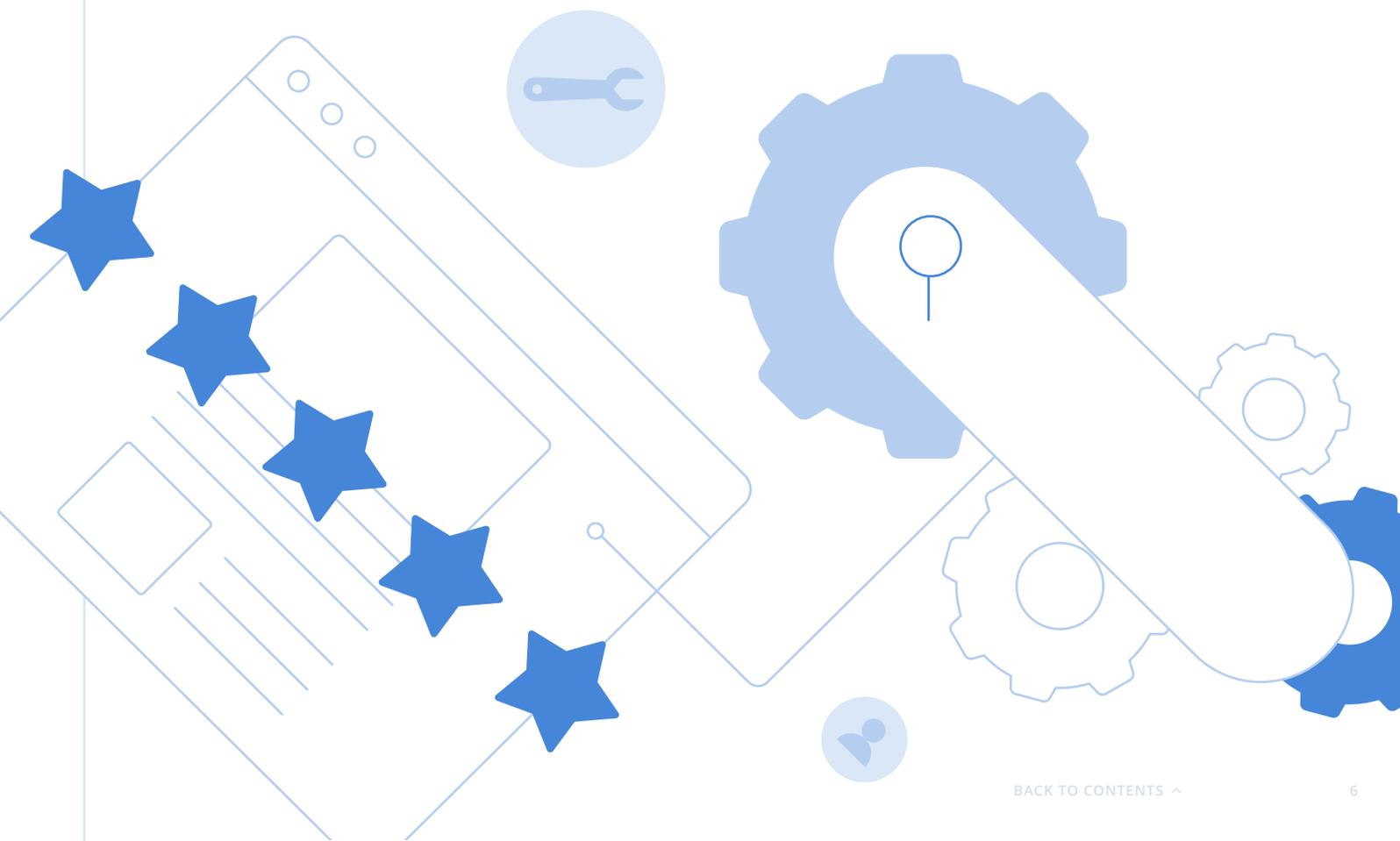
Tooltip: 3 core elements of good SEO

1. Technical - what to include on your website

- Create keyword categories and create pages around them such as:
  - Homepage
  - Topic pages
  - Sub-topic pages
  - Blog posts that support your categories. This will fall under relevance below.
- Site structure - allows Google to index the site properly and offer important information on user behaviour. This relates to your categories and logical flow.
- URL structure - a person and search engine bot needs to know what is on the page just by referencing the URL
- Schema markup - code that is placed on your website to help the search engines return more informative results for users.

