



Organic Social Media for Volume Photographers



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Introduction

Social media connects more people than we could have ever imagined years ago. It offers a huge pool of information and data that you shouldn't leave untapped when it comes to your photography business. From one person scrolling through their feed at work, to another lying at home on the couch watching cooking videos, everyone is involved in the world of social media. These platforms quench our thirst for light entertainment through casual exchanges and discussions, as well as satisfying our need to connect with one another. In business terms, social media can also be a huge resource for free or low-cost marketing and brand awareness.

Organic marketing refers to the art of reaching users without spending any money. When social media marketing first came to be, this was still quite easy to do. In the last few years however, the organic reach for social platforms such as Facebook has sunk lower and lower. That's why you understand each platform, how its algorithms work, and what kind of content catches your audience's eye has never been more important. By investing some time in polishing up your business' social media channels, you can market your business on various levels and attract customers and partnerships without a huge financial investment.

By the end of this guide, you will know all about the three social platforms we believe are most important for volume photographers, how to use them to their best organic marketing advantage, and what sort of content to post.

Overview of different platforms

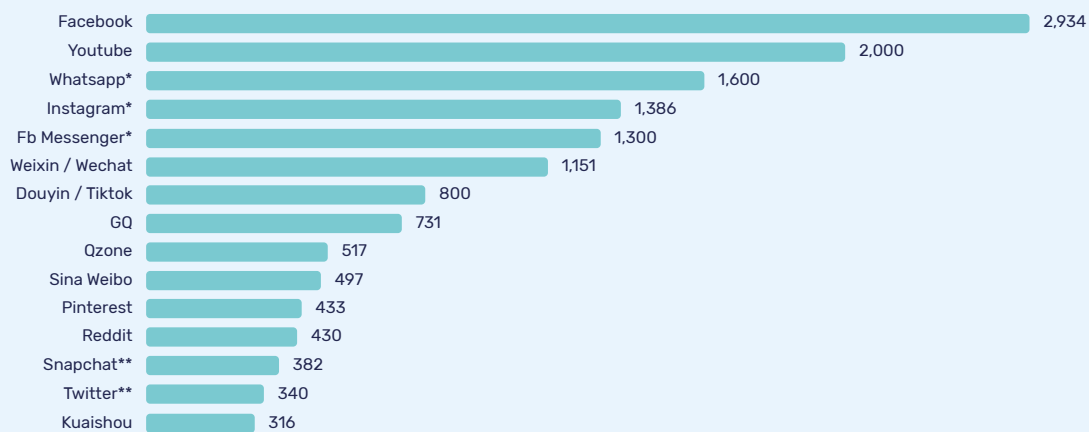
	Usership among Internet Users (U.K.)	Audience Demographic	Content Focus	Good for Photographers?	What We Love
Facebook	73.5%	Diverse in age, gender, location	Flexible for text, images, videos, GIFs and more	Ideal for those wanting to share varied forms of content to specific demographics	On top of being able to book photo sessions directly from the platform, it also allows for community groups to learn from and connect with other photographers!
Instagram	56.3%	70% of users are under the age of 35, targeting the age group 25-35	Originally known for their strong image functionality, it now incorporates vertical video and short-form media as well	Ideal for photographer branding, with the emphasis on high-quality images	Ability to create an instant positive impression for your business with an aesthetic feed
Pinterest	30.2%	Women make up the majority, with a huge age range from 18-64	Heavy focus on images and video clips that utilize the user clicking backlinks	Ideal for website traffic driving	Of the active engagement of users: 98% of Pinterest users act on pins they see.

* Pinterest content reaches 62% of UK women aged 25-34 and 49% of those aged 35-44 – even those who aren't registered users.

