



How to Get Started With Social Media Ads in 2024



Social media is an integral part of our daily lives and, naturally, a cornerstone of most brands' marketing repertoires.

All too often, growing brands strapped for time and resources struggle to execute their organic and paid social media strategies without feeling overwhelmed. Tasks like developing creative, reporting and measurement, managing campaigns, and keeping up with platform changes are massively time-consuming. Multiply this for every platform your brand has a presence on, and you can see why growing companies often have a haphazard social media approach.

Luckily, there's a solution right under our noses: **marketing automations**. Here's everything you need to know about your favorite social media platforms and using social ads to streamline your social media tasks and level up your results.

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The Importance of Social Media Ads



Social media offers brands an unparalleled ability to reach their target audiences, engage them in conversation, and ultimately drive sales. Just take a look at these stats:

- [According to Statista](#), the average daily social media use in 2023 reached 151 minutes per day.
- [Statista also reports](#) the projected ad spending on social media to \$207.10bn in 2023.
- [Hubspot breaks down the distinctions between age ranges](#): with 71% of Gen Z saying social media is where they most often find new products and 36% of Millennials finding new products through short-form video, where Gen X clocks in at 41%. Baby Boomers come in last for product discovery within the last 3 months, with only 17% saying they have found new products on social.

How to Budget Your Social Media Ads

Most marketers are familiar with the importance of [diversifying your ad budget](#) to different channels, whether that's display ads, native ads, or search ads. When it comes to social media ads, which platforms deserve your dollars the most? What proportion of your marketing budget should you invest in paid social media ads?

The answers ultimately depend on your business goals and marketing objectives. As you crunch the numbers, here are some factors to consider:

- **Launch a test campaign.** Rather than splurging on a lavish campaign right from the get-go, a test campaign can help you gauge results. Is the message resonating with your target audience? Is the creative attracting attention? Are people engaging with the landing page? Ideally, you conduct A/B testing during an initial trial campaign to identify the winning combination of copy, visuals, audience targeting, and placement to use in the larger campaign.
- **Review your organic social media data.** It provides insights into the channels with the highest engagement and conversion rates, which you can use to guide your budgeting decisions. For example, if Facebook is your most popular social media channel, and your audience responds best to testimonial-based images, consider investing in static Facebook ads that feature social proof.
- **Don't overthink it.** Remember you can always tinker and optimize as you go along — that's the beauty of social media ads! If a campaign or channel isn't delivering the desired results, you can always pause and recalibrate them.

That said, let's dive into four of the most popular social media platforms — TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest — and their best practices, ad types, and campaign set-up processes.



TikTok is the hottest platform on the block, and it's not hard to see why. With over [1 billion monthly active users](#), the app is a great way to reach a young and highly engaged audience. As Gen Z's buying power grows with its impact on the zeitgeist, platforms that offer opportunities for positive self-expression, community, and entertainment — like TikTok! — will be more relevant than ever.

Best Practices

- **Keep it short.** Although the latest maximum length of TikTok ads is one minute, short-form content is still the name of the game. The longer your ad, the more likely it'll be buried in the feed — in other words, have a captivating hook, keep it engaging, and prioritize brevity (15 seconds or less).
- **Don't be afraid to get creative (and weird).** Try to take advantage of TikTok's quirky features (music, sound effects, and filters) and map your ad ideas to trends. And remember: people love humor and self-deprecation on the platform. Don't take yourself too seriously!
- **Get started with influencer marketing.** Influencer marketing has seen tremendous growth, [in part thanks to TikTok](#). A great way to boost brand awareness is by partnering with influencers in your niche with large followings — your influencer-driven campaign can be as simple as having them unbox and try on or use your products.