2. Relevance (content)

- Do keyword research to understand what people are looking for and what competitors are ranking for.
- Create quality content over quantity.
- Update older content to makes sure it remains relevant, don't just post new content
- Add relevant words to web pages, especially main pages, so the search engine picks them up to display when people search for certain keywords.
- Create educational content, this type of content ranks high on search engines.
- Understand user behaviour, as it's common practice for buyers to research and learn about what they want to buy by reading online articles.

3. Authority

- Follow the EAT rule by demonstrating:
  - Expertise
  - Authoritative
  - Trustworthiness
- Links matter, specifically where they come from and where they point to.
- Forum activity helps to build authority and trust, you can do this by answering relevant questions on social media platforms.

Marketing tooltips

There are a wide variety of free and affordable online marketing tools that you can use to up your marketing game. We've outlined some of our favourite online tools below, many of which have small, free courses available on how best to use them.

Design tools

- **GIMP** - provides the tools needed for high quality image manipulation
- **Canva** - offers drag-and-drop functionality and professional layouts to design images
- **Affinity** - great for creating concept art, print projects, logos, icons, UI designs, mock-ups and more

Free stock image resources

- **Unsplash**
- **Pexels**
- **Death To Stock Photo**
- **Barn Images**
- **Over**
- **Freepik**

SEO and digital marketing tools

- **Google Analytics** - Google's popular web analytics service that lets you track, measure and report on website traffic
- **Semrush** - a tool for SEO, content marketing, competitor research, keyword research, PPC and social media marketing
- **Ubersuggest** - a free SEO tool that generates new keyword ideas
- **Hotjar** - a popular heatmap and behaviour analytical tool that also offers session recordings and surveys
- **Inspectlet** - a freemium tracking tool that offers click and scroll heatmaps similar to Hotjar

Social media management platforms

- **Hootsuite** - enables content planning, analytics, social monitoring and management
- **Sprout Social** - generates reports, offers social analytics and schedules messages across different social profiles and platforms

Marketing tooltips

Social media-specific tools

- **Facebook Audience Insights** - a tool to get to know your customers to better shape your Facebook ad campaigns
- **LinkedIn Insight Tag** - a tool to optimise your LinkedIn campaigns, retarget your website visitor, and learn more about your audiences
- **Twitter analytics** - a tool to measure and boost your impact on Twitter
- **Instagram analytics** - a tool to learn more about your account's followers and performance
- **Youtube analytics** - a tool to measure the success of your YouTube marketing efforts

Mailer tool

- **Mailchimp** - a popular email marketing platform for creating, sending and tracking email campaigns that integrates with ecommerce platforms such as Shopify, Magento and Prestashop. Find out it Mailchimp **integrates with your platform here**