JAN 2020

The World's Most-used Social Platforms

Based on monthly active users, active user accounts, advertising audiences, or unique monthly visitors (in millions)

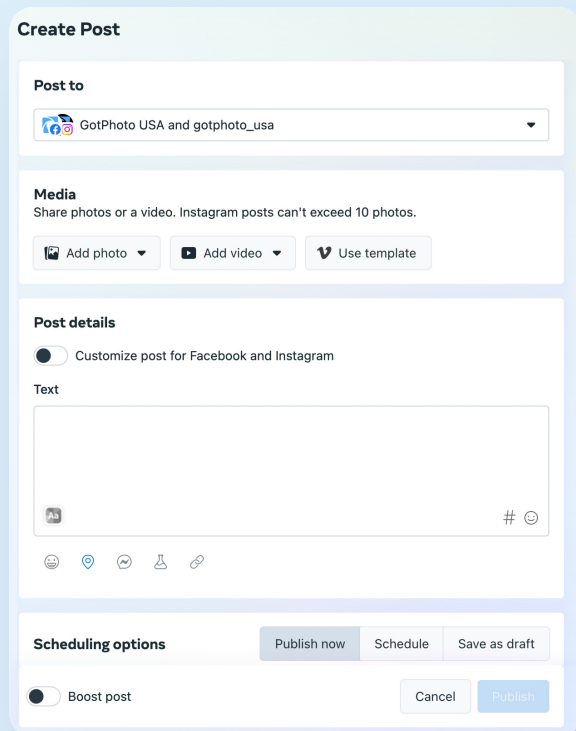


Sources: Kepios analysis; company statements and earnings announcements; platforms' self-service advertising tools (all latest available data). **Notes:** platforms identified by (*) have not published update user numbers in the past 12 months. Platforms identified by (**) do not publish mau data figures for Twitter and Snapchat use each platform's latest advertising audience reach figure, as reported in each platform's self-service advertising tools (January 2020).

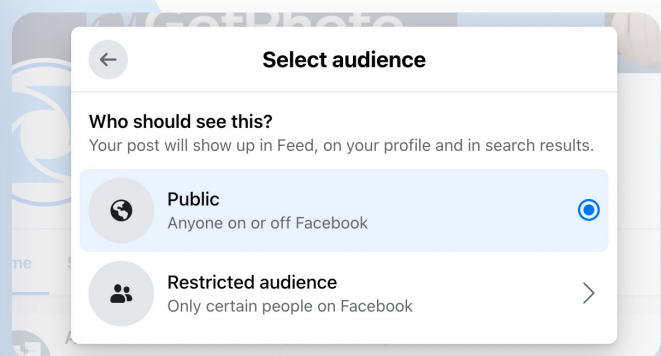
Facebook – the Frontrunner of Social Networks

Facebook is the platform that revolutionized the online social world, and even today, is still number one when it comes to the number of active users. Around 52 million people use Facebook in the UK (Dec 2022) – that's about three quarters of the total population.

Furthermore, Facebook is also the most well-known social platform in general. You can find users from every generation, from teens to grandparents. It's a veritable marketing paradise. The different targeting options make it possible to focus on target groups according to the smallest details. You want to reach women in their mid thirties, who have children and are interested a family mini session? Not a problem.



The 'Create Post' interface is shown with a light blue header. Below it, the 'Post to' section has a dropdown menu showing 'GotPhoto USA and gotphoto_usa'. The 'Media' section includes a note about photo limits and buttons for 'Add photo', 'Add video', and 'Use template'. The 'Post details' section has a toggle for 'Customize post for Facebook and Instagram' and a large text area for the post content. At the bottom, the 'Scheduling options' section includes buttons for 'Publish now', 'Schedule', and 'Save as draft', along with a 'Boost post' toggle and 'Cancel'/'Publish' buttons.



The 'Select audience' dialog is shown with a white background and a blue header. It features a back arrow and a title 'Select audience'. The main section is titled 'Who should see this?' and includes a subtitle 'Your post will show up in Feed, on your profile and in search results.' There are two options: 'Public' (selected with a blue radio button) and 'Restricted audience' (with a right arrow). The 'Public' option is described as 'Anyone on or off Facebook'.

The diversity in content that you can post on Facebook makes it perfect if you have a wide range of material to share. Photos, videos, links to blog posts and other resources, long chatty captions, and even live broadcasts: Facebook can suit them all. This also means you can try various different formats to see what attracts your target audiences best. Its extensive Business Manager settings also lend to being able to plan both organic and paid long-term campaigns effectively.

Instagram: A photographer's platform

As a photographer, you are sitting on a pile of resources that many businesses do not have access to, the main one being a wealth of high-quality images. Of course, you need to receive permission from your subjects to post their images, always make sure to get express written consent from the parent or guardian of any child whose image you may want to use.



