

69 CREATIVE MARKETING IDEAS TO BOOST YOUR BUSINESS



WordStream



GUIDE

69 CREATIVE MARKETING IDEAS TO BOOST YOUR BUSINESS

We've all hit it — that wall that seems to sap away all your creative marketing juices. Suddenly you feel like Peter Pan without his pixie dust.

If you've found yourself in this situation, all you need is a bit of help to get your marketing strategy back on track. In this guide, we'll be sharing 69 marketing ideas and inspirational tips to help you bust through that brick wall, including:

- PPC Marketing Ideas
- Content Marketing Ideas
- Social Media Marketing Ideas
- Urban Marketing Ideas
- Contest Marketing Ideas

Let's get started!

PPC MARKETING IDEAS

Try a new keyword tool — Google's Keyword Planner is great, but shake up your research from time to time — there are [lots of other tools out there](#), like Soovle and Ubersuggest. They often pull from different databases or help you see keywords from a new angle.

The screenshot displays the Soovle search engine interface. At the top left is the Soovle logo with navigation icons. A search bar contains the text "[bounce house]" and a "Soovle" button. Below the search bar are social media sharing icons and a "Soovled Link" section. The main content area is divided into three columns of keyword suggestions:

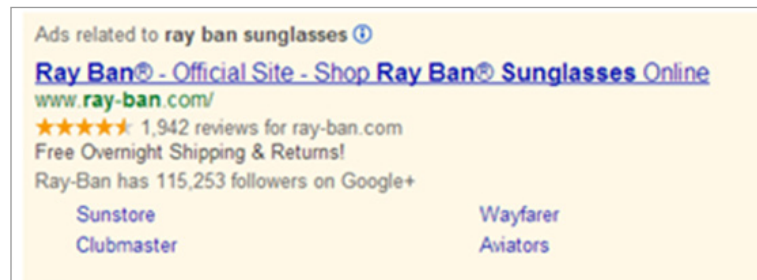
- Left Column:** bounce house rental, bounce house for sale, bounce house rental los angeles, county ca, bounce house rental orange county, bounce house orange county, bounce houses for rent, bounce house party, bounce house santa clarita.
- Middle Column:** bounce house rental, bounce house, bounce house for sale, bounce house rental los angeles, bounce house rental orange county ca, bounce house rental orange county, bounce house orange county, bounce houses for rent, bounce house party, bounce house santa clarita.
- Right Column:** bounce house, bounty paper towels, bouncer, boundaries, bounty, bourne legacy, dooney and bourke, handbags, bounce, bourne, bouncy balls, bouncing balls, bourne legacy, bounce out, boulder colorado, bounce house, bounce u, bountiful baskets, dooney and bourke, dog the bounty hunter, anthony bourdain.

Other visible elements include a "WIKIPEDIA" link for "bounce house", a "YouTube" logo, and a link to "inflatables.com".

Write more emotional ads — Ads with super-high click-through rates generally speak to the emotions behind why your customer would want what you're selling. For example, instead of writing an ad that just asks the prospect to register for your mountain climbing school, think about why someone would be interested in mountain climbing in the first place. One extremely successful ad said "Fluorescent lights are killing you. Be more than a warm corpse."

Get into symbols — Symbols and special characters, like exclamation points, dollar signs, and registered trademark symbols, are known to increase click-through rates. Test this out and see for yourself!

Add extensions to your ads — Without fail, ad extensions improve CTR — and they're free to set up! The simplest type of ad extension is sitelinks, which gives users more opportunities to click through to your site. There are also call extensions, location extensions, review extensions, and [lots more](#).



Create mobile-preferred ads that are tailored to this audience — and make it as easy as possible for them to convert.

Go mobile! — With [79% of internet users](#) conducting online shopping via mobile devices, you should be embarrassed if your Google ads aren't mobile-friendly. This is not optional, although many still treat it like it is. Create mobile-preferred ads that are tailored to this audience — and make it as

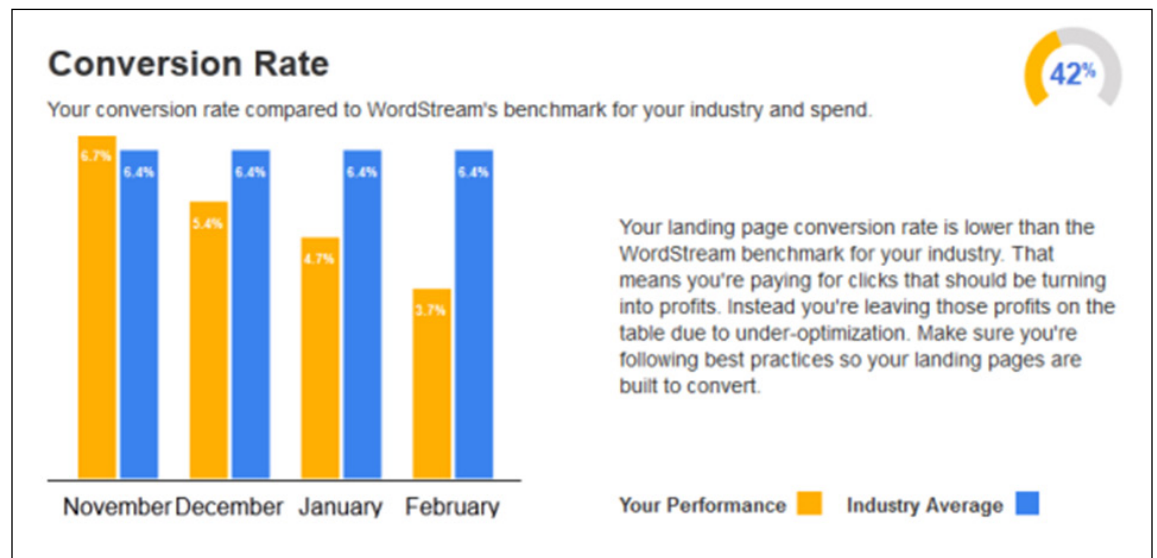
easy as possible for them to convert. Use call extensions so they can simply click to call your business. You can find more [key mobile ad strategies here](#).

Set up Shopping Campaigns — If you're an e-commerce store, you *need* to be using Shopping Campaigns. They enable you to see metrics and set bids at the product level. [Learn more here](#).

Give remarketing a try — [Remarketing](#) allows you to "tag" website visitors with a cookie, then "follow" them around the web. For example, if someone views a product on your site but then decides not to buy it, you can show them a display ad featuring that product the next day, and remind them what they're missing. Remarketing ads are a great way to [increase your conversion rates](#).