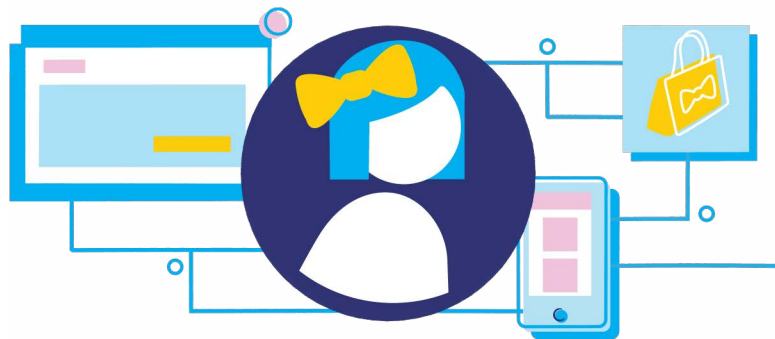
Ad Types

- **In-feed ads** appear on users' For You page alongside organic content and can be up to a minute long. There are multiple CTAs to choose from, including directing users to an instant landing page, website, app download, or storefront.
- **Managed brands** that meet a minimum ad spend threshold can work directly with TikTok representatives in launching the following:
 - › **Brand takeover ads** are still photos, GIFs, or videos that appear when users first open the app, making them perfect for boosting brand awareness.
 - › **Branded hashtag challenges** encourage users to partake in creating themed content and take them to a TikTok landing page (complete with brand info, website link, and challenge description) if they click on the hashtag.
 - › **Branded effects** are filters, stickers, and AR lenses users can use to spice up their videos.

Psst: TikTok has a variety of different ads, [including video shopping ads](#) and even shopping ads — learn more about them [here](#).

Setting Up a Campaign on TikTok

1. Log in to TikTok Ads Manager
2. Click Campaign > Create
3. Choose your campaign objective: awareness (reach), consideration (community interaction, app installs, traffic, lead generation,), or conversion.
4. Set your campaign name
5. Create an ad group
 - a. Choose your ad placements (or select automatic placements)
 - b. Add your ad details (including the display name, profile image, ad tags, video download, and ad category)
 - c. Set your target audience based on demographics, device options, interests, lookalike details, or a custom list
 - d. Set your schedule and budget, which must be at least \$20
 - e. Confirm your bidding strategy and optimization goals
6. Upload images or videos
 - a. Use TikTok's editing tools to finalize your creative
 - b. Choose a cover photo
 - c. Enter your ad name
 - d. Create ad text (which will appear above your ad)
 - e. Add a CTA (e.g., Download Now, Sign Up, or Shop Now)
7. Hit submit!



Facebook



Facebook's heyday may have come and gone, but the platform is still undeniably powerful and relevant for marketers. [Despite iOS 14.5 updates](#), Facebook offers some of the best targeting tools available to brands, and its reach across other Meta-owned channels like Instagram and Messenger is hard to beat.

Best Practices

- **Take advantage of its audience management tools.** By targeting specific users based on demographics, interests, locations, or behaviors (or even finding users that look similar to your current customers), you can ensure your ads reach the people most likely to engage and take action.
- **Experiment with different ad formats.** From carousels to lead ads, Facebook offers various ad formats for every goal. Test to see if particular placements and formats yield better results.
- **A/B test your creative.** Similarly, you can't just assume your ad will perform well — even if you spend hours crafting the perfect headline and designing a fantastic visual. It's important to A/B test different elements of your ad, including images, copy, CTA, descriptions, and more, to uncover the winning combination.

Ad Types

Some of Facebook's most popular ad types include these:

- **Image ads** feature a single image.
- **Video ads** use movement to better grab attention.
- **Carousel ads** showcase a maximum of 10 images or videos (each with a unique link) in a single ad.
- **Collection ads** feature multiple products and open as an Instant Experience (aka a full-screen takeover) if users interact with them.
- **Dynamic ads** use the Facebook pixel to connect your account with your store's product catalog, delivering personalized carousel ads to users — perfect for recovering abandoned carts, upselling, and cross-selling.

While less common, poll ads, slideshow ads, and lead ads are also available to brands.

Depending on your campaign objective and chosen ad type, your ads may appear in different placements within the Meta suite: Facebook, Messenger, Instagram, or Audience Network.