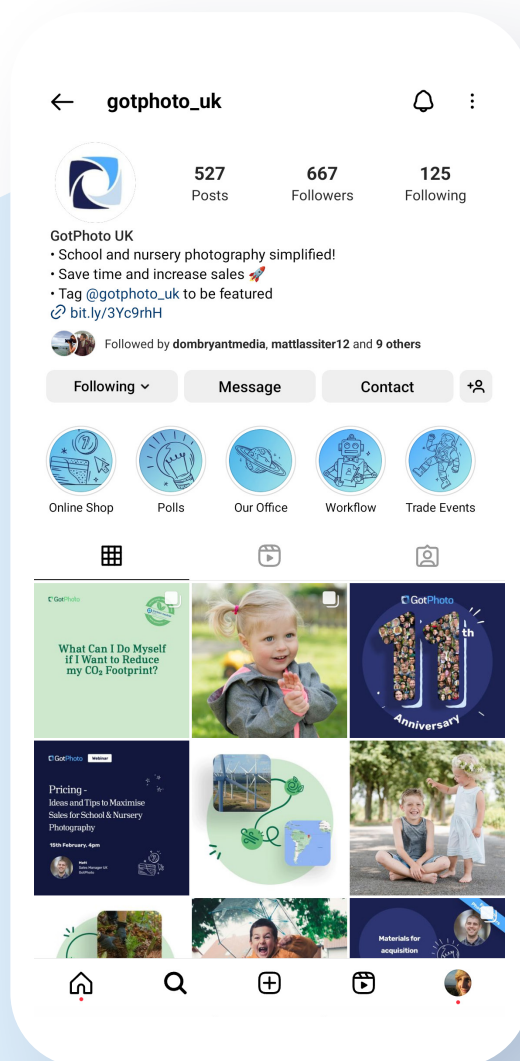
Tip: If you'd like to learn more about how you can set up social paid advertising campaigns, check out our guide

"Paid Social Marketing: a Guide for Volume Photographers!"

Instagram's platform is a great way to build your branding, especially as a photographer, as it is so visually focused. By creating an attractive looking feed and showcasing your best images, you can improve brand awareness, draw other people into your business, and communicate with potential clients. Other photographers will also identify with strong photos, helping you to stay in touch with the rest of the community.



Tip: Remember, your Instagram feed is practically an online portfolio that potential clients can discover at any time. Make sure to show off the true breadth of your photographic talents. Use a variety of pictures with different lighting, poses and styles to make sure that any client who visits your feed really gets who you are as a photographer.



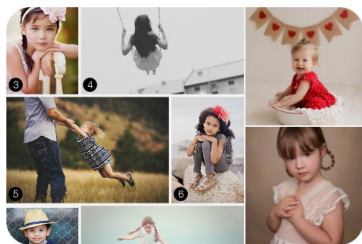
Pinterest: Inspiration portal

Pinterest might not be the first platform that comes to mind when you think of social media marketing, but if you haven't already, consider adding it to your repertoire. According to Hootsuite, two-thirds of 'Pinner' have discovered a new brand or product on Pinterest, and almost all of their 445 million monthly users - 93% to be precise - use it regularly to plan purchases. Their key demographic is women between the ages of 25 and 54, which is a large target market for portrait photography. Chances are, it's worth trying to tap into this active market for your business.

Pinterest works through "boards", with each user being able to create various different boards across different topics. These can be both private and public; you can create a public board that might be of interest to your customers or other photographers, or store up inspiring photos that might influence your work in future on a private board.

Boards are made up of "pins": these are essentially images or videos with short captions. Here is where you as a photographer can come into your own. Pinterest is driven by imagery, rather than brand logos or long captions. If you have some eye-catching photos, you can attract attention from a wealth of users.

Since your pins are connected to a backlink, people who click on it will be directed to your website, blog, or other business page. This will not only give you page views, but allow you to capture a prospective client's attention and entice them to use your business!



