

Chow Notes



EPISODE 16 – HOW TO CREATE A SOCIAL MEDIA CALENDAR

Why hello and welcome. Welcome to Episode 16 of the Small Business Made Simple Podcast.

Have you joined my Facebook Group I'm building called [Like Minded Business Owners](#) – I'd love you to join – just search Like Minded Business Owners on Facebook!

I know we all belong to lots of groups on Facebook so I've been pondering what I can do that's different – so, again, I am making the commitment to go, at least once a week to help YOU my listen and those in my world with their biggest challenges or those burning marketing and social media questions.

I'm going to go live every Thursday. So if you'd like to connect and get social on social – head over and [join my group](#). I would LOVE you to come over and say HI! Maybe leave me a question your grappling with and I'll answer it live for you!

So, have you ever finished work after a REALLY long day, only to realise that tomorrow is your workplace anniversary – a massive marketing opportunity and you've got ZIP organised for your social media channels?

A mad scramble ensues to come up with a clever concept, create the necessary bits like video or quote cards or write a blog, and execute in time to ride the wave of birthday fun.

Or in some cases, it may be too late to do anything at all – an awesome opportunity missed.

There is an alternative! And that's what we are going to talk about today!

But first, of course, our discovery of the week.

THIS WEEK'S DISCOVERY!

This week's discovery is the emoji keyboard! Yep, emojis – I think they are taking over the world!

But they are also helping us put more personality into our emails, into our social captions and into our blogs etc.

Branding is so much about personality and tone and so forth – and emojis allow us to show a little more of ourselves than we used to be able to in the written form.

Now I work on a windows-based system. Do for those in Mac land, you might need to experiment, apologises up front for you guys.

But for those of us who don't have a Mac to bring up the emoji keyboard you press the windows key (the one that has the windows symbol on it) and the full stop key together and an emoji keyboard will come up!



Does that excite you must a wee bit? If it does there's every chance, we are spirit animals!! I love emojis, my friends might say a little too much, but I love for business too!

In episode 2 of the Small Business Made Simple Podcast, our discovery is an emoji builder – you can literally build your own so if you're interested in that head back to Ep 2 to get the details on that.

Emojis are a great way to stop the scroll, or the thumbs as my teenager put it the other day, either on social or in people inboxes – both of which are busy little places!

I hope you can find a use for an emoji keyboard in your marketing!

As always and a little obvious with this one, my discoveries are just that and I am in no way affiliated with any of them but promise to tell you if I ever am. I just love them and from the response of my listeners, you guys, you are loving them too!

Hey and if you have a little discovery, or something you use in your business that you'd like to share, please do so. Email me at jenn@jenndonovan.com.au or tag me @smallbusinessmadesimple. I really love to know what tools you use to help make your life simpler!

HOW TO CREATE A SOCIAL MEDIA CALENDAR

So, what's the alternative to the mad scramble or the having nothing at all and missing marketing opportunities?

The social media content calendar. Ta-Dah!

What is a content calendar? It's exactly as it sounds! Somewhere to plan and organise content for all your social media platforms.

Sounds like a tiny miracle doesn't it?

Let's dive into why you should have a social media content calendar for your business and how to create one. Don't worry, I have a template for you to work with, but more on that soon.

WHY A SOCIAL MEDIA CALENDAR IS SO IMPORTANT FOR YOUR BUSINESS

If you are planning to produce more content for your social channels or just get more consistent, then it's important that you have the support you need.

There's many reasons why a social media content calendar is important for business, starting with:

1. You'll never miss important dates

Taking time to put all the key dates for your business in a content calendar allows you to plan content for those dates

(a) so, you don't end up scrambling at the last minute and

(b) so, you can plan campaigns and lead times for events, campaigns and important dates.

If you're ever stuck for content when it comes to dates, there's a fabulous website www.daysoftheyear.com – apparently there's a day set aside for practically everything!

2. You'll have organised content

I know, I know. Obvious, right? But you'd be surprised – despite this very clear benefit, many businesses fail to use a content calendar!

Being organised means you know what you're publishing, including where and when, and it also provides key insights into where your gaps are too.

