

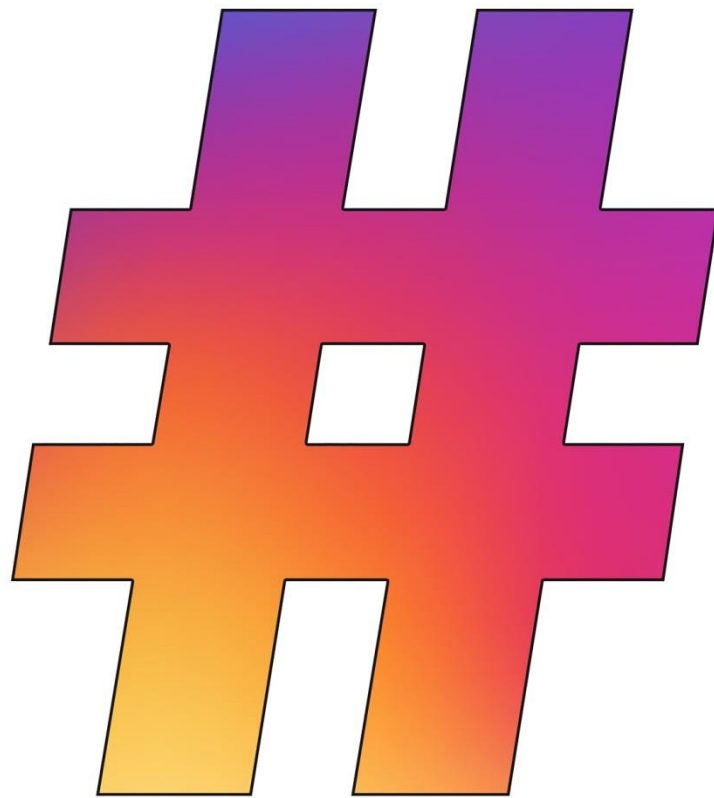
Clicks

The Online Marketing Guide for Small Business

FRESH
**SOCIAL MEDIA
MARKETING IDEAS**

FOR 2021

7 EFFECTIVE WAYS TO
MARKET
YOUR BUSINESS WITHOUT
Breaking the Bank



HOW TO USE
HASHTAGS
TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS

How to Use
You Tube
To Market Your Small Business

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When a business is pinching pennies, the marketing budget is often the first thing to go. For many business owners, it's more important to continue paying employees and to pay utilities than it is

to try to attract new customers. However, eliminating your marketing altogether is a mistake that can cost you in the long run – and there's no need to do it. Here are 7 ways that you can continue to market even if your budget is tiny.

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see a Tweet, Instagram post, or Pinterest image to find the content and understand what it's about. In this article, we'll explain how to choose and use hashtags to attract new followers and – this is what you're here for – increase your profits. It's easy for people who are interested in your business and content to find you.

Welcome To Clicks Magazine

Thanks for checking out our 78th issue of Clicks, your online marketing resource guide for small business. Each month we will be covering topics that resonate with local businesses just like yours.

Our goal is simple. We want to enable you to do big things online, and it all starts by breaking down the complexities of marketing your business online.

It doesn't matter if you're just starting out, or an established business owner in your local community, you can always benefit from increasing your brand's visibility online.

To your Success,
Jack Barros
App Direct Marketing

CLICKS IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY APP DIRECT MARKETING

App Direct Marketing is a small business-focused marketing service with offices conveniently located in Worcester, MA, and Ocala, FL.

If you want to build your business, you need to market, it's that simple. But you can lose thousands of dollars if you don't know what you are doing. So, we urge you to take action with some of the strategies we recommend.

For a more "hands-off" approach, we offer affordable solutions and can deliver results. We hope you enjoy this issue of Clicks and feel free to reach out to us anytime.

7 Effective Ways to **MARKET** Your Business without **Breaking the Bank**



When a business is pinching pennies, the marketing budget is often the first thing to go. For many business owners, it's more important to continue paying employees and to pay utilities than it is to try to attract new customers.