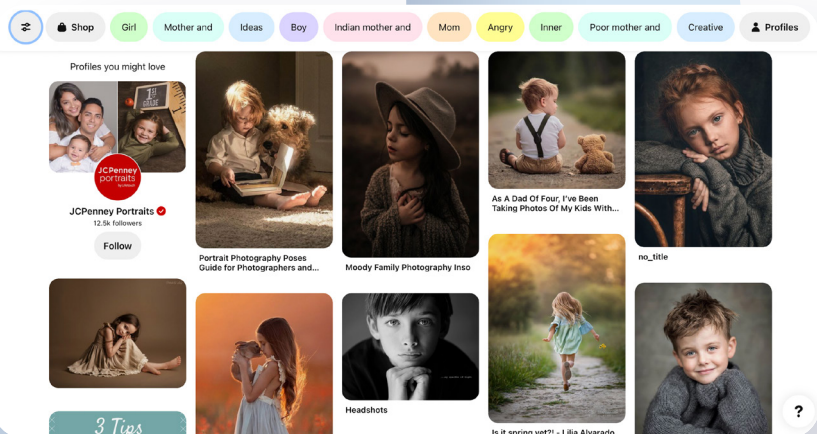
Child Photography
516 Pins



Child Photography
567 Pins



Child photography
117 Pins



Useful Tools for Social Media

Plan Posts

Don't worry, you don't need to be setting alarms every day to make sure you hit that perfect posting time. You can plan posts for later with Meta Business Suite or an external tool. There are a wealth of social media management platforms that can help with scheduling and managing, media and analytics such as:

- * Sprout Social
- * HootSuite
- * Buffer
- * HubSpot
- * Sendible

These platforms all have free plans that offer a basic service that should suit your purposes. You can of course upgrade to get full flexibility if you want to.

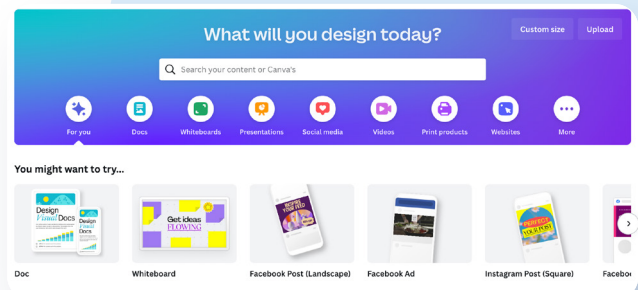
Many also have great analytic tools to track the kind of audience you are reaching and identify which posts do better. It is useful to look back to see the makeup of your organic audience, and also which posts have done well so you can recreate them in the future.

Design Content

If you want to give your posts a professional edge, but don't have the time or expensive software to make attractive graphics, we have a solution for you. **Canva** is a great resource that allows you to find, edit, personalise, and download free templates for all types of social media content. It even has recommendations depending on the type of post you want to share. You can also save your brand colors within your account for faster editing. It's also just as easy to use on mobile as it is on desktop. Canva is an ideal solution for anyone wanting to make sure their posts stand out.

Step It Up

If you're looking to branch out and boost your social media engagement, **Cool Tabs** is a handy resource that can help you create dynamic content with an emphasis on interactive campaigns. These can range from raffles and competitions to quizzes and discount coupons, or even gamification. All of their content is designed specifically to generate leads and help you grow your business. You can try it out with a 7-day free trial.



Posting Basics and Ideas

So, now you know what's what in the world of social media. But what now? We have put together a few pointers and ideas to get you going. Remember though, for your feed to stand out, you should add some of your own creative flair. Only treat these ideas as a springboard for your business!

Branding Voice

When you're creating any sort of posts for social media, you need to decide on a defined tone that matches your brand. If your business tries to focus on family-oriented aspects, then adopting a casual and personable tone in your interactions, posting a call-to-action in your copy opens the doors for followers to engage with your business and with others! For example, posting a question such as "What is your favourite holiday?". Another great way to get interaction and extend your audience reach is to give a tag-call-to-action. For example, if you post an image of two friends laughing together, your copy could be "Tag a friend who can laugh about life with you." is best suited. On the other hand, if you are looking to develop a more professional business-like style, the language should also match. The key is to keep it consistent, so as not to convey mixed messaging to your audience.

Something else that will affect what tone you adopt is your target audience. What do you want to achieve with your social media presence?

Engagement Tactics

To get the best engagement rates – meaning the amount of people who click or otherwise interact with your posts – there are a few smart tactics that you should employ across the board.