Don't underestimate the impact this kind of planning can have on the efficiency of your social media marketing plan.

We all know that the key to social media is CONSISTENCY.

A social media calendar will highlight consistency or lack of!

3. You can collaborate easily with your team

If you've got a team within your business, then a social media content calendar is going to make things SO MUCH easier!

It will serve as a single resource of all things social: what's being published, when, where, along with appropriate lead times that need to be managed.

If you put your social media content calendar in the cloud, like in google docs, then the entire team can have access to it and know what's going on.

Pro-tip: If your team knows what's been scheduled through your calendar, they can also contribute ideas to any unfilled spaces!

4. You'll save time

The inherent organisation of content calendars fosters efficiency.

Planning content ahead, knowing what content is evergreen, when you're pushing new content, and when you're curating items from other creators, will all save you time in the long run.

5. You'll be able to more effectively allocate resources

Rather than making last minute asks of your long-suffering but very patient team members, you can instead assign and plan things well in advance, providing ample time for research and creation, thus ensuring you rarely miss a deadline.

Not to mention your content can then be published exactly when you need it to be and the quality level will be higher (also because of 4. above!)

6. Gain a deeper understanding of successful content

Having a content calendar with a test and measure section, allows you to go back and make informed decisions on what's working, what's not working, what times of the day or days of the week work better for your business, what was a good piece of content, what engagement you are getting and the ability to check your insights against your posts.

This enables you to increase your success rate and create more of what your audience wants to see.

This deeper understanding can help you determine optimal post times, who your audience is, and what they want to see.

This will ultimately make it easier to duplicate what's working and make you a better marketer of what you do!

MY GIFT TO YOU

Because my podcast is called the Small Business Made Simple Podcast – clearly, I believe that making things simpler for us small business peeps is the way to go.

I also believe in the use of a Social Media Content Calendar and strongly encourage all my clients, friends in business and my audience members to be using one religiously.

So, my gift to you in this podcast, is the Social Media Content Calendar I share with all my clients, together with the User Guide that accompanies it. To get the fabulous resource to go

www.socialmediaandmarketing.com.au/calendar

Take time to download it now. Take a look and start following the instructions below in order to dive right into making your own social media calendar.

WHERE TO START WITH MAKING THIS CONTENT CALENDAR WORK FOR YOU

So, the benefits of having a Social Media Content Calendar are undeniable, as explained above. But how do you start?

Firstly, think about your audience. All good marketing starts at the same place: knowing your target audience.

What is their biggest pain point or their biggest goal that you have the expertise to solve?

Then start researching content that will resonate. Look back over the content you've already created on your social channels, or perhaps take some time to look over at your closest competitors and see what's working and what's not working for them.

Ask yourself:

- What content got the most likes?
- What content got the most comments?
- What content got the most shares?
- What content got the most views?
- What content got the highest engagement rate?
- While asking yourself these questions, do an audit of your existing content.
- Ask yourself the following questions:
 - What's still useable?
 - What can be updated?
 - What can be repurposed?
 - What can't be reused?

All items that fall into the first three categories have the potential to become evergreen content that will form the basis of your content calendar, and that's G.O.L.D!

Once you have looked at your audience, their pain points, past content and whether it can become evergreen content, start to map out major events within your business that you can use in your online marketing.

Think about:

- Holidays (big and small)
- Product launches
- Campaigns

- Annual events or features
- Anniversaries of your business
- Any charity events such as Daffodil Day and Jeans For Jeans Day

(Don't forget to look at "Days of the Year" for inspiration).

If your business is affected by seasonality, be sure to include this in your calendar. For example, if you're a B2B company and there tends to be a lull at the end of December, mark this on your calendar so that you can plan accordingly by reducing the amount of content published or saving top content for a higher traffic time.

Now you've got the bare bones of a calendar, the next step is a biggie! It's time to decide on your content mix – that is, what content you will share on which social platform at what time and what day.

Hang in there with me – don't dismiss the idea yet ...!