However, eliminating your marketing altogether is a mistake that can cost you in the long run – and there's no need to do it. Here are 7 ways that you can continue to market even if your budget is tiny.



#1: Make Cold Calls

There's no way to attract new customers or clients without having a "first touch" that introduces them to your brand and lets them know what you can do for them. That's where cold calling comes in.

Some companies pay for cold calling services but it's something you can do in house if you're willing. For the best results, do as much preliminary screening as you can and prepare a cold calling script for callers to use. It's also a good idea to think about what time of day people will be most receptive to hearing from you.

#2: Start (or Optimize) Your Referral Program

Referral marketing is one of the least expensive and most effective ways to get new clients for your business. A referral can come from an ex-

isting customer or from another referral source such as a professional colleague or local business owner.

You'll have the best luck with referrals if you incentivize people to refer their friends, family, or customers to you. One idea might be to offer rewards where people get a free product or service if they refer a specified number of people. Alternatively, you could offer a points system that allows customers to "level up" to unlock special rewards and perks.

Keep in mind that, with any referral program, you'll need to make the rules clear ahead of time. Will you offer rewards for a lead or only for a paying customer?

If you provide a service, does a new client need to stay with you for a specified time before the rewards kick in? Make sure that all participants understand the rules.



#3: Create Useful Content

One of the best things about content marketing is that it doesn't need to cost an arm and a leg. You can write blog posts, create graphics, and even film videos without going over your budget.

The key to not spending a lot is to focus first on how your content will serve your target audience. A video that demonstrates various ways to use your product will be immediately useful and people who view it won't need to connect any dots to understand how it has helped them.

Keep in mind that the content you create can be shared on your website, with your email list, and on social media. Cross-posting is free and it's always useful because the people who follow you on Twitter may not follow you on Facebook – or vice versa.

#4: Get Involved Locally

One thing that the COVID-19 pandemic has done is to remind people of the importance of supporting local businesses in their communities. You can gain some good will and increase brand awareness by participating in community events.

In-person events might still be rare, but you can get involved in local charities and other events that are being held virtually. If events are being planned, you can step in at the planning stage and offer advice and support. Either way, you'll get the benefit of having your business in front of the local people who are most likely to be your customers.



#5: Take Advantage of Free Social Media Features

While you can certainly spend a lot of money on social media marketing, you don't need to do so to get results. Let's start with the obvious. Any content you create can be shared with your followers at no cost to you. You can also choose to promote your most important pieces of content.

Other free options include creating a poll for your followers and running a social media contest. People love to get something free, and a contest is an effective way to get your content in front of new people without paying for it.

If you decide to go the contest route, make sure to incorporate Likes and shares into your contest rules. One common tactic is to give your followers one entry for Liking your post, one for commenting, and a third for sharing. You could even give additional entries for people who share your contest on multiple platforms. Track everything meticulously and articulate the rules to eliminate misunderstandings.

#6: Partner with Other Businesses

With a lot of small businesses struggling, it is essential for business owners to help each other out whenever possible. One way to do that is by joining forces with a complementary business and creating a cross-marketing campaign that benefits both of you.

For example, if you own an insurance agency, you could do a cross promotion with a local real estate agent or car dealership. If you own a furniture store, you could partner up with a store that sells gardening supplies and market your products to new homeowners.

The most important thing if you choose this option is to choose a marketing partner whose products or services will appeal to your customers. There might be a remote chance that the same person who bought a motorcycle helmet from you will want to plan a wedding, but the crossover is likely to be minimal – so stay focused.



#7: Look for Ways to Highlight Your Business

Trust badges, certificates, and awards are everywhere online. If an award committee accepts nominations for awards, you may want to ask someone to nominate your business for the award.

