

# Financial Professionals Marketing Guide

# Why Marketing Matters

## 10 key marketing tips, tools and tactics for financial professionals

Financial professionals work in a dynamic industry where new technology, tools and ideas thrive. But these exciting opportunities also bring new challenges--with that dynamism comes a need for continued growth and education to stay ahead of the curve.

Marketing is one area where hard work can produce career-changing results. A more sophisticated communication strategy can help you reach the right people, build your brand, connect with your audience and deliver exceptional services.

If you're ready to level up your marketing strategy, our team at Concorde outlined ten of the most impactful elements for a successful marketing approach.





# Email Marketing

Email marketing is a straightforward way to communicate with customers and inform them about new products, discounts and services. Effective email campaigns and automation allow you to build relationships with leads and clients without scheduling a full calendar of meetings. Not only is email the most popular way to receive updates from brands or companies (nearly 3 out of 4 millennials prefer their business communications to come via email), but a remarkable 99% of consumers check their email daily.

Despite this, a recent report by Litmus shared that in a survey of 2,000 professionals, 45% rated their email marketing efforts as poor or nonexistent. If nothing else, that data indicates there's a lot of room for improvement.

## Email marketing tactics

You'll need to get creative if you want an email marketing strategy that moves the needle. A single email won't do much if it's not part of a larger ecosystem of information and content. Email marketing initiatives may include:

### Newsletters

While not typically used as a direct sales tool, newsletters are a great way to motivate your clients to take action by checking out your latest blog post or visiting your website. Newsletters can be as personal as you like and are an excellent opportunity for clients to get to know you, your services, and your working style.

### Workflow automation

Workflow automation can streamline what is usually a time-intensive process—sending emails one by one and remembering to follow up could fill up your entire workday. A "drip campaign" allows you to set up and automatically send a sequence of messages to a recipient. Emails in that sequence are triggered based on an event, like a recipient's interaction.

For example, if a potential client fills out a form to learn about your services, it should trigger an email. The first email in your drip campaign can automatically deploy and give them the requested information. Their response (or nonresponse) to that first email would then trigger the next step in your process and deliver a follow-up message. If you notice someone frequently engages with your email content, it should be a sign to jump in and schedule a call.

### One-to-one emails

One-to-one emails allow for greater personalization and client-specific content. Unlike mass emails to subscriber lists, one-to-one email marketing allows you to use individual customer data to deliver relevant content. Subtle, personalized variations in imagery or content improve engagement and help clients feel a connection to your business.

## Measuring your success

Throughout the email process, you need to be able to evaluate what's working (and what's not) to optimize your strategy. Most email marketing platforms have metric dashboards that can tell you the open rate, engagement rate or unsubscribe rate for every email you send. These metrics provide a critical snapshot of your work, allowing you to make meaningful updates after each campaign.



# Organic Social Media

## Social media is here to stay

For financial professionals who want to maximize their outreach and optimize communication, it's essential to tap into the social scene. Just think: we know there are over 2.38 billion monthly Facebook users, with billions more across other platforms.

A strong social media presence isn't just a way to enhance your overarching marketing strategy; it's how you connect with a global audience.

## Social media basics

There's no silver bullet to success when it comes to social media, but there are some helpful principles to live by:

### **Know what to share**

Authentic and relevant content has the best chance of connecting with people. Your social media is a perfect avenue to communicate knowledge-sharing, new opportunities and recognition for people and institutions doing great work in your industry.

### **Know where to share it**

Before you start, make sure you understand the ins and outs of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube. Each channel has a unique purpose and audience—you can't send the same post to every outlet and expect it to perform well. Because social media constantly evolves, you'll want to follow a few blogs or publications that share up-to-date information on platform changes.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/264810/number-of-monthly-active-facebook-users-worldwide/>



# Networking

Online networking is the digital equivalent of “old school” in-person networking. By tapping into the power of LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter, you can expand your social and business networks without filling your calendar. Powerful tools like LinkedIn Sales Navigator can even help you target and connect with promising leads.