Setting Up a Campaign on Facebook

1. Open Facebook Ads Manager
2. Click Create
3. Choose a campaign objective: conversions, website traffic, brand awareness, reach, video views, engagement, lead generation, messages, catalog sales, store traffic, or app installs
4. Select your audience
 - a. Use Facebook's built-in filters: gender, work, home, languages, location, age, relationship, education, life events, interests, behaviors, etc.
 - b. Select a Custom Audience using the first-party data you've collected
 - c. Create a lookalike audience based on your existing customers
5. Set your budget (daily or lifetime)
6. Choose your campaign schedule
7. Confirm your bidding strategy (e.g., objective, clicks, or impressions-based optimal bids or manual bidding) and delivery type (standard or accelerated)
8. Create your ad
 - d. Choose your ad type
 - e. Upload your creative assets (making sure it adheres to the ad type's specs)
 - f. Select your placement options
 - g. Add copy
 - h. Confirm your CTA
9. Launch your ad!



Instagram

Instagram may be owned by Meta, but unlike Facebook, [which younger users have begun moving away from in the last few years](#), it's only gotten more relevant and popular over time. Perfect for visually driven brands, Instagram's new social shopping features are one of the best ways to attract and convert users by making their shopping experience as frictionless as possible.

Best Practices

- **Leverage Instagram's social shopping features.** By boosting organic shoppable posts where products are tagged with links to your store, you can increase reach, re-engage existing shoppers, and find new shoppers similar to your current customers.
- **Mix up product and lifestyle content.** While Instagram is not the platform for plain product images against a white background, you also don't want to launch only brand awareness ads that showcase lifestyle content. Instead, experiment by combining both while ensuring every ad you create reflects your brand's values and personality.
- **Add social proof to your ads.** Reviews are a major factor in online shopping as shoppers are likelier to trust products others love. That's why testimonials and reviews are so important — and Instagram offers the perfect opportunity to showcase customer quotes and ratings, whether you add them to the caption or make them the central focus of the visual.

Ad Types

Like Facebook, Instagram offers standard image, video, carousel, and collection ads. The ad types unique to the platform include these:

- **Shopping ads.** By encouraging users to “tap the ad,” you can either direct people to the product page on your website or check out directly from the Instagram app. (You need to enable this feature in your account settings.) Shopping ads can feature a single image, a carousel, or a video and appear in feed or on the Explore page.
- **Story ads.** With a vertical format, these ads appear within Instagram Stories and work like standard display ads — unlike organic Stories, which disappear within 24 hours, your campaign can run as long as you want. Because they're full-screen, they are more immersive than in-feed ads.
- **Reels ads.** Like organic Instagram Reels, full-screen Reel ads have a max length of 60 seconds and can be liked, saved, shared, and skipped.

Setting Up a Campaign on Instagram

As part of Meta's advertising suite, Instagram ads must be launched using Facebook Ads Manager using the same process as Facebook ads. Just make sure to select the Instagram box when choosing your ad placements.

Pinterest

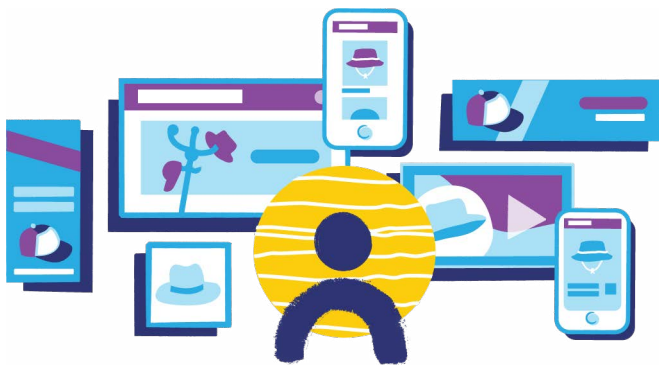
You may not think of Pinterest as a social media must-have, but the truth is that Pinterest is one of the best ways for brands to engage with high-intent shoppers — [97% of top Pinterest searches are unbranded, and 80% of users have discovered a new brand or product on the platform.](#)

Best Practices

- **Pay attention to Pinterest’s ad formats.** Unlike Facebook and Instagram, Pinterest is a vertical platform, which offers brands more real estate to play around with. Pinterest recommends creating ads with a 2:3 or 1:1 ratio — other sizes can mean a cropped ad.
- **Mix up product and lifestyle content.** This means overlaying headlines and other copy directly to your image, as well as including a clear CTA. The headline should be catchy enough to entice users to click through, while the CTA should be specific enough that people know what they’re getting into when they click on it. Make sure your image prominently features your brand — you want to avoid abstract or overly lifestyle-focused photographs that don’t prominently feature your products here.
- **Add social proof to your ads.** The best Pinterest ads are visually rich and include some interactive element, like a poll, quiz, or question — something that piques users’ interests and encourages them to interact with the image, including clicking to learn more.