Switch up your offers — If you're not happy with your conversion rates, changing button colors and moving the form around can only do so much. Consider trying a whole different offer. If people really want what you're offering, they'll sign up!

Audit your PPC landing pages — Run your landing pages through our [free Landing Page Grader](#) to make sure you're following accepted best practices. It's a quick and easy way to see if you're making mistakes that are costing you conversions.



CONTENT MARKETING IDEAS

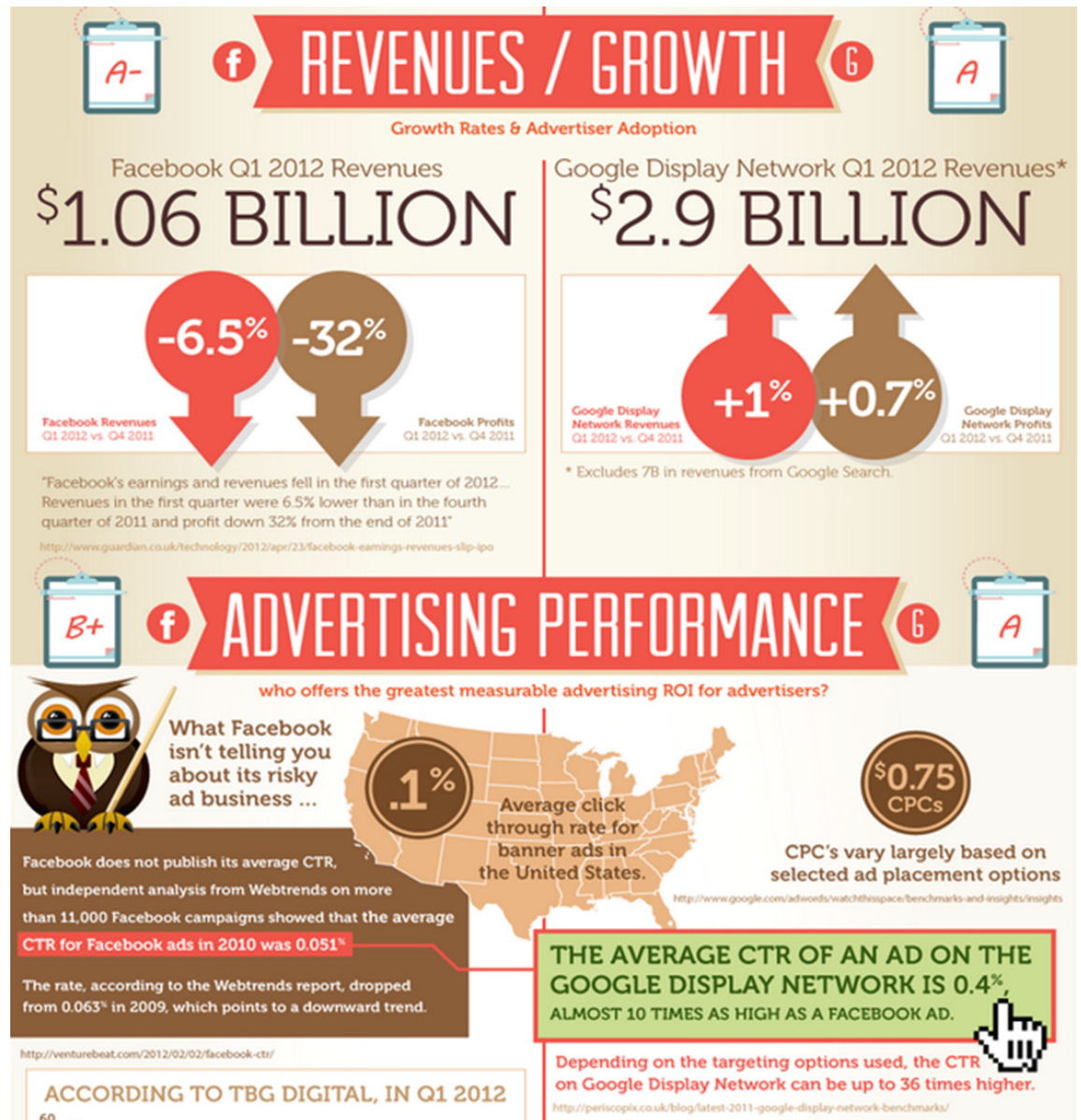
Try using keyword research tools to identify the questions your audience needs answers to — then deliver what they're looking for.

Write content to help your audience — The best content for marketing is directed at helping and delighting your key audience. Understand your customer: know their pain points, what gets them psyched, and what keeps them up at night.

[Killer content](#) address your audience's needs and concerns! Try using keyword research tools to identify the questions your audience needs answers to — then deliver what they're looking for.

Add a visual element to ALL your content pieces — People get bored with text really fast! To keep visitors reading, it's essential to have images breaking up your text. Don't overlook the importance of a visual element, even in blog posts that are predominantly text-based. You can see some examples of [highly visual business blogs here](#).

Invest in infographics — We know readers love visual content, and [infographics](#) are a prime example of linkable visual assets.



While the idea of creating a top-notch infographic may sound daunting, it doesn't have to be hard. You don't need fancy software — in fact, you can make a simple [infographic just using PowerPoint!](#) There are plenty of infographic guides templates out there to get you started. Speaking of...

Build useful templates — Templates are another powerful form of visual assets that visitors find extremely helpful. Templates serve as a visual framework that can help users create custom pieces without completely starting from scratch. Take this [landing page template](#) as an example — it explains the basic layout and fundamentals, letting users get a grasp on [great landing page essentials](#) before making their own.

AN AWESOME HEADLINE YOU CAN'T IGNORE



SUB HEADING

What the offer is, in a nutshell, and why you have to have it.

- Bullet points about your awesome offer
- And the amazing features it has
- Or the valuable tips and tricks it contains
- It will change your life forever

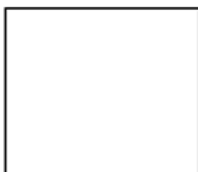
CALL TO ACTION BUTTON



**BIG
BRAND
NAME**



AWESOME TESTIMONIAL #1



"This awesome ebook I downloaded changed my life. Now my cat and I visit a new country every month!"
-Mr. Cat Man

AWESOME TESTIMONIAL #2



"Before I bought this product, life had no meaning. Now I have more meaning than I know what to do with!"
-Meaningful Lady

