

HOW TO PROMOTE YOUR RADIO STATION USING FACEBOOK

Facebook used to be the go-to social platform for businesses of all shapes and sizes to promote what they do and engage with fans, however since Mark Zuckerberg announced changes to the Facebook algorithm which now prioritises content from friends over businesses, it has become a lot harder.

However, that's not to say that your radio station can't still take advantage of the power of Facebook, using it to benefit you and your audience. We've outlined a few quick fire ways you can promote your radio station below, before also exploring Facebook Live, which has the potential to be an exciting addition to your digital strategy.

Facebook And Your Radio Station

There is a huge amount of content published on Facebook every day, so you need to make sure everything that comes from your page is relevant and of the highest quality in order to catch the eye.

Tip One: Don't be over-promotional

If you constantly publish promotional material, selling your radio station post after post, there is the increased likelihood that this will be seen as spam by the new Facebook algorithm. As a result, these posts won't be pushed out as frequently or as far to your fan's feeds, so fewer people will see what you publish.

Sticking to an 80-20 rule, where 80% of your posts are socially focused, sharing memes, videos and other content and 20% of your posts are

promoting your radio station, tends to work well and will see you reach the largest percentage of fans possible.

Tip Two: Engaging posts show more frequently in newsfeeds

Your aim is to get the largest number of engagements and reactions on your posts as possible, as these show up more frequently in your fan's newsfeeds.

Your most recent posts with the highest number of likes, comments and shares will increase its potential reach, so be sure to ask your followers questions that require them to leave a comment, and also ask them to share things for good measure too!

Tip Three: Consider ad targeting

If you want to guarantee your content is seen by a large number of people, who have interests and likes that you specify and live in your target area, you can reach this audience by paying Facebook to promote your content to them.

Therefore, if you have budget available and have something interesting to say that will make it worth your while in promoting, for instance an exclusive behind the scenes interview or a great competition, why not give paid advertising a go?

What's great about this is that you can also start targeting listeners of your competitors, ensuring your content gets pushed out to them without them even knowing!

Using Facebook Live For Your Radio Station

Facebook Live enables you to broadcast live video to your followers at the click of a button, so we're sure you can already start to see how this

could be advantageous for your radio station. What was once only available through the ears of your listeners can now be seen too; taking your radio station and the shows on it to the next level.

There are a few things for you to bear in mind when it comes to Facebook Live for your radio station though:

Make sure your Facebook Live has a purpose

There's very little point in broadcasting live just for the sake of it; what with the fast paced lives we all lead, if your live event isn't very interesting, you'll soon have people turning off. There are though some great things that will be sure to pull in your audience to your live show on Facebook, including:

1. Interviews with big stars
2. Exclusive acoustic performances from singers and bands
3. Outside broadcasts backstage at festivals and events
4. Comical stunts
5. Charitable appeals and events

Promote the broadcast in advance

In order for people to know and look forward to your live broadcast, you need to let them know about it in advance.

Use the platform of your radio station to plug any Facebook Live events to your audience, whilst also utilising all the other social media

channels you use, emails to those on your subscriber list and even adverts on your station too.

A simple shout-out from the presenters on your radio shows, for instance, stating that they will be broadcasting live from the backstage area of a local festival, interviewing all the stars as they come off stage and to follow your Facebook page to watch this exclusive content, is likely to see your follower count rise.

Understanding the difference between live and archived videos

When creating a video on Facebook Live, you will be producing something that can be seen live and archived for after the event.

With your live video, you'll obviously want to make it longer, so you give time for viewers to tune in and also for you to encourage interaction with those who are watching it. If you are interviewing a star name, you could ask those watching to send in their questions live that can be asked on the spot.

Once the Facebook Live broadcast ends, the great thing is that it will be archived so more people can view it after the event. If it has created a bit of a buzz when the video was live, there's a good chance that more people will come and view it afterwards, so edit to ask those late comers for their comments and thoughts on the video. You can even embed the video on your radio station's website and promote through your other social media accounts too.

Don't forget to review how effective your Facebook Live video was, whether it had the engagement you hoped for and what you can do next time to reach an even wider audience.

Experiment with your Facebook page and how you use it for your radio station, as testing different types of content, the times you publish and the subject of your Facebook Live videos will help you develop your strategy and ensure long term success.

Setting Up a Facebook Page for Your Radio Station

To watch your radio station grow, it's essential to connect and engage with listeners. Social media is a great way to do this, helping you turn listeners into fans and grow your following with free, accessible marketing. For this reason, it's important to set up a Facebook page for your radio station if you're serious about its success.

