

6 steps to dominate a competitor's social media marketing

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



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If you've kept up on trends in the online marketing industry in the past decade, you're aware of the value of social media marketing. Some naysayers have criticized its ROI, but I've consistently stood by the strategy as one of the you can pursue.

If you dedicate yourself to producing and promoting quality content, strategically targeted to your audience members, and you're consistent in engaging with them on a regular basis, there's nothing that can stop you from achieving growth.

That growth might be limited or stopped entirely, however, if you have a fierce competitor on the scene. If a company similar to yours already exists and has a bigger, more engaged following, it will naturally cast a shadow on your campaign -- and new competitors could always become wild cards, interfering with your efforts. So, what do you do when a competitor starts poaching your turf?

You dominate them.

But how?

Step 1: Investigate.

First, you need to get a better idea of what's going on. This starts with . Play the role of a follower and try to understand why that company's strategy is appealing. What kinds of posts is it making? How frequently? What's its brand voice like? How are its current followers responding?

You won't be able to get all the information you'd like: for example, your competitor's internal goals, how it's measuring its results or if it's doing anything behind the scenes. However, you will get a surface-level understanding of your competitor's broad direction and tactics.

Take note of these and compare them to your own strategy: You may find some immediate things you're doing wrong. provides some helpful tips and tools for analyzing your social media competitors.

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Step 2: Choose and understand your niche.

Next, you'll want to . If you've been in the game a while, this might seem like an obvious step, or one you've already taken. You know who your target audience is, but if you want to beat the competition, you'll need to take things a step further.

As you'll see, one way to beat your competition is by differentiating yourself, and you can do that by choosing a more specific niche (or a different one altogether) and focusing on it by delivering highly relevant, tailored content. In any case, you'll need to reevaluate what niche you're targeting and dig up some more details about what's important there.

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Step 3: Mimic what works.

Next, figure out what specific tactics your competitors are using that are earning them long-term benefits and mimic them for your own campaign. You'll need to be careful here, though; if you mimic your competitors' strategies too closely, you'll end up blending in as white noise.

Instead, observe on a conceptual level why these strategies work, and apply those concepts to your own brand. For example, have they grown in popularity thanks to video tutorial content? Perhaps you could come up with your own such offerings.

Step 4: Be different or be better.

If you want any hope of dominating the competition, , and you only have two options to do that: Be different or be better. The former is arguably easier; you'll choose a different niche, construct a different brand voice or otherwise fundamentally remove yourself from this competitive space. Once you do that, you'll end the competition and start competing with yourself.

Your other option is to do what your competitor already does, but better. For example, if that company has published an awesome 5, 000 word article, publish an even-better 10, 000 word one. If it makes good videos, make great videos. Up the ante with more details, more entertainment value and greater practicality.

Step 5: Provide Value

Next, you'll want to start . Until this point, we've been focusing on crafting a strategy that's similar to -- but distinct from and better than -- your competitors' strategies. With those fundamental frameworks in place, think about what your ideal followers would most like to see.

What kinds of topics are they most interested in learning about? What kind of posting pace do they respond well to? What's the best way to engage them in conversation? Make it worth their while to follow your content updates.

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Step 6: Learn and improve.

From here, your best weapons are ongoing improvements. Your strategy isn't going to be perfect right away, but as long as you consistently measure your progress, you'll have a way to steadily hone your approach. Watch to see which of your posts are most popular and which ones fall flat. Compare your follower-engagement rates to those of your competitors'. When a tactic doesn't appear to be working, don't spend any more time on it, and if you find one that carries a massive impact, replicate it.

These six steps may not seem like much at first glance, but in sequence, they're a powerful and reliable way to analyze, approach and ultimately overcome, virtually, any competitor that threatens you on social media.

The process won't happen overnight, and it will take some creative legwork to make everything connect, but if you stay true to your audience and work around or exploit your competitors' signature qualities, you'll be back on top sooner than later.