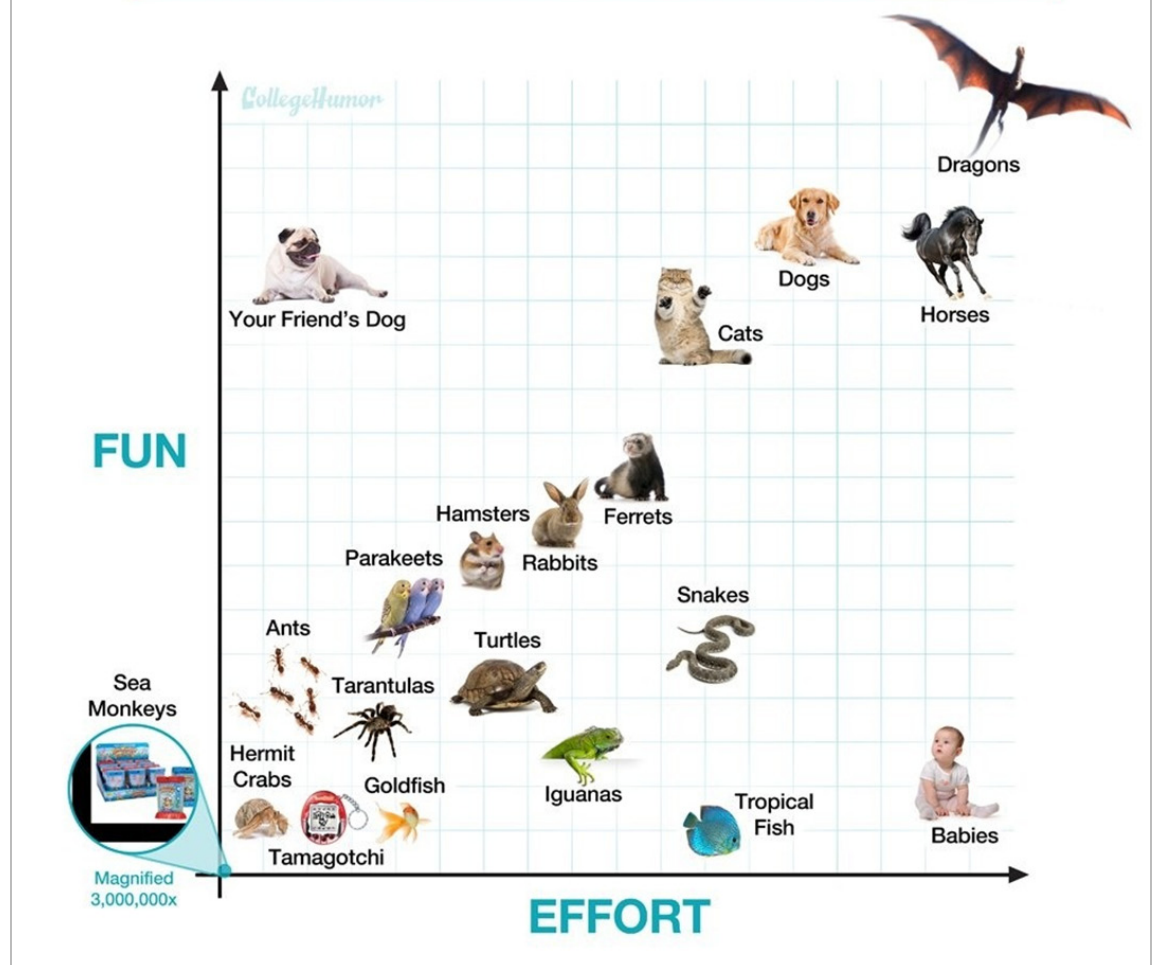
Pepper in graphs and charts — Simple graphs and charts still have their place as formidable pieces of visual content. They may not be as impressive as infographics, but they require considerably less time and effort to create and are still shareable, so don't be afraid to use them generously. For visual learners, a graph will be much easier to interpret than a chunk of text and numbers. Make sure you appeal to all kinds of learners!

Video not only draws in users, it sticks with them — retention rate for visual information can reach 65% vs. 10% for text-based info.

Show and tell with videos — Video content, whether you're trying to demonstrate how your product works or just educating and entertaining visitors, is incredibly powerful. Video not only draws in users, it sticks with them — [retention rate for visual information can reach 65%](#) vs. 10% for text-based

info. Plus, customers who view product videos are much more likely to convert than those who don't.

The Official "Fun Vs. Effort" Graph of Pets



That's why you find so many dragons at the animal shelter (via Reddit)

Video not only draws in users, it sticks with them – retention rate for visual information can reach 65% vs. 10% for text-based info.

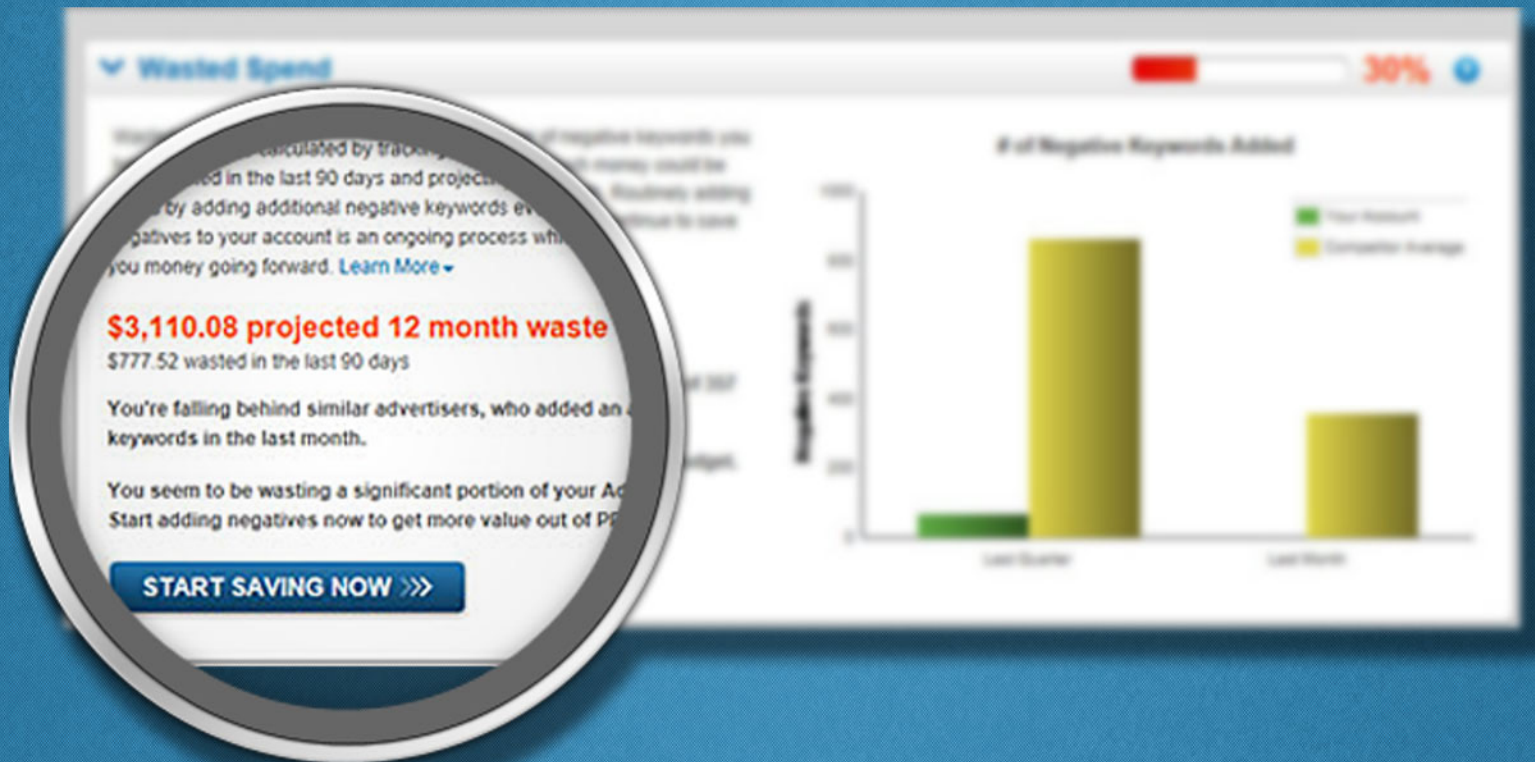
Make a statistics lists — For an easy content marketing fix, collect interesting statistics on a subject related to your business and create a blog post about what you've learned. Massive lists of facts and stats are easy to create and extremely sharable — and other content creators will want to

