

# Social For Search

How to use social marketing to boost your visibility and grow your search rankings.



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## Is Search Dead?

You might have heard that Search traffic is dead. The days of relying on Google and other search engines for your traffic are done. Social is the new "king".

If you've heard that, you've heard wrong.

Search traffic will always be more important than social. It's always going to be more engaged. People come looking for YOU, rather than you looking for them with your social network content shares.

Think about your own habits. When you're browsing Facebook, or when you're searching in Google, which one is more likely to lead to you buying something?

Something like 80% of all sales in the world, whether online or offline, start with an online search.

That's incredible isn't it?

***80% of all sales start with a search.***

If you're not interested in generating FREE traffic via search engines, traffic that will be the most targeted and most likely to buy something, then you're doing something wrong. Bear that in mind.

So where does social marketing, Using Facebook, Google Plus, Twitter, and so on, fit into all of this?

This eBook is called "Social For Search", and it's about using social marketing to get your message out there, get your website noticed, and start the ball rolling, so that your site's content will ultimately gain better search engine rankings as a result.

**Use social to get your search results up. "Social For Search". It's simple really.**

Hold on, if the end goal is search traffic? Why waste time with social?

## Social For Search

For several reasons, which I'll go into now.

Firstly, you can still get SOME sales from your social shares. Over the last 1.5 years of using social marketing, I've shared virtually every single post that I've created on my website. Those shares did result in some sales. \$5 here, \$5 there.

Not enough to get excited about, but enough to know the content is good.

Secondly, when you are starting a new site, it can be an excruciatingly long time before search traffic starts finding its way to your site. I've had sites take 3-6 months before they really get search traffic worth caring about (but once that traffic starts coming, it stays coming).

This can be pretty disconcerting, as you might have to wait a while to learn if your work is paying off.

Social networks can help stop you from going insane with impatience. Seeing your visitors grow as people come to like your site and become familiar with your content is a great feeling, and even if those visitors aren't as engaged or 'spend-happy' as search visitors, it's a good way of keeping your motivation up.

Thirdly, how is Google going to give you search rankings if it doesn't deem your site worthy? When your site is new, the Google indexing spiders will only visit you a few times a month, and when they do, it won't have a very good idea of the quality of your site. Having visitors engaging with your site and clicking around, checking out your other pages and maybe even re-sharing the content is going to contribute massively to Google thinking your site is worth ranking. If your content is engaging and quality, those rankings will come in time.

To summarize, your end target should be getting search engine rankings and the mass of engaged visitors that come with them. Sharing your site with social networks (the big four mostly – more on them later), is a great way to speed up the process and start the ball rolling.

On the other hand, if a site DOESN'T get much social sharing or interaction, Google is going to wonder why. Who wouldn't want to share their content? Spammers? Tricksters? You tell me.

## Doing It Right

Quality, engaging content is what Google is looking for. Gone are the days of it trying to find the "best match" to a search term via keywords and other signals. Now Google tries to identify which sites seem to provide the best user experience, and one way it does that is by looking at various metrics:

- Time users spend on your site
- Number of pages they visit
- Number of returning visitors
- Number of social shares and re-shares

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- Number of comments on the site.

Now, it gives different “weight” to each of these metrics and nobody can say for sure which ones are more important, it’s probably a combination of them all. If your site is being active in social circles, Google is going to start getting all this data about your site (assuming you’ve connected it to Google Analytics and Webmaster Tools), and start using that to rank you.

**Sidenote:** [Learn about connecting your site to GA and WMT here.](#)

This means that it’s not enough for you to just create quick, hashed content and spam it through Facebook, Twitter and the other big social networks. Your bounce rates (how many people visit your site for a few seconds and then leave) will soar, nobody will engage with your site (leaving comments, visiting multiple pages, sharing content) and Google will say “Hey, this site is junk”.

By doing it right, you’ll be creating engaging content that people will read to the end. You’ll be linking to other parts of your site to encourage them to look around, and you’ll be making them want to leave comments. Not everybody leaves a comment, in fact it’s a very small percentage of people that do (unless the content is controversial), but getting a lot of comments is only a good thing.