- Using mixed media is a great way to catch people's attention and generate better engagement. For example, posting a range of photos, videos, or GIFs keeps your feed interesting, vibrant, and attractive to a wide range of people.
- Your social media posts should not only be diverse in terms of format, but also in terms of content. Mix it up with educational or informative content, interspersed with more light-hearted or funny posts. Furthermore, if you are always posting promotional content about services or products you offer, it can come across as too sales-y and not genuine enough for people to really want to engage with your feed.
- To get interactions, posting a call-to-action in your copy opens the doors for followers to engage with your business and with others! For example, posting a question such as "What is your favourite holiday?". Another great way to get interaction and extend your audience reach is to give a tag-call-to-action. For example, if you post an image of two friends laughing together, your copy could be "Tag a friend who can laugh about life with you."



It can be difficult at first to get the level of engagement that you might want, but don't be disheartened! This is completely normal when starting to build your social media audience. Keep experimenting with your posts, either by simply mixing up your content or using organic A/B testing. Once you find out what works and what doesn't, you can recreate similar content, or even reshare top-performing posts when relevant.

Post and Feed Aesthetic

When a user scrolls through their newsfeed, you have just a split second to grab their attention. Make sure your posts are visually appealing and laid out neatly. A good photo or video is the backbone of a strong post because it catches someone's eye and stops their scrolling.



Keep it Short

Social media is no place for novels. Posts should be short and to the point. With long text, readers will often lose interest quickly. Concentrate on the most important bits of information and express yourself clearly. Ideally, visitors will be able to see everything important without having to click 'Read More'. The less work for the user, the better.

Another great tool you can use is emojis. They stand out from the text and attract attention on newsfeeds. But remember: less is more. Too many emojis can seem unprofessional. You can also attach a 'feeling' or 'activity' or share your location – the options are endless.

Mobile vs. Desktop

Using social media on a mobile device is growing more and more popular; for this reason, Facebook and others have spent a lot of time optimising the platform for mobile use. That means that you should definitely make sure your posts look good in their mobile formats, as well as on desktop. Photos can often look different on mobile versus desktop, and you will likely be able to see much less text per post.

Key Statistics:

- **99% or 4.43 billion** social media users access networks using a mobile device
- **78% or 2.97 billion** users access networks exclusively on their mobile phone
- **1.32% or 50 million** exclusively access networks on a desktop
- **20% or 760 million** users use both desktop and mobile phones
- There are **3.50 billion** smartphones in the world, which means **84.85%** of smartphone owner's access social media from their phones
- There are **5.27 billion** unique mobile phone users in the world

Sources: Data Reportal, BankMyCell, Statcounter

Hashtags

Hashtags are a popular and useful tool on many social media platforms. Hashtags are a word or phrase preceded by a hash sign (#), used on social media sites and applications, especially Twitter and Instagram, to identify digital content on a specific topic. You can even follow specific hashtags on Instagram allowing relevant posts to show up on your feed. Researching which hashtags could be relevant to your audiences is an important step to extending your market reach. You can use free hashtag analytic and tracking tool such as [TalkWalker](#) which allows you to follow trending hashtags, analyse your campaign hashtags, and track your branding tags! Incorporating the right hashtags into your posts can be a highly effective way to boost your organic social reach to new users who may not be following you already.

Although you can use hashtags on Facebook, they're used to track your brand reach instead of pulling people to your page. That said, using a hashtag that specifically describes your audience is never a bad idea. For example, #nurseryphotography might attract some parents. When people use the search feature on Facebook, it will compile hashtags into its results. Posts on Facebook with too many hashtags often actually get a much smaller reach. Users can even, in the worst case, be put off a post because of hashtag overuse. Use them in moderation; for example, you could attach a certain hashtag to a marketing campaign or competition. In any case, you can then use it to track the success of your campaign.

Choosing the Perfect Platform

So now that you understand what to post and what to write, it's time to dive into where to post! With so many platforms to choose from, and new ones emerging all the time, how do you choose the best platform for your volume photography business? We will look at a handful of top social media platforms and the pros and cons of each.

Twitter

The inventor of the hashtag, the pioneer of post sharing, the giant of short form text, Twitter seems to be a platform made for brand awareness! However, is it the right platform for volume photographers?

Before 2019, Twitter was notorious for harshly compressing images. Although this has changed in the past few years, the upload max size is still 5 MB and four images at a time. There is (italicize) an audience for you as a volume photographer on Twitter, however the audience is much smaller, and you'll have better luck putting your time and attention on other platforms that began as a way for people to visually share their creativity.