cite your research! Plus, some of the those stats may get your gears turning about other content ideas, such as...

Make predictions — Play the soothsayer by predicting future trends in your industry — just make sure you have at least some data to back up your hypothesis.

Stop Wasting Money In AdWords

Get Actionable Advice on How to Improve Your Account Now with WordStream's FREE AdWords Performance Grader



Get Your Free AdWords Performance Report Now >>>>

www.wordstream.com/google-adwords

Dive into a controversy — [Controversial content](#) always earns attention, but it's not for the faint of heart — playing with fire can get you burned! Rather than stirring up controversy yourself, the safer road may be to answer or respond to larger industry controversy, or show both sides of the issue.

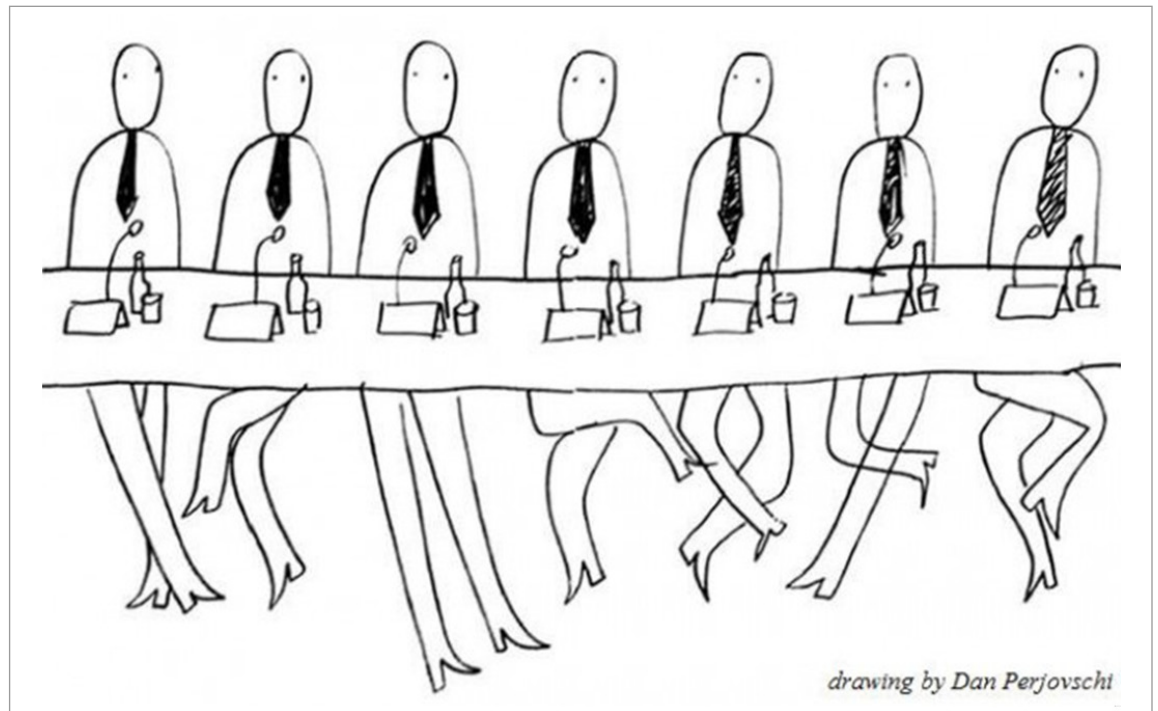


Rumors travel fast.

Aggregate awesomeness from other sources — Another easy way to create killer content is to curate quality content from elsewhere. For example, take our guide to the best [SEO Reddit AMAs](#). The content we quoted from was originally posted on various Reddit forum threads. We took what we deemed the best excerpts and put it all together to make one big SEO advice guide. This new post is much easier for users interested in SEO to read, rather than scouring through all the different Reddit pages. NOTE: If you're going to curate, always giving credit where credit is due, linking back to the original source.

Ask the experts — Another great content marketing idea is to interview industry thought leaders and share their responses in a blog post; for example, our interview with industry experts on [the future of PageRank](#). This kind of content tends to do well, and it's always

interesting to see where industry gurus agree and where they don't. One great thing about sharing expert opinions – chances are, the folks you write about will share your write-up with their own followers! (Pro tip – talk to people with large Twitter followings!)



Do a Top 10 — People go nuts over top 10 lists — top 10 tools, top 10 blogs, you name it.

Turn anything into a list — Starting your title with a number can make it stand out more in search listings (e.g. 3 Ways to Slice a Pineapple). Why do people love lists? Because they are super scannable and quick to read. This is probably why [over a third of BuzzFeed's posts have a number in the title](#). Great content strategies involve a mix of quick, snackable content pieces and more in-depth, [long-form articles](#). Variety is the spice of life.

Create a product comparison guide — Decisions, decisions — it's tough being a consumer with so many products to choose from. Help out users with a comparison guide, especially if you have a series of product offerings for different needs. If you're comparing your product with competitors, be objective and fair; maybe you're a better fit for small businesses, while a competitor is better for larger corporations.