Much like traditional networking, there are protocols that every financial professional should keep in mind. Familiarizing yourself with those unwritten rules is a critical prerequisite to networking online:

## Searching for prospects

Searching for and connecting with new prospects online is called “social selling.” Social selling is primarily about building relationships—the sales benefits come in the long term. In other words: it’s appropriate to send a congratulatory message when one of your connections gets a new job, but don’t jump in and try to make a direct sale.

## In Mail + connection requests

LinkedIn’s customized in-platform communications tool, InMail, is a great way to connect to LinkedIn users. Whether your networking efforts are informal or more systematic, using more powerful and sophisticated tools is a great way to generate new leads. But remember, recipients may become annoyed if you abuse this tool and spam messages to your network.

# Digital Branding

Here's a mistake we often see: financial professionals spend too much time managing their company's brand and forget about building their own. Your online presence can be an invaluable asset to your business. Authenticity and relatability can help make meaningful connections with potential leads, customers and employers.

If you haven't put much thought into your personal brand yet, here's some advice:

## **Map out your brand**

Think about your favorite brand: What do they do? What is their primary offering? What values do they believe in or advocate for online? A company's brand is intentional—and yours should be no different. Think about what you want to be known for and what sets you apart from other financial professionals. Formalize your thoughts and use that as your guide.

## **Hone your online voice**

Just as you have a personality when you meet others IRL, having a distinct and recognizable voice online is essential. Think about your writing style, preferred discussion topics or how you want to be perceived by clients. With the answers to those questions in mind, decide what kind of "personality" you want to bring online.

Did you know you can tap into SEO and paid media as a financial professional? These tools aren't just for large corporations anymore. But before you publish your first ad, it's essential to understand the core differences between SEO, earned media, and organic social media:

## SEO

Search engine optimization (SEO) hinges on your knowledge of how search algorithms work. When a user searches a term on Google, the algorithm scans content across the internet and serves what it believes is the most relevant content. Consequently, SEO is a strategy that makes your content "more relevant" to the algorithm and increases your chances of user clicks. To get to the top of the search results, write high-value content embedded with high-value keywords on a credible website. The more specific your keywords, the higher your chance of capturing the right audience. SEO is a long-term game, unlike paid media which provides instant clicks. Now, you can pay to place your landing page at the top of Google—but much like other paid media, there will be a designation that indicates to the user the "spot" was paid for by your organization.

## Earned Media

In its most traditional sense, earned media is leveraging outside sources to communicate about a brand. When a storyline catches the attention of a journalist, blogger, or social media influencer, that story secures media coverage. You can gain a lot of credibility with an audience if your story is picked up—but that attention is never guaranteed. Remember, earned media is not pay-to-play.

## Organic Social Media

Many are familiar with social media—it's one of the best ways to stay connected to the people you care about. But social platforms are searchable (just like any content on the internet) and can become a valuable piece to your marketing puzzle. Create social accounts that you can use to publish thought leadership, get in front of potential clients, or build your online presence. But remember, much like the other forms of content mentioned here, organic social media engagement is earned. It's a slow-burn strategy with a big pay-off, so don't give up if things don't go according to plan immediately.

# SEO + Earned Media

A hand holding a smartphone is the central focus of the right side of the image. The phone's screen displays a bar chart with several vertical bars of varying heights and a line graph with a fluctuating path. The background is a warm, orange-toned gradient with faint, abstract shapes and lines, suggesting a digital or data-driven environment. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern, with a focus on technology and data analysis.

# Paid Media

In addition to an earned media strategy, paid media is an effective way to target a specific audience with your message. You can pay for placement on a user's feed using tools like Google Ads, LinkedIn Ads or Programmatic Advertising. At a high level, the process is simple: use your paid media platform to set a budget for your content, the audience you want to reach, the goals you have and your campaign timeline.

## PPC + Google Ads

You've likely clicked on a Google Ad before and didn't notice it. Go to Google now and type in a query; when you look at your page results, you may see a result with the word "Ad" next to it. That result was paid for by that business to appear when specific keywords are entered.

As a financial professional, you can pay to get your website or blog to appear in the searches of potential clients (or any target audience, for that matter). And the best part of all: Google Ads are pay-per-click (PPC), which means you only pay when the ad does its job and someone clicks on your content.