The benefit of winning an award is that it offers you the opportunity to promote and raise the visibility of your business without dipping into your marketing budget. You may get a nice badge or trophy symbol to display on your site and you may even get some free promotion from the organization providing the award.

As you can see, it's not difficult to market your business with a tiny budget.

All you need is some creativity and time.



How to Use **You**Tube To Market Your Small Business

Have you been sleeping on YouTube marketing? If the answer is yes, you're not alone. It's easy to dismiss YouTube as the place where teenagers and young adults make silly content, whether they're sampling weird fast food mashups or doing stunts.

The truth is that YouTube is the world's second-largest search engine. Only Google sees more traffic. People who watch videos on YouTube are always looking for new content to watch and there's a big opportunity for small businesses like yours to find a whole new audience with video marketing.



SHOW OFF YOUR PRODUCTS

Do your customers know how to use your products? More importantly, do they know the best ways to use your products? If they don't and you can help them get the most out of what they buy, then YouTube is the perfect place to do it.

Let's look at an example. Luxy Hair is a company that sells a full range of hair

extensions. They have attracted over three million followers on YouTube thanks to their styling videos that show customers (and potential customers) how to wear their hair extensions and style them.

The videos include practical demonstrations plus recommendations of styling products to

use with extensions.

You can use this technique to connect with your customers on YouTube. Think about how you can help your customers get the most out of your products and then, produce a series of short videos showing them how to do it.

FILM AND SHARE CUSTOMER TESTIMONIALS

Customer reviews and testimonials provide powerful social proof when a potential customer or client comes looking for the services you provide. Because YouTube gets so much traffic, it makes sense to share your customer testimonials there by filming them.

A video testimonial is more direct and appealing than a written testimonial. Your target audience will get to see your client's face and hear their voice – and they can see the work you did and why the customer is happy with your company.

A great example of how to use customer testimonials on YouTube comes from a company called Hippie Fertilizing. They have posted a series of video testimonials that they have filmed in their clients' back yards. In the testimonials, the owner of the company interviews clients about why they called the company, the work



that was done, and how the client feels about it. They include before and after shots of the space they treated, so that prospective clients can see the results.

You can use this idea by talking to customers about testimonials when you book a job. To make the process as convenient as possible for your clients, you can copy Hippie Fertilizing and film the tutorial on their schedule and where the work has been done – or whatever works for your clients.



CONNECT WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS

If there's one thing the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us, it's that technology can help us stay in touch when we can't get together in person. That lesson is one we can take with us going forward.

How does this relate to YouTube? One way to create a lot of good will with your customers is to share your knowledge with them for free. We're not talking about giving away your services, but we are talking about making it clear you care about your customers on a personal level.

A great example comes from Georgia's Cakes, a UK bakery that shared a step-by-step tutorial

to help people make a wedding cake at home during the pandemic. Since a lot of people were having small weddings with only a few guests, the owner of this bakery saw an opportunity to connect emotionally with potential customers.

Now, this technique isn't going to garner you any immediate business but ask yourself a question. If you had to cancel your big wedding and you used this video to make your own cake, would you be inclined to order from this bakery for future birthdays, parties, and events? The answer is almost certainly yes. This marketing technique creates good will and solidifies customer relationships, and those things have a direct impact on your future success.



USE YOUTUBE TO DEMONSTRATE YOUR EXPERTISE

Building authority is essential if you want your customers to trust you. They need to believe that you can deliver on your promises. Testimonials play a role in that, but it's also important to find ways to visually demonstrate your expertise.

One way to do that is to show people what you do. We like this example from Daisy Duke Landscaping, which demonstrates how to install landscape fabric like a pro. The benefit of a video like this is that it may inspire people to do some landscaping on their own, but it also demonstrates the company's ability to do great work.

You can copy this technique by thinking about what techniques or experience will overcome potential objections to hire your company and putting it into a video. The video doesn't need to be long – the one we linked is under seven minutes.

