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The secrets of effective social media marketing

SGG Media co-founder and president Troy Paul discusses how smart social media usage and cost-effective spending can give smaller sportsbook operators a solid platform to compete against the industry's better-funded brands

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As social media has become increasingly more prominent among the current generation of sports bettors, we've seen most operators become far more nuanced in the content they offer their customers. One of the unique aspects of sports and betting is the communities they create, be that among fellow fans, rivals or just lovers of the game in general.

Bringing engagement to social media allows both fans and gamblers to dive further into those communities, meaning they become more engaged with particular brands and the products they're promoting. Take FanDuel, for instance. It gets vast exposure when Twitter users share big hits and same-game parlay (SGP) winners on social media, so because it created that sense of community, they automatically receive organic promotion without having to generate it themselves.

In addition, having personalities like Pat McAfee producing daily content provides a deeper connection with the community and helps build loyalty. This, however, raises an interesting point about social media marketing — and one a lot of operators still don't seem to have grasped. While we believe having a celebrity endorse your brand is still a good investment, for social media, micro-influencers are far more efficient.

Loyalty and retention

In our opinion, using a celebrity for social media posts just isn't a cost-effective way of doing things. For a smaller spend, you could instead work with a network of 100 micro-influencers whose combined followers and exposure easily eclipses that of the celebrity. This should be a no-brainer for operators if they want to reach new audiences for cents on the dollar.

In terms of sports betting in North America, the industry is still largely in its infancy. While a lot of diehard sports bettors are already active customers, operators still need to do everything they can to win over casual fans and sceptical bettors. As these 'late majorities' may hold something of a stigma when it

comes to gambling, it's important to inform them that legal sportsbooks have options such as daily wagering limits to keep online betting safe.

Of course, once they've won them over, the next challenge for online sportsbooks is retaining their customers. For smaller sportsbooks, the main focus should generally be adding features to their interfaces that can compete with the big-name brands. These could include offering SGP odds, live in-game features, and showing live stats for your SGP wagers in the bet slip. The goal is always to find new ways to turn a casual customer into a long-term bettor, and these additions can significantly increase retention rates.

Target the right customers the right way

Another important aspect of ensuring your acquisition and retention spend represents long-term value is being more selective in the customers you target. Attracting players that have high-lifetime value is crucial. Marketing towards affluent communities in legal gambling states is important, as is getting your brand in front of as many potential new clients as possible. Using billboard advertising or targeted social media ads that only display to a specific user profile can really help operators attract the high-value players they want.

Although competition in legal US sports betting markets is already fierce, when the bigger companies start testing the waters through gambling partnerships there's still a lot to be said for smart spending. You can have all the advertising budget in the world, but if your product and sportsbook can't compete with your rivals, you'll still have low retention.

As someone who's tried pretty much every sportsbook, I know how important it is for new operators to offer interfaces and betting lines that stand up against more established brands. If they can do this while also adopting more cost-effective and targeted marketing methods, the amount of engagement they can create for a fraction of the cost opens sustainable marketing plans that will allow them to compete with larger, better-funded operators.



Troy Paul co-founded Sports Gambling Guides (SGG) back in 2020 and has developed it into a network of 27 million followers. He has signed deals with the likes of DraftKings, FanDuel, and BetMGM