Create the Perfect Facebook Page

When you log in to your Facebook account, you should see the option to 'create a page' on the left. Setting up a personal profile instead of a page is an easy mistake to make, but crucial to avoid if you want to establish a social media following. You can then create a Facebook url (e.g. www.facebook.com/spacialaudio), and add a widget to your website if you have one, to make it easier for your fans to find you.

Once you've established your page, get to work on branding. Image matters if you want to attract new listeners.

Set your logo as the profile picture, and choose a cover photo that reflects your radio station. If you haven't got a logo yet, consider investing; they really do make professional radio stations stand out from the amateur ones.

Attracting and Engaging with Fans

Building up your social media following takes patience. To get started, invite your friends and family to 'like' your page. You can also grow your following through Facebook advertising – from a few dollars per day, you can promote your page to hundreds and thousands of people who fit your target audience. However, perhaps the easiest way to attract fans is through your station.

Make your Facebook page an extension of your radio station – post about your upcoming shows, use it to promote competitions, share guest interviews and give your listeners teasers. Likewise, mention your page on your station and ask listeners to respond via social media. Create a 'listen live' tab and embed your radio link, so that fans can listen directly from your Facebook page.

Without content, your followers have nothing to engage with, so remember to post at least twice a week. However, don't just make your page a tool for self-promotion – post about other issues that interest your followers, such as new album releases, the latest technology, and local events. To get relevant information on specific topics first, subscribe to Google alerts.

Listen to Your Followers

Your Facebook page offers a unique opportunity to gather feedback from your followers. This could be through the amount (or lack of) engagement on certain posts, indicating what your followers are interested in and therefore what to post more of. Or, it could be through reviews and comments.

Be prepared for the fact that not all of these will be positive. If you do get negative comments, don't just hide or ignore them. Responding to

negative comments promptly and politely gives your radio station credibility, and can paint your brand in a good light.

Follow these tips to propel the popularity of your radio station, and create a fan base for free. Invest some time and effort into getting your Facebook page right, and it can be an invaluable tool for engaging listeners and attracting new ones.

Essential ways to better understand and use Facebook to your best advantage:

1. Content is King! Publish great content. Engage listeners with entertaining, fun and relevant content that makes them think.
2. Don't post too much promotional material. Posting promotional information is more likely to be considered spam when considered by Facebook's updated algorithm. Consequently, these posts receive less push to your fan's feeds.
3. Use ad targeting. Boost your most compelling posts using ad targeting. Start by targeting your competitor's listeners.
4. The most engaging posts show up in your fan's newsfeed. More recent posts with a higher number of likes, comments and shares on the post increase its likelihood of appearing in a user's feed. Make sure to ask questions in each post. Ask for comments and of course ask for your fans to share.
5. Your most active followers are more likely to see your posts. The more interaction a user has with the page the more likely Facebook is to show the user a post from your page.

6. The 80/20 rule works here too. Follow the 80/20 rule; where 80% of your posts are social and the other 20% are promotional or designed to sell something.

7. Posting bad content is a waste of time, in fact it hurts you. Do not use clickbait headlines.

Facebook cares for its most important asset; its users. They found that people are most interested in seeing updates from their friends and the pages they care about. They don't wish to be bombarded with promotional content.

Create a content calendar

A social media content calendar should organize the way you create and distribute content. A social media calendar cuts extra time out of your content marketing strategy and helps you allocate your resources wisely, to help ensure your station consistently publishes high-quality, engaging content.

Your social media content calendar should be easy to read and contain all the necessary information for your content marketing strategy. The easiest way to organize a content calendar is by using a separate sheet for each month, with activities further broken down by month or day, depending on the volume of content you plan to distribute. If you have more than one individual, your calendar should reflect which of your station's personnel is responsible for writing, and promoting each piece of content. If you have several social media channels for content promotion, it helps to include icons representing each network next to the title of the post—this way, you can streamline your content marketing and social media strategies.

Other Tips On How To Promote Your Radio Station Digitally

The decision to promote your radio station digitally is just the first step in online marketing. Next, you'll need to define strategy and tactics as the makings of a plan to get the word out about your station.

Marketing in the online world isn't philosophically different than the traditional marketing you've done to promote your station — you still conduct various activities in order to get more listeners to your station. The tactics and media are different, though, and it will require a new skillset to promote your station through digital channels.

How to promote your station through digital channels

Here are 18 tried-and-true tips that radio stations can use to promote their businesses via online and social media channels:

Submit your station to radio directories: There are plenty of places online that provide an opportunity for radio stations to get discovered. Submit your station to Nobex Radio and the dozens of other radio directories online. Some of these directories have their own radio apps where new listeners may find your station and tune in to your stream.