CROSS-POST YOUR MARKETING VIDEOS

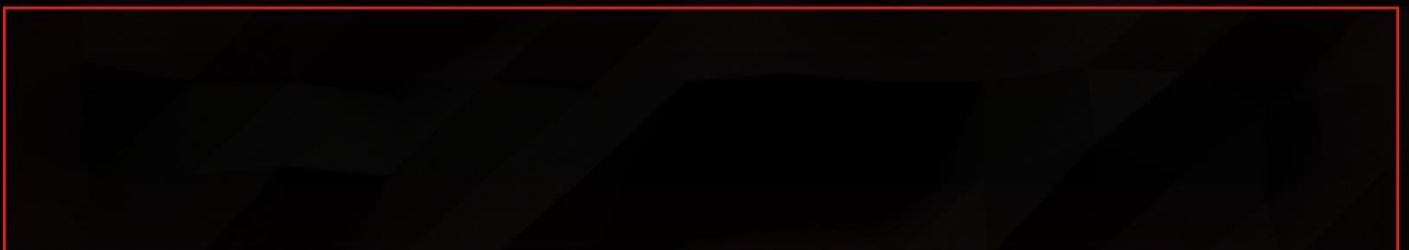


While creating professional-looking videos is easier than it ever has been, you cannot count on your YouTube followers to follow you on other platforms such as Facebook and TikTok. For that reason, we strongly recommend cross-posting your video content from other platforms on YouTube and vice versa.

There are too many examples to list here, but lots of companies create Facebook Live videos, save them, and post them on YouTube. Others create funny TikToks and share them on Facebook or Twitter. You should always be thinking about how to reuse or repurpose your videos to reach the widest possible audience.



The bottom line – and the thing we hope you'll take away from this article – is that YouTube marketing is one of the best ways to connect with your audience, share your expertise, and build your brand. You can get more ideas by peeping on your competitors' activity and finding ways to adapt the things they have done to help you grow your business.





Fresh **Social Media** **Marketing Ideas for 2021**

Social media marketing isn't the new kid on the block anymore. Things that felt fresh and exciting just a few years ago are now old hat and that means we've all got to find ways to take our Facebook and Instagram marketing to the next level.

Fortunately, there are still lots of things you can do to "level up" your social media marketing. Here are some suggestions to help you stay ahead of the pack in 2021.



Poll Your Followers

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram all allow users to create polls for the followers to respond to. In most cases, we're talking simple polls with just two or three potential responses.

That said, even a simple poll can be useful as a way to collect information from your followers. Because polls are interactive, they encourage engagement. In many

cases, respondents won't even need to leave their feed. They can respond by clicking their choice.

If you want to take it to the next step, you can try using a poll as a quick form of split testing. Include links to two different versions of your landing page or home page and ask people to vote on their favorite.



Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram all allow users to create polls for the followers to respond to.

Engage in Social Listening

You've probably seen at least one brand make a critical mistake on social media by responding in a tone-deaf way to something in the news. Does that mean you should never respond to anything topical? No – but it does mean you

need to be careful.

The best way to avoid missteps is to engage in social listening. Before you post, scroll through relevant hashtags, and get a feeling for what people are saying and how it might relate

to your brand, products, or services. Then, you'll be able to craft a response that is equal to the moment and will speak to the concerns and needs of the people who follow you.