## Creating Engaging Content

There’s going to be some trial and error involved with finding what your readers will truly engage with, and that’s part of what makes online business tick. Trial and error.

Here are some things that you can do to speed up the process of figuring it out.

### Build up a following/authority

This can only be done over time. Nobody is going to view you as an authority on a topic unless they’re already familiar with you and have been exposed to you a few times. The more they click on your posts (create good headlines if you can), the more they’ll learn that you know your stuff.

Obviously, make sure you know your stuff.

### Get to know your niche

Leading on from above, you really need to get to know your niche. I’m not just talking about the topics and issues within your niche, but the people who occupy it. Visit other sites that cover similar categories as yours, and see what kind of engagement is going on there. You’ll get a better understanding of the people that you’re ultimately going to be talking to, and you’ll be much better at engaging them.

If you yourself are a member of this niche, that's all the better.

**Sidenote:** I recommend you start your first website on a topic you know a lot about. It's just easier.

## Investigate other hot sites and topics in your niche

Similarly, find out what topics really get people debating and try to stay relevant. Sign up to Google Alerts for news in your niche, and blog about relevant things as they come out. You'll be surprised how fast you get good at this.

If you can find your own take and opinion on all these things to share, that's fantastic.

## Make Your Content User Friendly

Use headlines, subheadings, and break up your paragraphs to make it easy to read. As a general rule, try not to write more than 3 or 4 lines together before putting a line break in. Notice how I've done it in this eBook?

Lots of white space.

People like to scan pages . Subheadings and "easy on the eyes" formatting will really help your cause. Things like bullet-points, tables, boxes, and images are also great.

**Extra reading:** [5 WordPress Tips For Beginners](#)

## Be controversial

Nothing stirs the nest like controversy. Got an opinion on something that others will disagree with? Great! Blog about it and people who see it will likely respond telling you they disagree. Google doesn't award points for you being "Right", but does reward points for engagement.

Don't go making up lies or spreading hate just to get comments though. If you break the "I'm an authority" rule, it doesn't matter how many comments you get, nobody will listen to you.

## Ask people

Ask people to comment! I try to finish a lot of my posts with a question, "What about you?" and it often helps people to leave a comment. Even when nobody comments, it still engages directly with the reader, and that's a good thing.

## Offer incentives

On some occasions, you can offer incentives. "Leave a comment below to win a free copy of (whatever)". You might find this only works some of the time and you can't give something

away every time you post, but it's a useful tool for those special times when you want added user interaction or comments.

## Join a community

Premium members of Human Proof Designs get access to our Google Plus community. Members often share their latest work and ask for feedback. As a result, many members leave engaging comments on each others' articles to help kick start the debate.

[Wealthy Affiliate is another such community to consider.](#)

## The "Big Four" of Social Marketing

Now you might find there are other social networks that suit your niche, as well as various forums, but for the most part there are just 4 that you want to be concerned with; Facebook, Google+, Twitter, and Pinterest. It's up to you whether you focus on all of them or just one, and it really suits your style. I started out with just Google+, and grew from there. Your results may vary.

## Facebook

Since we're keeping with "free" traffic, I'm not going to talk about promoting your Facebook pages or trying to get more likes through advertising. [You should really check this video](#) if you are considering paying for likes anyway.

A lot of people struggle with what to do on Facebook. It's best to just start out by sharing it with friends. When you write a new article, post it to your wall. Make a Facebook page and encourage friends to like it and share it. This will help "get the ball rolling" and get you some exposure. Because these people are your friends, whenever you link some of your latest content to them, they're likely to read it.

A lot of people find this awkward or embarrassing when they first start out, especially if they're new, or working on their business secretly. That's fine, but I'd recommend you avoid starting out with Facebook. It's an uphill struggle if you want to share Facebook posts with strangers.

Obviously once your site gets some authority, people will find your Facebook page naturally, but we're trying to GET that authority in the first place.

Of course, if you do want to share your site with your friends, don't spam them or beg them to comment. These people are your friends after all.

