

Marketing for cash-strapped small business owners



By [Christopher Mills](#)

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When it comes to digital marketing, most people think that it is an expensive endeavor. Sure, there are entities that are expensive, but this isn't always the case, and this article discusses a scenario that any business owners may implement themselves.

In the digital era, one of your most powerful tools is the ability to write about something you know a lot about. If you're running a business you should be knowledgeable about the product or service you offer, combine that with some writing and you're set for a great outreach marketing strategy.

There are countless websites on the internet that will accept well written and on point articles to publish to their readers. Get your pen and paper ready because you're going to be writing something today!

Identifying interested parties

About a week ago we wrote a piece on Memeburn, a South Africa technology website, that discussed Google+'s ability to bring a company more business than Facebook or Twitter. Time was spent writing the article and positioning it correctly for the people who read the website.

Upon publishing the article, we were fortunate enough to see some immediate interest, which ended up sky-rocketing. However, this was just half the benefit, let me unfold the rest. At this point we knew that a lot would come from it - not only was our article being shared hundreds of times across Google+, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, but were we also identifying who the interested parties were.

Finding the audience

For the sake of simplicity, I'm going to walk you through how we capitalized on this using Twitter as the example social network as it's the easiest to explain and the easiest to copy.

The first thing we did was open up [Twitter search](#) and searched for the title of our article. In this case it was, "Google will get you more business than Facebook or Twitter: here's how". Twitter then displayed a list of all the Twitter users who shared the article - this was our audience! We jotted down all of their Twitter names along with their real names in a spreadsheet.

Our next step was to determine which people are the most influential online. You could do this by looking at the number of followers they have, but this isn't necessarily accurate as the number of followers doesn't quite define how influential someone is. Instead, we installed the [Klout extension](#) for Chrome, which puts a Klout score next to everyone's name on Twitter. The Klout score is a more rounded influence value for a person as it takes multiple social networks into account. There are some great Twitter analysis tools available, but the best ones have a cost involved and for this post I'm going to avoid them.

A great asset

Once we had the Klout extension installed and running, we returned to our spreadsheet and noted down the Klout score of all the people on our list. At this point we had three columns: Twitter name, real name and Klout score. We now had a list of people who were interested in the article we published with the ability to sort them based on influence - a great asset! This meant that we could strike up conversation with the most influential people, who may well be interested in more of what we

have to say.

From here the options are endless, but in our case we went on to write up a second article related to the first one. This time we published it on our own company blog, we then established relationships with the most influential people from our spreadsheet and went on to tell them about the follow up article. This resulted in a lot of new people visiting our website, of which a high percentage went on to look at our services and even a few dropped us an email to enquire more about how we could help them.

What we've done here is use a larger audience to build our audience and all for literally no cost at all.

Take the time to write a great article, position it correctly, see who appreciates it and use this as a platform to begin to build relationships with them.

ABOUT CHRISTOPHER MILLS

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