Drive AM/FM listeners to your mobile app: Mentioning your website or mobile apps on the air for terrestrial listeners is probably the most effective strategy for radio stations that choose to market digitally. If you have an offline audience, create opportunities to encourage listeners to go and download your station's app or head to your station's website.

Encourage reviews in mobile app stores: Mobilizing existing users of your radio station's mobile apps is an effective strategy to get more users downloading the app. That's because you can prompt users to leave reviews of your app in the Google Play and Apple App stores. Then, when their friends and other users from their cities go to iTunes, it's possible they will be hit with a positive review of your app. Friend recommendations go a long way to help people determine which apps to download.

Create and distribute posters and flyers: There's nothing wrong with handing out, posting, or mailing flyers that promote your station's website or mobile apps. They're easy. Consider using a simple graphic design tool like Canva — it'll make it look like you had the promotion professionally done.

Work on your search engine optimization: SEO is a marketing strategy that tweaks the content of your website, as well as its organization and design, to maximize discovery by users in search engines and app stores. Make sure your content in your apps and website does an effective job in richly describing your station. The better your SEO, the more discoverable you can be for people searching for stations like yours.

Run viral contests: Contests are traditionally powerful tools to boost audience and drive listener engagement. Games and giveaways reward the most loyal listeners. To drive usage of your radio mobile apps, consider running mobile-only contests, available only to those users on mobile. There are plenty of ideas for viral contests that run on Facebook that will not only engage listeners but help to get the word

out about your station. Getting listeners to respond to posts or upload their own pictures to win some swag is a powerful promotional tool.

Participate in social media: Social media is an important tool to identify and connect with new listeners. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have proven useful for stations to grow their audiences and communicate with their listeners. That said, regular posting on social media requires discipline and diligence, so don't start until you're ready. Try to pair the right choice of social network to your audience — a jazz station, for example, might choose Facebook, but not Twitter, based on where it believes its listeners are active,

Pay for Facebook listener acquisition: You can participate on social media for free, building your community and new listener pipeline organically. Or, you can pay social networks like Facebook to help you acquire new listeners. You can do a variety of things with a paid strategy, like run campaigns that get likes to your Facebook page, drive traffic back to your website, and get users to download your radio station's mobile apps.

Define a content strategy: The way people communicate may have changed but radio is still a form of media. It just means that growth plans for radio stations have to take in to account messaging and content strategies across multiple platforms — not just through the air. So, active radio stations are publishing blogs, participating on Facebook, posting to Instagram, and have Whatsapp groups to message their audiences. You can create content to share with other sites in your niche, too. Create a strategy that fits your audience and stick with it.

Check out how California-based station RAD Radio approaches content and community. RAD has a vibrant Facebook community, with over

75,000 members. Members of the staff post regularly to Instagram. The station offers Android and iOS mobile apps (built and managed on the Nobex Partners platform) for its audience to connect through mobile. It also publishes some of its content in podcast form.

The station also offers a members-only section of its website for hardcore fans, too. RAD is a good example of a modern radio station — one whose core content may be audio, but it's certainly running a community across different types of media.

Cross promotion with partners: Recommendations drive today's consumption of media. Consider finding a media partner — like a local newspaper or TV station — with whom you can embark on mutual promotional campaigns. Or, a local retailer might be a good way to cross promote. In return for them promoting your radio station in store, you can promote their products or sales. These cross promotions don't necessarily have to cost money. With some partners, you can barter your way to growing awareness.

Calls to action get listeners to share: Your listeners are busy and most likely, even if they love your station, not actively sharing out your content. Here's the secret: you have to ask them to share. Marketers describe this as a 'call to action' — a CTA is a request for a user to take a specific behavior. If you want your listeners to share content on your website or mobile apps, you have to first ask them to.

Adopt email marketing: With so much noise out there, email is still effective in getting a listener's attention. On Facebook, your station can get lost among all your users' other activities. But an email still feels somewhat personal and it's delivered into some of the only remaining private space we have — our inboxes. Build an email list from contests,

by offering downloads, and promote it on social media. Use email sparingly and smartly and email is a great way to grow and market your station.

Start a podcast: Podcasts, as an audio format, are enjoying an early Renaissance as a medium. High quality shows are being produced by some of the biggest names in media. Podcasts seem like an obvious channel for radio stations to promote themselves.