Instagram

This brings us to Instagram, a platform built around imagery! This is the social media platform really built for photographers. The visual layout of your Instagram feed allows for a more portfolio set up for your business. This allows visitors to see a snapshot of who you are and what you do!

Instagram is also great for sharing your brand via profile tag interactions. Creating call-to-actions that encourage your followers to tag their friends is a great way to extend your brand reach. Instagram is also a great place to hold contests which can include post sharing and profile tagging.

Facebook

Facebook still holds the top spot for many businesses. Although Facebook tends to compress your images still, it allows you to create business pages in which you can link to your website or even allow for scheduling directly through Facebook!

Facebook can also help you with your organic audience reach with post sharing. When you post a preview of a session (with client consent), people are quick to share the post from your business page with friends, allowing more people to be able to discover you.

It's important to mention here that the Meta Business Suite that comes free with a Facebook business account, allows you to schedule posts to both Facebook and Instagram. It also gives you a variety of analytic tools that you can use to track your brand reach across the Meta platforms.

Pinterest

Much like Instagram, Pinterest is a visual platform built on collecting visual inspiration. Each pin you add must be connected via backlink which can drive traffic to your website. Not only is Pinterest a great way to share your work, it's also a great way to reach people through inspiration, ultimately driving traffic to your business.

Pinterest, unlike other social media platform, doesn't reach your audience by collecting followers or subscribers. Instead, it purely relies on relevancy of your media pins. Pinterest can be described as a loyal friend. When you post on other platforms such as Facebook or Instagram, the average lifespan of a post is fairly short. On Facebook, the life of your post varies between 2.5 and 5 hours and for Instagram, it's only 48 hours. Pinterest, however, keeps your photography content alive for months, even years!

TikTok

TikTok burst onto the scene in 2017 and by 2020 boasted around 800 million active users! It's a platform that took the world by surprise, but is it the right platform for your volume photography business? The short answer is, maybe.

There are a few bonuses to marketing your photography business on TikTok, one being that more businesses utilise social platforms like Facebook or Instagram to market to their audiences, so you automatically have a better chance at reaching your audience and growing your following. One of the downfalls of this though, is the algorithm used to promote your media.

TikTok will show users videos that match their interests which means your videos have a better chance at reaching others who are either photographers themselves, or interested in photography. In order to keep your videos showing up, though, you need to have daily consistency with posting, and media that grabs a viewer's attention within the first few seconds. This can be difficult and time consuming for some, which is why we suggest that if you're just getting started, to focus on Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest first.

Organic Marketing on Facebook

As stated above, Facebook is the ideal platform for planning long campaigns and developing a marketing strategy. To help you get on the right track, let's dive into strategies to polish up your organic Facebook content.

The Business Page

The fundamental first step for a successful business presence on Facebook is building the business page. Under no circumstances should you use your private profile for business purposes. Not only is it impractical for marketing strategies, it actually breaks the official Facebook User Agreement.



If you have more than one photography segment to your business (such as school photography and mini sessions) it makes more sense to have separate pages for each one. The more pages you have, the more work you might have to put in, but your customers will get a clearer sense of your specific focuses. Otherwise, you might come across as a 'jack of all trades' photographer. Having a clear distinction helps to build a real sense of professionalism and specialisation.

The Right Timing

The most interesting and best crafted posts might not have the interaction you're seeking if you post during a time that your audience isn't browsing (such as the middle of the night). Choose the day and times to post when your Facebook followers are most active. You can use the Page Insights Tool on Facebook to track user activity across different days and times, or some scheduling tools also offer such data. Try to always post during prime times when most of your fans or perspective clients are active.

Don't worry if your personal schedule doesn't match your audience's though. You can schedule posts for later with various different social media management platforms that can help with either the Meta Business Suite, or a third party social media scheduling program!

How Often?

Different platforms reward users for different levels of posting. Instagram encourages people to post every day, with lower frequency posting directly affecting how many people will be shown your posts on their feeds.

In contrast, Facebook and Pinterest algorithms will pick you up even if you haven't posted on consecutive days. Although, it's still recommended to post between three and five times a week still. Pinterest also has different rules, counting merely pinning someone else's content as content creation. Regardless of the platform, the fans of your page should be getting regular updates from you.