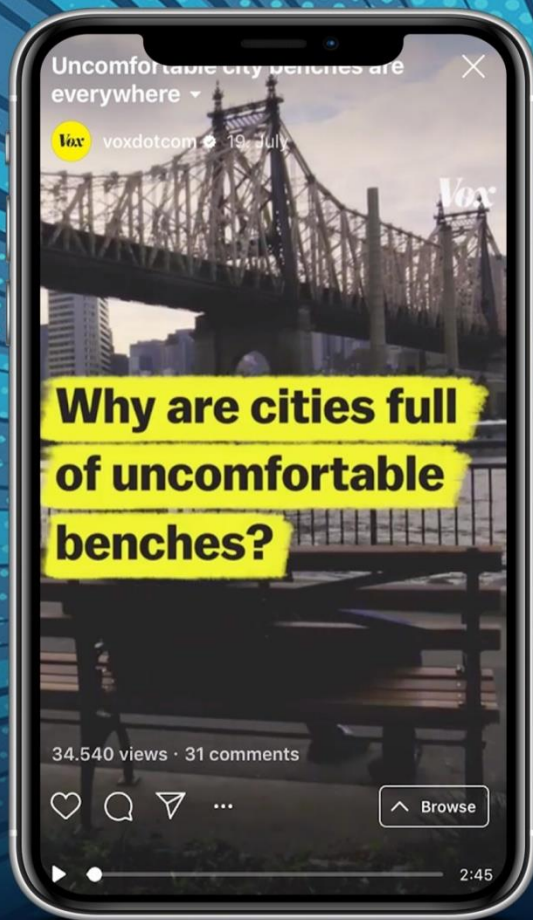
Fine-Tune Your Twitter Voice

Having a clear and consistent brand voice is essential on any social media platform but it is most important on Twitter, where you have just 288 characters to get your point across. You can expand a thought over

two or more Tweets (sometimes known as a Tweetstorm) but you still need to fine-tune your voice.

Your voice might be authoritative, funny, snarky, or highbrow.

Whatever it is, you should learn how to get it across in a single Tweet. There's nothing wrong with a bit of experimentation and trying a couple of different options will help you to get it right.



Vary Your Instagram Content

Because Instagram got its start as an app where people could share mobile photography, it's common for business owners to get stuck in a rut, posting only high-quality photographs and never taking any chances.

Instagram's options have expanded and it's time for you to get on board with the changes. You can try any of the following to diversify your content.

- Create short videos to share with your followers

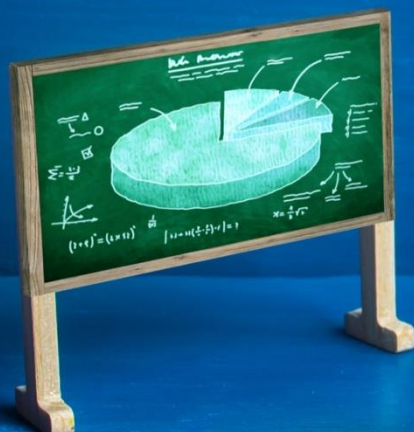
- Do an Instagram Live video
- Create one or more GIFs from your videos or other sources
- Get creative and make some memes that are relevant to your brand
- Take advantage of micro-blogging and share your thoughts

There's a lot you can do with Instagram and as users become increasingly sophisticated, they expect more from the brands they follow.

Start an IGTV Show

Speaking of expanded content on Instagram, did you know you can create long-form television shows using IGTV? Content creators use IGTV to do Q & A sessions, live stream events, interview experts, share reviews and testimonials and much more.

The great thing about IGTV is that you can start small and build your channel. You don't need fancy video equipment or sound equipment. If you can produce quality video with clear sound, you have what you need to create your own IGTV show.



Use Custom Retargeting to Increase Conversions

When you are marketing your products or services to a “cold” audience, it can be nearly impossible to make any money from your Facebook ads. That said, there’s a way you can increase your ROI without spending a lot more money: retargeting.

For example, you might run a video ad to people in your area featuring your product. You don’t need to run it for long – just a few days or a

week. Then, you can create a custom audience of people who watched at least half of your video and show them a new ad designed to pique their interest and encourage them to buy your product or fill out your lead form.

You may also want to check out link retargeting, which allows you to add a Facebook pixel to any content you share, even if it’s curated from a third party site.

Find Micro-Influencers to Share Your Content

Few local businesses have the money to hire nationally-recognizable influencers. For that reason, some business owners have written off influencer marketing as something that’s a waste of time.