Alternatively, write up a comparison guide for a product you don't offer, but which relates to your audience's interests. For example, a video game reseller could write a product comparison guide for different video game controllers. This is helpful content that gets relevant users familiar with your brand.

Make the most of Slideshare — The slideshow is back and better than ever! Repurpose PowerPoint presentations or conference decks in this engaging, audience-friendly online format. Check out these tips from Jonathan Colman on [getting more views on Slideshare](#).

Host a webinar — Host your own free webinar or partner with another business for twice the expertise (and twice the promotion power). Webinars are a great source of business leads. Here is a handy [checklist for making sure your webinar runs smoothly](#).



Check out Google's related searches — The Google related searches (found at the bottom of the SERP when you perform a keyword search) is a great tool for generating content ideas. These show you what other people have searched for around the same topic idea, and may help you dig in and get a little more specific. Just Google a term and see what related searches turn up at the bottom of the page. You may be surprised!

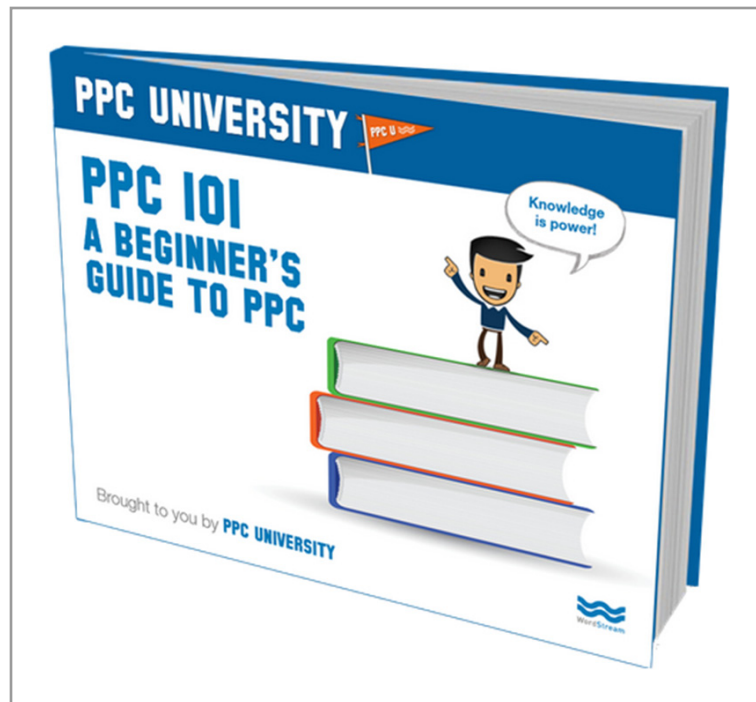
Test a pop-up opt-in — There's a lot of debate around newsletter opt-in pop-ups. They can be annoying and intrusive, but they also work! A/B test one and see how it works with your audience. If [newsletter subscribers](#) have proved to be valuable leads for your business, do what you must to obtain them.

Continue your lucky streak — Not sure what to write about? Go into your [analytics account](#) and take a peek at your most popular posts to see what subjects users get excited about, then write a variation or extension of one of your most popular posts.

Build an e-book library — Another great marketing idea is to write a comprehensive e-book on a known pain point or popular industry topic, then [create a quality landing page](#) around the offer. If you require users to register to get your free e-book, it can be a great source of lead generation.

Test your titles — Guides, e-books, white papers — they're kind of all the same thing, but labeling your assets differently can help your message resonate with different audiences. Test your labels to see which works best with your prospects. Just changing the name can help you get more signups!

Create 101 guides — There's always someone just starting out in the biz; beginner's guides and 101-style content pieces will always get linked to and shared around by newbs.



Promote, promote, promote — Even great content needs promotion. Don't just publish your content and expect it to promote itself; [share it](#) with your email subscribers and social media followers.

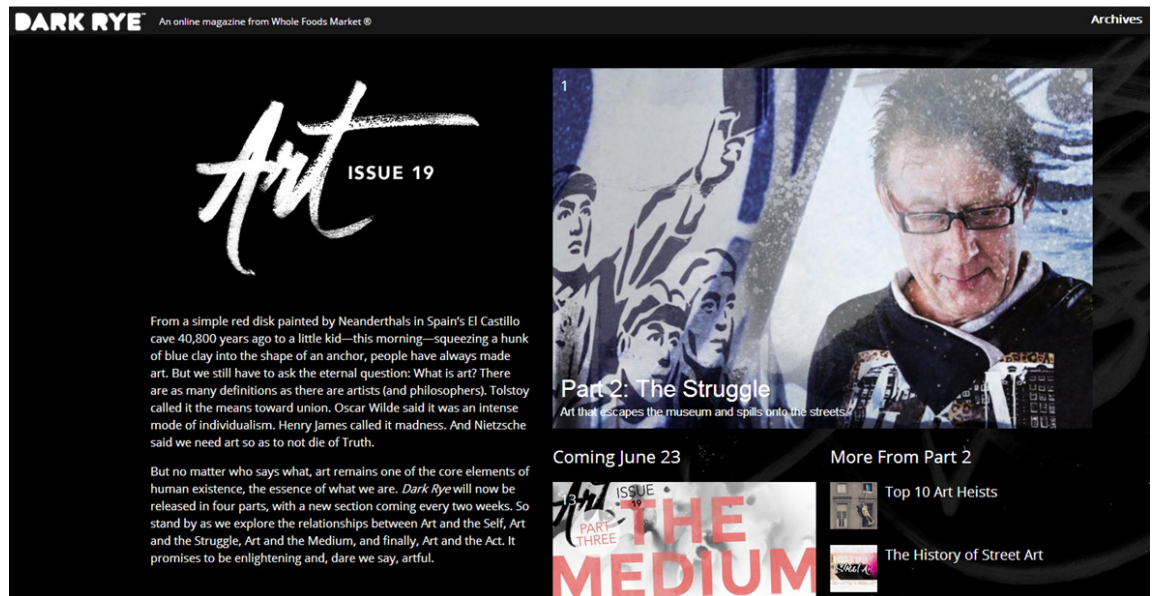
Post about industry hot topics — What's the buzz in your field? Post about topical news to show that you're in the know. Use Google Trends to surface trending topics — be sure to add your own commentary so you're doing more than just reproducing the news.

Google hates thin content, and users don't like it either. It's better to have fewer pages on your site than hundreds of low-value pages with duplicate or auto-generated content.

Write a guest post — While the SEO value of guest posts has been called into question, there's [nothing wrong with guest posting if done right](#). Just focus on the value of getting your brand in front of a new audience, rather than the links.