Extra tip: Join some Facebook groups related to your site and engage with it, you might find your friend circle naturally grows and more people are interested in viewing your site.

## Google Plus

You NEED to be on Google plus to some extent. I know people like to hype these things, but let's face it, Google Authorship requires you to link your website with your G+ account. This is how Google verifies who is writing the content on a website. Sites that have authorship set up correctly will receive more Google love and higher rankings. It's a trust thing.

Read more: [Setting Up Google Authorship](#)

As a result, if you have a lot of followers on your Google plus page, your "authority" and "authorship" is going to grow and be more highly regarded. It's not a HUGE factor, but it helps. Besides, Google Plus users tend to be more engaged than Facebook people, and are more willing to check out each other's content.

Lots of people on G+ expect to make new friends and find new content and interests; it's just the nature of how this social network works. Get yourself on there, connect with any existing friends you may have then start joining communities. Search for the things you are interested in at the top, and see where it takes you. Add people to circles, and grow your exposure.

If you're a premium HPD member, join "Tested On Humans" and start sharing your content there, you'll find this community to be the most engaged one of all ;)

Extra tip: [Learn more about understanding circles.](#)

## Twitter

A lot of social posts are just noise. There, I've said it. Twitter is the noisiest in my opinion, and I don't spend a lot of time using it. What I find Twitter is really useful for is when you've already got an established following, and you need to keep them updated of things. Human Proof Designs didn't get much Twitter engagement until people already liked the site and the things we were doing.

As such, I'm not much of an expert on using Twitter in the "Social for search" context.

However, some people disagree with me, and [here's a great article on that.](#)

Just remember; always use a #hashtag to get your tweets found. Keep it to 2 or 3 though. #you #don't #want #to #use #too #many.

## Pinterest

Behind Google+, Pinterest is probably the easiest to get traffic from using a cold market (non-friends). It can take time to grow your followers and notice results, but once you've got a few pins up, you'll find that you really start getting more engagement.

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One of my websites gets 2 or 3 new followers every day on Pinterest and I barely even Pin with that site anymore, it's a great passive traffic source.

While G+, Facebook, and Twitter posts will get lost and go missing once taken off a feed, a "Pinned" image will stay forever, and can generate traffic for a long time.

Equally, because it is a visual platform, it seems to be a lot easier for people to click through to your site. Re-pins happen more often too, as people like to collect their interests and images and stick them on their own pinboards.

**Extra Tip:** If you're at all interested in using Pinterest (you should be), [I really recommend this book](#). Reading it changed how I worked on Pinterest, and got me some great initial results.

## Five Steps To Better Social Results

### Step One:

Choose one or two social networks to start out on. I recommend Google+ and Pinterest.

Create yourself an account of them both. For Google+ use your personal profile and set up a business page for your website. For pinterest use either a "personal" account or a "business" account. It's up to you.

### Step Two:

Start growing your friendships on those accounts. Search for things you are interestd in, and thigns that your website is related to. "Follow" people that look worth following, and some of them will return the favour. If you start engaging and commenting on their stuff as well, you'll find that your own work gets commented on in turn. Don't over do this by spamming comments all over the place though.

### Step Three:

Write your next posts with social in mind. Try to make it engaging and ask questions that people might respond to.

When you share it on your social accounts, you can write a blurb to go with it, ask people to comment!

### Step Four:



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Start posting some of your already existing content. This will get your social accounts more populated, increasing the likelihood of someone clicking through to your website.

Note: The best time to share is in the morning.

### **Step Five:**

Rinse and Repeat. As you use social networks more, you'll become more familiar with them and see what works for you. It's an ongoing process, but it doesn't have to take up a lot of your time. I spend less than an hour a day using social networks.

### **Bonus Step: Join Wealthy Affiliate For Free.**

Everything I learned came from my Wealthy Affiliate membership. Back when I joined, you had to pay upfront to get in the door. Now you can have an unlimited free trial. Free starter membership lets you learn all about getting started in affiliate marketing, web building, and making money online.

There are dozens of training posts dealing with Social marketing too, so to compliment this eBook, it's the best place to go.

[Join now for free.](#)

[Read my WA review.](#)