Ad Types

- **Static Pin ads** feature only one image or video.
- **Max-Width video ads** expand across users’ entire mobile feed.
- **Carousel Pin ads** include multiple images that users can swipe through.
- **Shopping ads** feature only one image and allow users to purchase products from it.
- **Collection Pin ads** appear as one primary image above three secondary images on both desktop and mobile feeds — when tapped on, users can see up to 24 secondary images.
- **Idea ads** are a set of multiple videos, images, custom text, and lists in a single pin.



Setting Up a Campaign on Pinterest

1. Log into your Pinterest business account
2. Click Ads > Create Ad
3. Choose a campaign objective
4. Create an ad group
 - a. Create a new audience and choose your targeting specifications
 - b. Select your budget and schedule
 - c. Confirm your optimization, bidding, and delivery strategies
5. Review your ads
6. Hit launch!

How to Measure Success on Social Media

Despite the unique quirks of these four platforms, the way you measure results is similar — it all depends on your campaign goals and scope:

- **Engagement:** ad likes, clicks, shares, comments
- **Brand awareness:** reach, frequency, impressions
- **Conversions:** conversion rate, click-through rate, cost-per-click

If your goal is to boost engagement, you might focus on metrics like the number of comments, likes, and shares. Comparatively, if your goal is to increase sales, you can measure your conversion rate.

However, this is where it gets tricky: Not many shoppers will see your ad once and immediately purchase on your site. Instead, most will interact with your brand a few times, possibly on different social media platforms, before converting. But with each social media platform claiming credit for that conversion on their individual analytics dashboards, you get some inaccurate and messy data if you're just compiling your exported results into a spreadsheet.

Luckily, this is where AdRoll's automations builder comes in.

What is AdRoll's Automations Builder?

Marketing automations are not just for email. AdRoll's automation builder is the only tool that lets you create consistent, personalized, and automated campaigns across display ads, social ads, and email — all from one place. Integrate your social ad manager accounts to AdRoll with a few simple clicks. From there you can launch campaigns that coordinate ads across Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Pinterest, and the web. We also import your existing campaigns, ad groups, ads, audiences, and twelve months of historical performance data from your social ad managers. This way you can manage (edit) campaigns, as well as view, measure, and analyze across your entire campaign footprint in one place - social, Google paid search, plus display, native and video ads on the web — no more extracting and cobbling together performance reports into a spreadsheet.

Whether your brand's marketing is in its infancy or an established powerhouse, the benefits of the automations builder are massive:

- **Better data.** Having all your data in one place means making better and more accurate decisions, including which channels to invest more heavily in.
- **Saved time.** If you're a beginner marketer, mastering different social media platforms' interfaces, settings, and strategies isn't always easy. Because ad types and sizes are unique to each platform, without the automations builder, you'll need to dedicate a significant portion of your week toward managing creative, campaign types, and settings.
- **Easier reporting and analysis.** When running campaigns on disparate channels, you'll have to manually export results from each dashboard and string them together in a spreadsheet. In other words, without spending significant time analyzing the data, you can't quickly offer your team a snapshot of what's working and what's not, or even worse, convince your boss that your campaigns deserve more investment.

Get Started With AdRoll's Automations Builder

Social media and business growth are inseparable. No matter your brand or target audience, there's a social media ad platform ready to help you launch your first campaign — whether you're looking to increase brand awareness, drive sales, or nurture customer loyalty.

Despite the robustness of the most popular platforms available today, their data is siloed, meaning you won't be able to reap the benefits of a seamless multichannel marketing strategy. The benefits of the automations builder are unparalleled: better data, more effective social media management, and more seamless campaigns.

Ready to get started? Learn more about AdRoll's automations builder, where you can create, launch, manage, and report all in one place. AdRoll unifies your paid social advertising and makes it easy to be consistent across various platforms. [Learn more or get started here.](#)