Focus on quality not quantity — This should go without saying, but only produce quality content that you can be proud of! [Google hates thin content](#), and users don't like it either. It's better to have fewer pages on your site than hundreds of low-value pages with duplicate or auto-generated content.

Consider online magazine formats — Producing your own virtual magazine is another epic form of content marketing — one that requires more time and thought but can have a big payoff, if you've got the budget. For a great example, check out [Dark Rye](#), a stylish online magazine produced by Whole Foods, or [Apostrophe](#), a magazine-style catalog from Land's End. For a quick and easy fix, make your own online newspaper with [Paper.li](#).



Talk it out in a Podcast — Podcasts are great because users can download them and then listen on the go! It's a whole different way to consume your content. Possible podcast concepts include discussing hot industry news or interviewing experts in your space. [Our own Larry Kim was recently featured on the Marketing Agents podcast.](#)

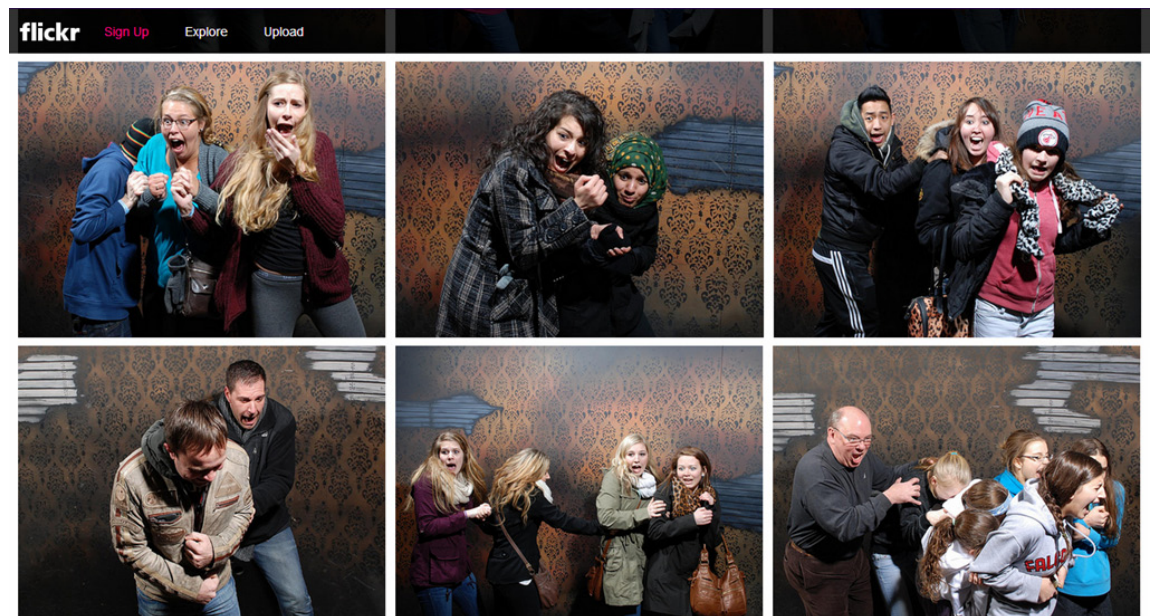
Cover events — If you attend a conference (or even an online event), consider writing a post about what info you gathered from the event, what you found valuable, your favorite sessions, etc. Chances are others will find it valuable too! Use the hashtag from the event in your promotional efforts.

Dabble in collaboration — Collaboration can extend your reach and build your reputation. Consider all the different partnerships you could build — partner with a charity? A related business? You can co-author a blog post or guide, co-host a webinar, and so on, and you'll both benefit from each other's loyal audiences.

Add flavor with memes — “Memes,” or familiar images with captions built right in, are fun and can spice up your content. It’s easy to make your own with sites like [meme generator](#).



Show social proof — Sometimes great content marketing ideas also serve as fantastic forms of social proof. Take this inventive content project by a haunted house called Nightmares Fear Factory. They take photos of victims...er, I mean guests, and [post them to their Flickr feed](#). The photos are absolutely hysterical and prove that Nightmares Fear Factory is as scary as they claim to be!



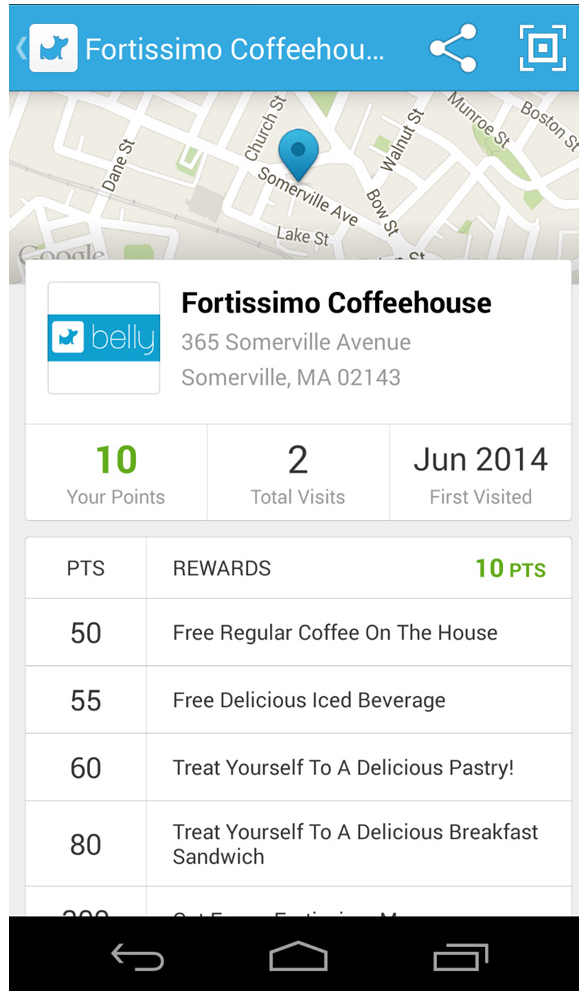
Conduct a content audit — Is your existing content up to snuff? What is driving conversions? What isn't — and why? Asking these questions might make you sweat, but you'll be better off knowing the truth. Finding the answers to these questions will ensure that your marketing strategy moves forward in the right direction.

Leverage branded tools — Create valuable tools that your audience will find useful. You can use the tool as a kind of free preview of your product offering, but make sure the tool itself has value — don't just make it a glorified sales pitch. Providing free tools will make users think fondly of you and extend your brand reach, as people are more likely to share and promote a free tool versus a paid product. Our own AdWords Performance Grader and free keyword tools are perfect examples.