Tip: Remember to use the scheduling tools we mentioned earlier to make sure your posts go out at the optimal times.

Engagement is the Key to Success

Successful organic volume photography marketing on Facebook is based on post engagement. This number is more important than your total number of followers. Only through your engagement rates can you see how often your posts are seen and how well your brand is being received.

This could be a real issue, due to Facebook's way of filtering posts. To not overload users with too many posts, Facebook chooses specific content to show individuals, based on their interests and interactions. That is considered a valuable service to Facebook users, although it does mean that content from low interaction sites almost never reach their fans.

View It As An Exchange

Giving your followers engaging content certainly does the most amount of good for your organic marketing. That way you get clicks, likes, comments, and, in the best case, shares. Ask questions and encourage discussions.

Enter Into the Discussion Yourself

When someone comments on your posts, don't stay in the background as a silent observer. Reply to comments from your followers, discuss topics with them, like comments, and like their comments! The users should feel like their contributions are heard and appreciated.

Facebook Groups

Facebook places a huge emphasis on the group function, to combat the cluttered newsfeed that so many struggle with. There are so many Facebook groups that you can join about all sorts of topics, including general photography, and even volume photography specifically. In our [blog post about resources for school photographers](#), you can find a few key examples, but we would also recommend hunting some out for yourself according to your specific interests and disciplines. You can then not only exchange experiences with other photographers, but also come into contact with potential customers, depending on what sort of groups you join. Parent networking groups are a great example. Customers often post in such groups when searching for photographers for family sessions, or when wanting a recommendation for a new photographer for their child's school.

With groups, you can often reach a wider range of people, and combining it with your Facebook page is a match made in heaven. You can also create a secret group, which only includes your customers. This way, you can offer them special offers or discounts that are only visible to them and not the general public.



Photo: Nathan Allan



Content Ideas

As promised, we've combined all the advice from above into some specific content ideas. First of all, you should be clear on who you are trying to target with your content before you start posting. That's why we've collected some examples and ideas of social posts, and split them between the two audience groups we described earlier: current clients and prospective customers.

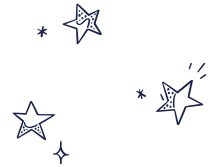
Don't feel restricted by these ideas; let your creativity shine! Use these as inspiration to go out and create a unique feed that shows off your brand and photography to its best advantage.

	For Current Clients	For Potential Customers	For Both
Show Your Expertise	Share links to blog articles on your website. Give tips on a variety of topics, from posing to photography style.	Get in touch with potential customers and generate sales with examples of your best work.	Share a 'what to expect on picture-day' post with some behind the scenes images.
Add Value	Show the behind the scenes of your day, such as studio tours, Day In The Life's, or 'What's in my bag?' content.	Advertise special offers or discounts to give your followers an incentive to check back in with you in the future - and to boost sales of course.	Run a giveaway!
Create a Community	Boosting engagement helps your social page thrive. You can do so using tools like live video, polls, or competitions.	Reply and share positive reviews and testimonials. Not only does this boost your brand, but it will help retain satisfied customers and encourage others to do the same.	Be sure to return the favor in replying and engaging with those who interact with your content.
Strong Branding	Branded videos are a great way to show off your business values. You can see an example on our website.	Keep a consistent watermark in your photos, so your work is always recognisable.	Share personal stories from sessions or photo days to let your personality shine through.
Benefit From Feedback	Ask honest questions, and engage in constructive criticism from time to time. You can start threads in the comments of posts where everyone offers feedback on the goods and bads of a photography session or sending their child to school on picture day! Again, this can help to boost engagement.	Listen to reviews and give updates on your progress to show that you're paying attention. Where possible, be as open as possible about your processes. Customers like to see companies be honest and clear on social media.	Share stories of times that you took a disastrous situation and ended with amazing photos and strong connections with your clients!

These are just a few ideas of content you could share with your audiences, but the best part of social media is that it is all within your control. Get creative, dedicate some time to thinking outside the box, and you'll certainly be able to engage more fully with your followers. Think about what you would like to see on social media, and get posting!

Wondering whether GotPhoto is for you? Have a chat with our team and have all your questions answered. Book a call:

www.gotphoto.co.uk/consultation



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