The correct response to the rise of influencer marketing is to focus on micro-influencers: people who have authority with the (relatively) small audience of people who are in the market

for products like yours.

Micro-influencers may be industry superstars or popular local figures. Focusing on them means spending far less money than you would on a celebrity influencer for a higher rate of return. You can find influencers by searching for relevant hashtags and looking for people who are sharing content to your target audience.




Optimize for Mobile

Our final tip cuts across all formats and social media sites. At this point in our digital history, you should assume that everybody accessing your content is doing so via a mobile device. There's no excuse for not optimizing your social media content for mobile users.

On Pinterest and Instagram, that means using vertically-oriented, rectangular pictures in a 2:3 aspect ratio to fill mobile screens. The easier it is for your followers to view your content on their device of choice, the more likely it is that they'll buy your products.

Social media marketing has come a long way and it's time to get caught up and try some new things. As we head into the second quarter of 2021, take advantage of the updates to increase your ROI and profits.



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How to Use **HASHTAGS** to Grow Your Business

Even if you've never used one in your marketing before, you've seen hashtags on social media. They're the words after a post, each one starting with the # sign. They help people who see a Tweet, Instagram post, or Pinterest image to find the content and understand what it's about.

While it's easy enough to add hashtags to your content, it requires skill and attention to do it artfully. In this article, we'll explain how to choose and use hashtags to attract new followers and – this is what you're here for – increase your profits.



What is a Hashtag?

Let's start with the basics for those who don't know. A hashtag is a word or phrase that appears after the # symbol on social media. There are no spaces, and the goal of a hashtag is to make it easy for people who are interested in your business and content to find you.



Hashtags can be serious or whimsical. Community hashtags can crop up week after week and year after year. For example, #ThrowbackThursday (or #TBT) is a hashtag that has been making the rounds for over a decade. In fact, #Throwback-

Thursday was started by Sports Illustrated all the way back in 2006!

Hashtags can be related to topics or events. For example, if you're someone who owns a landscaping business, you might follow these hashtags, all of which we found on Twitter:

- #Landscaping
- #Lawn
- #LawnCare
- #PropertyMaintenance
- #GroundsMaintenance

We also saw examples of lawn care and landscaping companies jumping on community hashtags such as #SpringAhead because – let's face it – spring is when a lot of us start working to get our lawns in shape for summer cookouts and lawn games.



Tips for Finding Relevant Hashtags

One of the most important elements of using hashtags is choosing the right hashtags to reach your target audience. It might be tempting to throw ten hashtags onto every post, but you'll do better with well-researched hashtags that are relevant to your business.

Let's start with Twitter, the birthplace of the hashtag. When you log into your Twitter

account, you'll see a menu that includes a search option. When you click it, you'll see a Trending tab. If you click on that, you'll get a list of trending hashtags and topics. You can also use the search function to find hashtags that are relevant to your business.

There are some tools you can use to re-search hashtags as well. These include:



is a free tool that you can use to find hashtags for Twitter and Instagram



allows you to manage your social media and helps you find hashtags that are relevant to your business with its "Streams" feature.



is free to use and can help you find trending topics that you can use in your business Tweets and Instagram posts.



is free and has a list of trending searches plus a search function.

We suggest putting in some time researching hashtags. If you find someone that you think could be a good business connec-

tion that has used a relevant hashtag, follow them. You may be able to connect with them in a way that helps both of you.



Tips for Using Hashtags

What should you do with the hashtags that turn up in your research? Here are some suggestions.

- Find people who may be able to help you market your products. For example, say you make custom wedding cake toppers, and you notice a local baker posting pictures of wedding cakes with the hashtag "Cake-Topper. You could DM the baker and ask if you can send them a sample topper and – if they like it – they can feature it in one of their posts and use the same hashtag.
- Look for trending hashtags and figure out how to make them relevant to your business. For example, if there's a holiday coming up, you can use holiday hashtags to suggest your products for gifts or for use at holiday meals or gatherings.
- Combine hashtags to expand your audi-

ence. Perhaps you've added a new service or a new product to your lineup. Expanding your hashtag vocabulary can help you get your social media content in front of a new audience.