The image shows a screenshot of the WordStream website's AdWords Performance Grader Plus page. The page has a blue header with the WordStream logo and navigation links like 'Products', 'PPC U', 'Blog', 'Support', 'AdWords Grader', 'Accounts', and 'Login'. Below the header is a dark blue banner with a white box containing a '91%' grade and a '40 Hours of PPC Analysis in 60 Seconds or Less!' claim. A prominent orange button says 'Get Your FREE Report Today'. Below the banner are three promotional cards: 'Worry-Free PPC', 'Throwing Money Away on PPC?', and 'Landing Pages & Leads'.

Play with gamification — Gamification is a great way to get users excited about engaging with you. As on *Whose Line is it Anyway*, the points may actually be meaningless, but you'd be surprised how much people enjoy getting points!

Get by with some content help from your friends — There are a ton of great tools out there to help you find quality content ([Storify](#) & [Buffer](#) to name a few). Remember, you don't want to just share your own content — sharing great pieces by others in your industry shows that you're a team player and valuable source of unbiased knowledge. And they may be more likely to share your stuff in return.



Illustrate your ideas with comics — While newspaper funnies may be a dying breed, online comics are thriving! Consider making your own internet comics that relate to the absurd and surreal aspects of your industry. Try free tools like [Pixton](#) or [Strip Generator](#) to get started.

Pixton

Fun Schools Business **LOG IN**

The World's Best Way to MAKE COMICS

Unleash your creativity!

Fun, quick and easy to use.
Tell your story your way.

Copy the masters — Watch to see who is creating great content, and follow their lead. Take a close look at [clickbait](#) sites like BuzzFeed that get a ton of social shares; while their audience and content subjects will be different from yours, they serve as an excellent study in how to improve your marketing strategy. What are they doing right? Can you implement something similar?

Write better titles — While we're on the subject, Upworthy is famous for their killer, clickable headlines. Even a superb blog post won't get the attention it deserves without a good title. Should it be clever? Eye-catching? SEO-friendly? Think about what will appeal to your audience. It's recommended you write as many as 5-10 titles for every article, then choose the best! Check out my [19 tips for writing better blog headlines](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING IDEAS

Follow the 4-1-1 rule — The 4-1-1 concept comes from Andrew Davis, author of [Brandscaping](#). Davis' social media sharing strategy dictates that for every six pieces of content shared on social media:

- 4 should be content from other industry influencers that is relevant to your audience
- 1 should be your own original, educational content
- 1 should have a sales aspect (coupon, product news, press release), aka, a piece of content most people will simply ignore

The philosophy behind the 4-1-1 concept is that when you share industry thought leadership, you're building relationships within the industry and demonstrating a certain level of selflessness which earns serious reputation points that come in handy in the long haul.

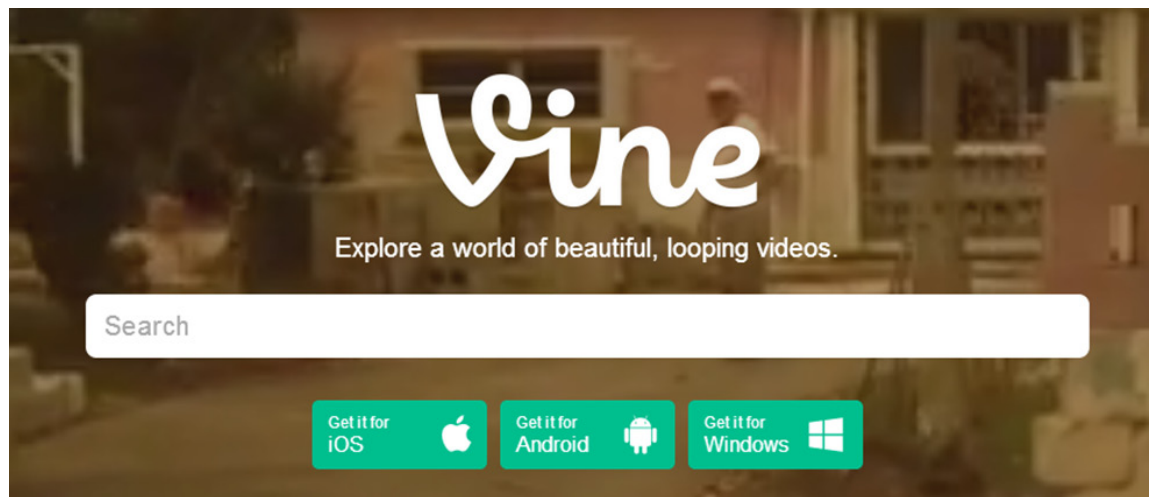
Include your Twitter handle on the slidedeck (in fact, keep it in the corner the entire presentation).

Push the handle — If you're looking to bump up Twitter followers, you can't be afraid to be a bit shameless. Speaking at a conference? Include your Twitter handle on the slidedeck (in fact, keep it in the corner the entire presentation). Ordering new business cards? Better include that Twitter handle!



Join in on weekly hashtag themes like #ThrowbackThursday — If you want to build your social media following, you need to be an active participant in the community. This means posting regularly, and also joining in on fun weekly social media traditions that already have a loyal audience. A great one for paid search marketers is [#PPCchat](#).

Film some Vines — Vines, quick 6-second video clips, are largely under-utilized — especially by marketers! With a little work and some fun content, you could become a big fish in a small pond on Vine.



Pin your own images (and others) — Don't underestimate the value of this image-sharing site. Post your strongest visual assets (templates, infographics, etc.) on Pinterest and link them back to your webpages for some serious traffic. If you're an e-commerce company, the potential for profits is even higher.

Facebook business pages allow you to follow other accounts via the Pages to Watch feature. Follow your competitors and see what they post, and which of their posts get the most shares and likes.

Keep tabs on competitors — [Facebook](#) business pages allow you to follow other accounts via the *Pages to Watch* feature. Follow your competitors and see what they post, and which of their posts get the most shares and likes. Note what works and follow their lead.

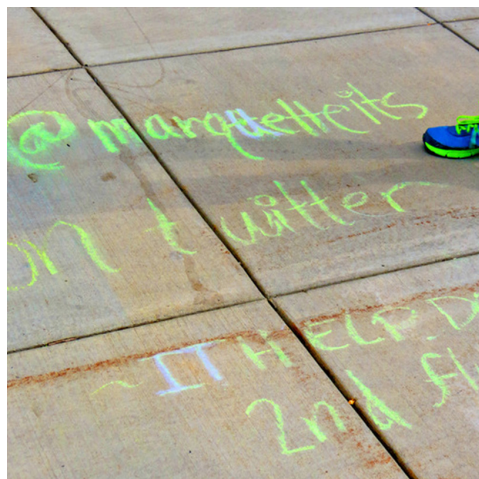
Pages to Watch		Add Pages
1	 UserVoice 4,980 likes	6 ▲
2	 Heroku 4,926 likes	38 ▲
3	 Y Combinator 3,455 likes	51 ▲
4	 Double Robotics 2,292 likes	28 ▲

From Inside Facebook

URBAN MARKETING IDEAS

Living in a concrete jungle allows for some pretty creative marketing concepts. Here are some ideas to get you started.