Once everything is set up you will need to constantly monitor and tweak your images, copy and metadata to make sure your website has a good SEO ranking and good visitor traffic. It's good practice to check exit pages in Google Analytics to see the last page a user accessed before they left your website.
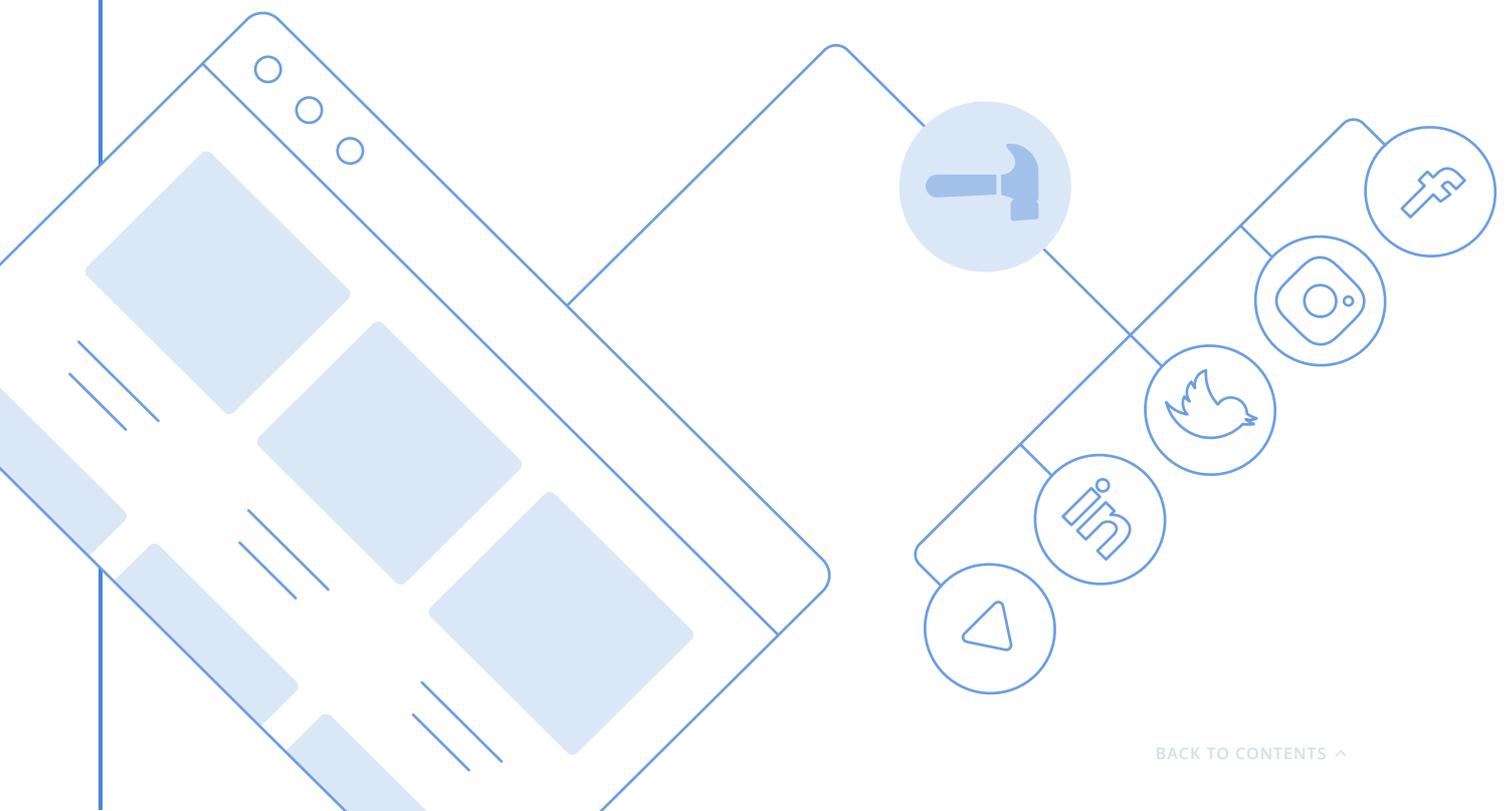
Find out more about going online

To find out more about getting your business online, download the entire PayFast Guide to Going Online or any of the individual chapters that may be relevant to your online business.

Download the entire PayFast Guide to Going Online

Download the individual chapters:

Chapter 1: Developing your business plan
Chapter 2: Managing logistics
Chapter 3: Building your online store
Chapter 4: Setting up a payment gateway
Chapter 6: Converting visitors into customers
Chapter 7: Capitalising on shopper trends like Black Friday

About PayFast

PayFast is a leading online payment processing solution for individuals, non-profit organisations (NPOs) and businesses of all sizes in South Africa. Over 80,000 merchants from a variety of South African businesses, big and small, have registered with PayFast to process and manage online payments made by their customers.

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