



Great Social Media Content Ideas

Congratulations! You have your social media accounts set up, profile and cover photos in place, and all the important information on your website filled in. So what now? That's a great question. Since you now have a fantastic opportunity to have a conversation with hundreds of customers every day, deciding what to say and how to say it can be a difficult first step.

First, and maybe most importantly, drop any temptation to go into "corporate" mode. Speak like a human. Remember that custom framing is a very personal business and social media is all about building and nurturing relationships with real people. That's the social in social media. Be

professional, be mindful, but, above all, be a person.

Second, consider your audience and adjust your voice. If you are writing content for a professional networking site such as LinkedIn, you will want to present yourself as a professional but still have an authentic manner. If, on the other hand, you are

marketing to millennials, you will need to adjust accordingly.

Third, resist the temptation to promote. It may seem counterintuitive but, in general, posts of a purely promotional nature should make up only 20 percent of your social media content at most. Look at social media as a big cocktail party. How would you feel if someone you barely knew kept trying to sell you a condo? You'd be annoyed and would avoid the message. You need to build a relationship with your audience and provide

them with value before you even think of selling.

With all of this in mind, here are 18 ideas to help you fill your social media accounts and start taking advantage of a huge opportunity.

1. Connect with the big names. Some of the industry suppliers do a great job in sharing interesting and useful content. Larson-Juhl, as an example, regularly posts inspiring pictures of framed art and how it enhances décor. Even if the framing shown isn't exactly your style, remember that the idea is to promote custom framing as a necessary element in interior design. They are more than happy to let you share it, and that is the main reason they post. Your success, after all, is their success.
2. Post inspirational quotes about art and creativity from famous artists. A quick Google search for "artist quotes" will provide you with more than you can ever use. Just right click, save, and share.
3. Share news about art and framing. Maybe you remember all the hype over the new frame for "Washington Crossing the Delaware" a few years ago, or the "phantom framer of London" more recently. Those are just the kind of interesting and offbeat stories that draw attention to framers and framing.
4. Post a happy birthday message to famous artists along with a short biographical snippet and one of their famous works. There are plenty of online sources, but the Smithsonian American Art Museum has an extensive list available at: <http://s.si.edu/1PO3IZ6>.
5. Love it or leave it? Post a picture of a daring framing treatment or an example of framing used in an unusual way in the home. Invite feedback and engagement with a "Love It or Leave It?" question.

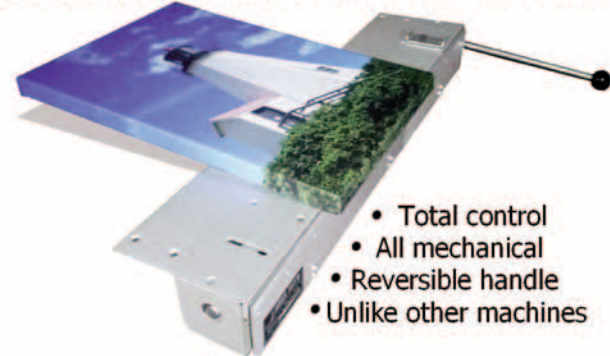
Before the selling begins, use these fun and engaging ideas to connect with customers on social media

6. Let customers peek behind the curtains and show them how you work some of your magic. Just don't get too technical; this is not a how-to but rather a "here's what we do." Anything with a gee-whiz factor, like showing your CMC in action or something specialized, like lacing, is great. If at all possible, use a short video.
7. A great thing about small businesses is the fact that customers get personalized service and they see the same people every time they visit, year after year in many cases. Introduce yourself and your employees with a picture and a short bio including their experience, specialties, qualifications, and interests. Do them individually so each person gets to shine and so that you can make it a regular series of posts.
8. Look for popular social media themes. For instance, "Throwback Thursday" is very popular and presents an opportunity to show favorite (if dated) frame jobs from the past or pictures of the store from years ago. Look at it as a way to reinforce the theme of credibility; if you have been in business for 25 years then, by all means, show it off.
9. Major holidays are fodder for multiple posts. Gift-giving ideas can be suggested well ahead of time. Then, as the holiday approaches, remind customers that there is still time for framing. Don't forget to put up a reminder about holiday hours, and then post an appropriate message on the day of the holiday.
10. Remember some of the oddball holidays like Star Wars Day (May 4) or National Donut Day on June 3. Look at them as an opportunity to share a little fun with your customers.
11. Social media is the perfect way to announce in-store events. Just like holidays, you will want to announce it well in advance and remind people of it as it approaches. Post pictures during the event and then follow up with a thank-you and recap the day after.
12. If you are located in a small town or tight-knit community, be sure to promote events in your area, especially if you sponsor or support them. Also sign up for the mailing list of local museums and share news about upcoming exhibits.
13. Follow large museums like the National Gallery of Art on social media. They regularly post great content relating to art, including special features like highlighting a particular artist.



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14. Feature happy customers. Nothing is better than a picture of an excited customer picking up and smiling about a finished artwork. Just ask politely before getting a picture and if the customer doesn't want to be in the picture, just get a photo of the finished product. Either way, be sure to tell the story behind it. Don't obsess over getting a perfect picture; the main idea is a happy customer and a fantastic frame.
15. Share pictures of beautiful home interiors, even if they do not specifically highlight framed art. Follow sites like Elle Décor and Pantone to share hot trends with just the click of a button. It will show your customers that you are in touch with current décor.
16. Show customers new and exciting products, especially sneak peeks at products coming soon. Remember not to get too technical and to tell a customer how it can provide value. Rather, describe the product, how it fits in with current trends, and what type of artwork it would pair with.
17. Keep an eye on community news and congratulate new businesses in your immediate area by sharing their social media information when possible. It's a great way to support small businesses that just may

return the favor.

18. Socialize! Make friends with and follow other framers on social media. It's a great way to network and share new ideas.

By now you have likely noticed that, aside from some of the holiday and store events ideas, there is very little selling in all of this. That is deliberate. As mentioned before, and will likely be mentioned many more times, social media is all about building and maintaining relationships. A great way to do that is to provide some sort of value to your followers and helpful tips, information about local events, and interesting articles all do that. And yes, there is even value in making someone laugh or smile now and then. **PFM**


If you're looking for more social media content ideas, David is a popular instructor at The National Conference in Las Vegas.

David Lantrip, MCPF, GCF, is the director of education for Franchise Concepts, and the franchisor for Deck The Walls, The Great Frame Up, and Framing and Art Centre stores. He has served in a number of roles in the PPFA including as a member of the International Board of Directors and serves on the Chapter Relations Committee as well as the Guidelines Task Force. David recently earned a Masters in Mass Communications degree from the University of Florida.

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