- Create a custom hashtag for your business. We would suggest using this idea sparingly. In many cases, creating a new hashtag may be the equivalent of screaming into the void. However, if you can come up with a memorable hashtag that helps you differentiate yourself from competitors, then go for it!

A word to the wise about using hashtags. A lot of big companies have made huge missteps when trying to capitalize on trending hashtags. An Insider article from 2019 highlighted a list of Instagram influencers who promoted themselves using 9/11 hashtags. Please don't copy their mistakes.



“Hashtag marketing can be extremely useful for local business if you do your research...

Examples of Effective Hashtag Use

Let's look at a few examples of effective hashtag use. The first is from **Kentucky Fried Chicken**, which jumped on the **#NationalFriedChickenDay** train to promote its meals. Although they're a national chain, any local restaurant that serves fried chicken could do the same thing. Keep your eye out for relevant tags that are trending nationally and use them to your advantage.

An example of a brand that did a great job of creating its own hashtag came from Charmin, who launched the **#TweetFromTheSeat** campaign. The campaign was certainly helped by the fact that Charmin is a national brand, but the injection of humor into your social media posts is a great way to get people to pay attention to your content.

When **Burger King** launched its new low-fat French fries, it used a **#WTFF** hashtag that was meant to stand for "What the French Fry." What they didn't know was that **#WTFF** was already a hashtag – and those two Fs stood for different forms of a word that you can probably guess.

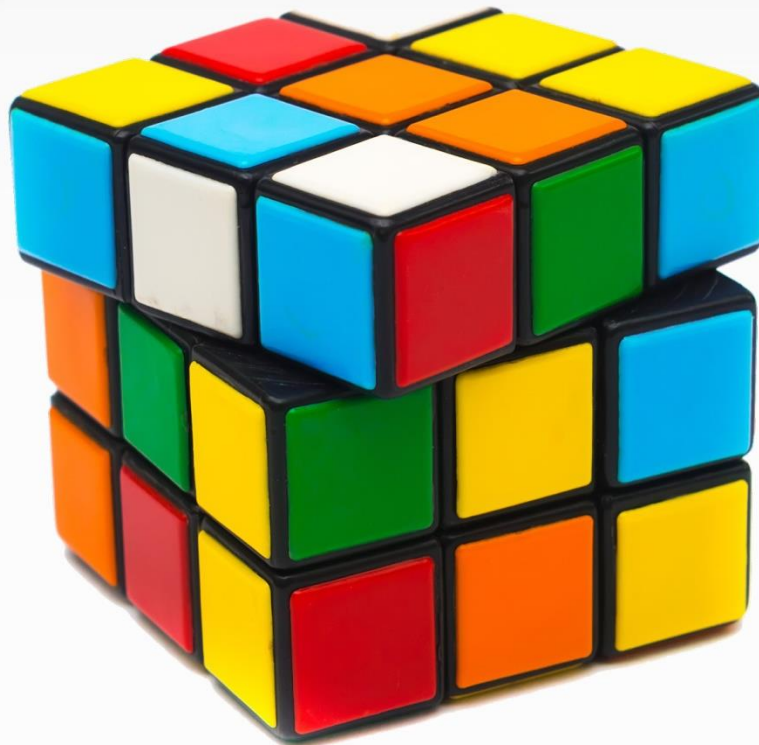
Finally, let's look at a hashtag fail that illustrates why it's so important to research any "new" hashtag before you try it. The takeaway is that hashtag marketing can be extremely useful for local businesses if you do your research, choose hashtags thoughtfully, and don't try to shoehorn your content into a hashtag when it isn't appropriate or relevant.

Now, get out there and start hashtagging!



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