For example, you can see how WBBM FM, a CBS news affiliate in Chicago, offers podcasts of specific popular shows and personalities. To get started, you can repurpose existing shows into podcast format so listeners can time shift their consumption. Over time, consider creating new programming specifically for the podcast format. (The Nobex Partners platform enables radio stations to archive their programs so that listeners can access the shows where and when they want. It's called On-Demand, available via our paid plans, and a good way to start podcasting.

Implement an influential guest strategy: A great technique to growing a digital audience is to identify people with large overlapping audiences and invite them on a show. You'll get great content and in turn, your guest will likely share out his interview with his audience. It's a win-win. Don't forget to ask your guests to share your programs on their different social media channels.

Participate on Reddit/Forums: There are an infinite number of forums out there where your target audience spends time. One of the most popular places for younger listeners is Reddit, a modern form of forums where people link to interesting things, discuss topics, share pictures, and vote on interesting content.

Reddit offers what are called subreddits, or niche forums, that are maintained by moderators. You can participate in others' subreddits or start and maintain your own. See, for example, the /rock subreddit. Over 10k people are subscribed and review, share, and discuss the genre. An expert opinion from a PD or radio exec could go a long way.

Market your station at events: Our online and offline worlds are blurring and all the data show that people are hungry for real-world connections. That's why events are still a great way to build community and promote your radio station. You'll have the attention of your audience, so plan out your messaging. If you want to promote specific shows or your website or your mobile apps during your event, prepare signage or handouts and make sure you mention your marketing messages multiple times during the event.

Start an influencer marketing program: 70% of millennial consumers are influenced by recommendations in their buying decisions. Your audience today looks to celebrities, their peers, and other influencers for suggestions of what to watch, what to listen to, and what to buy. You can tell them a thousand times that they should spend more time listening to your station but that message would pale in comparison to having a celeb promote you.

Identify some influencers with brands that match your own. Reach out to them to see if there are ways you can work together. With some influencers, you'll be able to barter by offering them some promotional air on your station. Others you'll need to pay. As with any type of marketing, make sure your pitch matches the style and interest of the person you're pitching.

PR/local news coverage: Ah, the lure of PR. Create something newsworthy and get it in front of a local reporter. It's as simple as that. It's worth creating an email list comprised of local reporters and periodically reaching out to them to tell them what you're working on. You're the expert in your field and your audience and people like them want to hear from you. In fact, 6% of buyers want content with more input from industry thought leaders.

INTERNET RADIO DIRECTORIES

It can be a challenge promoting a new internet radio station in today's market space crowded with tens of thousands of stations. So this article will focus specifically on the goal of getting your station listed in all the major radio directories. These are the directories with the biggest audiences and those likely to be the source of the majority of your listener referral traffic.

Shoutcast.com is easily one of the biggest internet radio directories in the world today boasting more than 55,000 stations. Getting listed is just a matter of setting the proper meta data in the Shoutcast D.N.A.S

or control panel. A benefit of being listed here is that many smaller directories scrape Shoutcast's directory using their API, so your radio station will end up being listed on many other places on the web as well. And a draw back however is that their categories system limits each station to just one genre per mount point which they claim reduces spam but has been referred to as a little unnecessarily restrictive. Also worth bearing in mind, with so many other stations listed, it can be hard to get noticed and generate traffic, so you are advised to choose your genres wisely.

iTunes Radio is a very popular means for listeners to browse radio stations thanks to the popularity of their web site, mobile application and presence in the burgeoning smart car systems market. Getting listed here is a matter of creating an iTunes user account and completing an excel application form. Turnaround time for replies tends to be in the order of weeks which is a little slow but their directory can be a good source of traffic even if it doesn't generate nearly as much as it used to before the days of Apple's other music and radio services. A little SPAM has also crept into their directory recently which I hope they become a bit more more proactive at dealing with.

Internet-Radio.com is a very sizable radio directory with some great functionality for listening to and promoting stations. Their directory is built to accompany the internet radio hosting service they also provide which is based on a pay as you go model. It's a very good directory to be listed on and can generate of a good volume of listener traffic. A nice touch here is the availability of a personalized page for every station in their directory which comes with some well integrated "tune in" and social networking functionality. One draw back however is the lack of dynamically updated stream "now playing" information.

TuneIn.com is another very sizeable and popular directory particularly so for mobile device users where they have an enormous presence. Directories often offer mobile applications for accessing their content online and tunein.com is easily one of the best example of how beneficial this can be for radio station owners. The popularity of their radio app and it's inclusion in both the main in-car phone function systems from Google and Apple, will also mean great penetration into the rapidly expanding internet car radio market for listing owners.

In summary there may be hundreds of internet radio station directories available online, but these four are easily the biggest and best known, and where you should definitely be focusing your efforts if you're just getting started.