I have a rule when it comes to social media. Every post on your social platforms should be doing one of the 3 E's. The 3 E's are

- Entertaining
- Educating or
- Engaging with Value

If your content is not doing one of the following, then you need to ask yourself FOR WHAT PURPOSE are you sharing that content?

Episode 13 was all about the 3E's – so if you'd like to more about that, then head back there for listen in.

The social media platforms are marketing platforms, not selling platforms. So, keep your "selling" to a minimum, and remember you might not always be selling but you are ALWAYS marketing!

Remember that not all content that you share needs be original content created by you or your team. Sometimes it is appropriate to share content curated by someone else. Just remember to always acknowledge that it's not your original content (because that's only fair).

Now that you've marked all the important dates – and I do mean ALL – on your content calendar and set up a process for content planning, it's time for the fun part: **New content.**

Start with a brainstorm for the coming month. (Note: Once you start using the calendar, doing a few months in advance is a great idea or even longer if you can forward think!)

Perhaps there is a theme that you can follow for the month. Perhaps it's a campaign for Spring or End of the Financial Year or a topic such as leadership.

Picking a theme for a month and then brainstorming content for that theme will make planning so much easier.

Choose the themes you want to run with and map them onto your calendar. As you do this, keep in mind that it's better to do a few things well than to do everything poorly.

Narrow possible themes down to key priorities.

Once you have themes to go along with your dates, it's time to figure out your individual content pieces.

If you have big upcoming events in your calendar that you want to plan content around, ensure that that's reflected in the themes of your brainstorm sessions and, of course, that you leave adequate time for content tasks to be resourced. After all, you could have the best Christmas-themed campaign in mind, but no one will want to see it if you can't finish it until January!

Ideas for how to present your content are endless! In fact, after brainstorming for content creation ideas, we came up with 108 of them! Yep 108! If you haven't already downloaded this fabulous resource, then go to www.108social.com.au to download. Links are in the show notes too don't forget.

Not only will it inspire new content, it may also seed many ideas on repurposing content you already have. Plan your content, create your content, then schedule your content in your calendar.

Simple right?!?!?

Yes, simple in theory, much harder in practice. But with a little organisation, you can maintain a Social Media Content Calendar that will help your team be more efficient and create better quality content – on time, every time.

FINAL WORDS ...

Not having a Social Media Content Calendar forces teams (or yourself) to operate in the dark.

That inevitably leads to confusion, frustration, and a lack of focus. That's no way to effectively create consistent content on social media.

CONSISTENCY IS KEY

As small business owners, there is always so many things going on at one time. Knowing your social posts are lined up and ready to go, frees up time and mental energy for other tasks.

In short, save your sanity and use a calendar.

I'd love to hear your thoughts on whether you already use a content calendar or whether today is your first day!

My audience would love to hear about your experiences too.

Or perhaps you have some challenges in this area? Join my closed private Facebook group – Like Minded Business Owners and continue the conversation to get the answers from our brilliant community that you've been looking for.

Just search Like Minded Business Owners on Facebook or go to my show notes for the link.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LikeMindedBusinessOwners>

Don't forget to download our Social Media Content Calendar and the User Guide that goes with it at www.socialmediaandmarketing.com.au/calendar

So that's it for Episode 16. I hope I've inspired you to think about your social content in a different way. And that you start to think about it in a planning way – not something that you just come up with at the last minute.

I'll be back next Thursday with some more marketing know-how and another discovery of course.

If you're liking the podcast – please head over to where you listen and leave a rating and even a review – those things are GOLD for podcasters like me! I'll be eternally grateful, and it helps others find this podcast and enjoy the free training, tips and tricks too. It could be the best gift you give them!

Maybe you could take a screen shot of you listening to this episode and put it in your stories mentioning @smallbusinessmadesimple

I am very glad to have you as part of my world, as part of my tribe, listening in every week, but I'd also love to catch up between podcasts so don't forget to join my Facebook group Like Minded Business Owners Look forward to seeing you in there! Of course, links to my other social accounts are in my show notes.

If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to leave me a DM on Instagram! The DMs seriously make my day!

Catch you next week,

..... and remember small business peeps, as my opening song says, there's no point in dreaming small!

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