Step out on the streets — We're living in an online age, and there's something to be said for going *au naturel* and exercising a little "IRL" marketing. Go old-school with flyers and posters in local cafes; do some sidewalk chalk writing. This strategy is most effective for locally oriented businesses, but it can work for anyone.



Street chalk Twitter handle

Commission a mural — Try getting permission to decorate the side of a prominent building with a large mural that advertises your business.



Great Di Bruno Bros mural found on Yelp

Use your surroundings — Get a little imaginative and think about how you can use your urban surroundings for potential marketing magic.



Very creative urban marketing efforts by Vihar Barbecues, found on Owni

Seek out unusual sponsorships — Urban living results in some unique marketing opportunities you won't find elsewhere. They secret is, you need to think creatively to capitalize on these opportunities. It'll be worth it when you see your brand displayed around town.



Citi Bank sponsoring Citi Bike

CONTEST MARKETING IDEAS

Photo Contests — Photo contests are great for a number of reasons — they're relatively easy to enter (anyone with Instagram and a few spare seconds can submit), and they also provide sponsors with a great form of [user-generated content](#) that can be reused and implemented elsewhere.

Check out [Harpoon Brewery](#) — they've mastered the art of photo contests.



Video contests — Not as many people will enter video contests, but you're likely to get a higher caliber of content, since creating a video requires more effort on the user's part. This kind of content can be extremely valuable for businesses down the line, especially when you have talented filmmakers creating [video content](#) just for you!

Submit your vote contests — Voting contests get a ton of entries because they're so easy to participate in (just click a button, in most cases). What's cool about voting contests is that you can use the data obtained from the votes to create a mini data study. Share what you learned in a blog post!

Caption Contests — Post a photo and ask users to submit their best caption — this kind of contest can get some pretty great laughs.



Sweepstakes — The most traditional of contests, sweepstakes/giveaways are a tried and true classic. By giving away something of value for free, you're likely to get exposure far beyond the value of the goods or services. Sweepstakes are quick and simple to enter, and easy to run too – plus it's easy to ask for email subscriptions as part of the submission form.

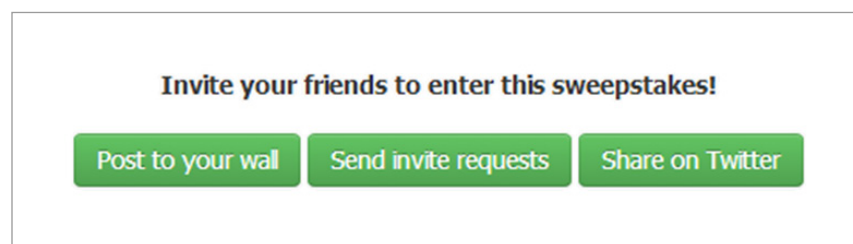
CONTEST PROMOTION IDEAS

Post to deal sites — People love free stuff, some more than others. The people who really love a good deal tend to frequent deal sites and forums. There's almost always a contest forum section where you can add your contest into the mix.

I've seen contests in which 90% of traffic is driven from these types of sites — alright, they aren't always the most qualified leads, but if you want quantity over quality, this is a sound strategy. Start by submitting to [Slickdeals](#) and go from there.

Hashtag-ify your contest — Adding a relevant (and unique) hashtag to your contest helps you keep track of entries and makes them easy to scan through and organize. Besides, they're just plain fun.

Make contests super sharable — This means adding "share this contest" buttons if you have an entry form on a website, and encouraging social sharing in general. The more people who know about your contest, the merrier (for you anyway)!



If you offer users bonus points for sharing news of your contest via social media, they'll be much more likely to help spread the word.

Offer bonus points for sharing — If you offer users bonus points for sharing news of your contest via social media, they'll be much more likely to help spread the word. Tools like [Rafflecopter](#) make it easy to offer users extra entries for different actions (e.g. Joining the mailing list = +5 entries. Sharing contest on Twitter = +2 entries).

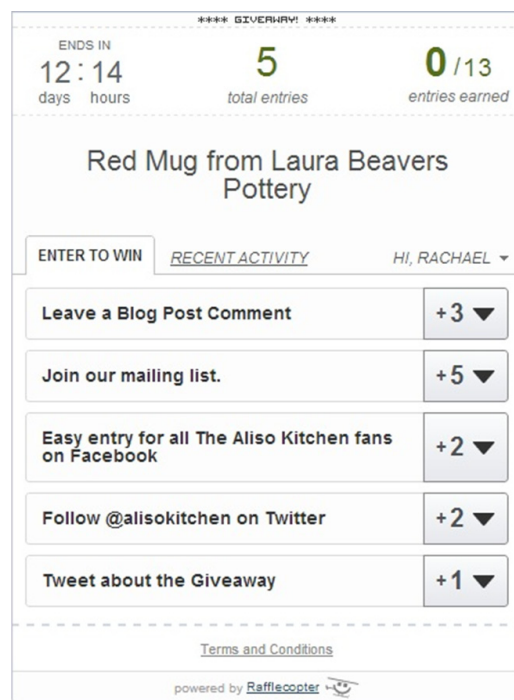


Image from Website Spot

Notify email subscribers of contest — Remember, you already know that your email subscribers like you and are interested in what you have to offer. If you're running a contest for a free year of your software, you know your subscribers are going to want in!

Promote your contest on (all) social media — If you're running a photo contest via Instagram, make sure you still promote the contest on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and all your other social platforms. You want all your followers, across *all* social media networks to know about your great giveaway!



We hope these ideas are enough to get your creative marketing juices flowing!

ABOUT WORDSTREAM

[WordStream Inc.](#) provides search marketing software and services to small and medium-sized businesses that want better results from paid search. WordStream's easy-to-use PPC Advisor software facilitates more effective PPC campaigns by providing a customized workflow, the 20-Minute PPC Work Week, to help advertisers increase relevance across Google, Bing, and Yahoo and get expert-level results in a fraction of the time. Whether you're new to search marketing or are an experienced PPC manager, WordStream's PPC management software and services can provide the boost you need to grow your business and drive better results.