## Programmatic Advertising & Media Buying

Traditional media buying can be a complex process of balancing budgets against goals and content types. Luckily, there are ways to leverage technology and algorithms to do the hard work for you (well, some of it). Programmatic tools leverage online user data to ensure your ads are served to the right high-intent person in the right location. And with the ability to set parameters on the audience, bidding strategy, budget, and placements, you're still in control.

Some may be familiar with display ads, typically reserved for a single ad network. In contrast, programmatic advertising uses sell-side platforms (SSPs) and demand-side platforms (DSPs) to buy media space across the internet. The final result? Your brand is automatically shared across various platforms to an audience that's likely to tap into your services—or at least your content.

## Sponsored Content

Keep in mind that other types of "paid" media exist beyond ads. Sponsored content is an editorialized article that speaks to an industry trend but has a 'sponsored or presented by' designation. With an established audience, sponsored content in a credible finance trade publication can drive awareness, traffic, conversion and leads.





# Videos + Webinars

One of the clear takeaways of a tumultuous and challenging pandemic was the emergence of video as an essential communication tool. Platforms like Zoom quickly became the new normal. In retrospect, it shouldn't have been a surprise, given how strongly people respond to video marketing. LinkedIn reports that one of the ways to maximize engagement with a LinkedIn Company Page is to use "rich media" like images and videos. Images, on average result in a 98% higher comment rate than without on LinkedIn.

Webinars and online events also spiked last year as institutions got creative in finding new ways to "gather" and connect in virtual environments. Virtual experiences aren't going away post-pandemic, and financial professionals should use video marketing and regular webinars to communicate with their target audience.



# Website Funnels

Far too many financial professionals treat their website like a fancy business card: a way to provide basic information to curious visitors. The reality, however, is that your website is one of the most powerful and effective marketing assets in your arsenal—provided you know how to leverage it correctly.

## Creating a web funnel

A website funnel is a conversion marketing funnel that gets your audience from Point A to B in your sales journey. An effective funnel contains a series of steps designed to guide potential clients or connections through the website to a desired outcome. That outcome might be anything from signing up for your newsletter or reaching out for more information. To create a funnel that makes your website do the work for you, financial professionals should:

- + **Optimize for personas.** Buyer personas are unique representative profiles that allow you to hone in on and target specific audiences with your message.
- + **Create multiple conversion paths/points.** Develop and design an appealing and effective conversion pathway.
- + **Use dynamic elements like pop-ups or chat bots to gather information from visitors.** Interactive features can do everything from prequalifying leads to securing contact info.



# CRM + Contact Management

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is a critical piece of the marketing puzzle. Instead of managing contacts through a spreadsheet, financial professionals should have a CRM solution that tracks contacts' activity, synchronizes with email systems, and generates reports on contact communications and engagement. You can't automate every task, but functionality like auto-reply emails, chatbots, and alerts and notifications optimize your demand generation process.

A CRM tool can also help you conduct Account Based Marketing (ABM), a strategic approach to target top prospects in a market, identify key touchpoints, and use personalized messaging to appeal to each account.



# Public Relations

Public relations (PR) helps position you and your firm as a credible solution to potential clients. PR can engage key audiences in the financial services industry, whether as an opportunity to increase brand awareness, increase thought leadership, or influence an audience's decision. To develop a strong PR strategy, start with the following:

## **Create a media list**

Once you've defined the story you want to tell and the audience you want to connect with, it's time to identify specific contacts (journalists, reporters, bloggers, etc.) to pitch. A media list should include the outlet, designated marketing area (DMA), name, title/role, email, and phone number for your contacts. Tools like Cision can help streamline this process and identify the appropriate contacts to pitch for a specific topic. You can also seek out specific media contacts (reporters, bloggers, etc.) via a publication's website.

## **Proactive approach to PR**

It's always nice to be one step ahead—especially regarding media coverage and the perception of your company's brand. Financial professionals and their PR partners can proactively anticipate upcoming trends or industry events and offer their expertise for media opportunities. Staying connected to the ever-evolving news cycle can support this process and help your brand stay top of mind with target audiences.

# Overall Marketing Goals + KPIs

Even the most diligent marketing campaign will flounder without clear, concise goals and objectives—and a way to measure those goals. Defining Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is the first step in developing a sustainable marketing program that will grow over time.

## Common KPIs include things such as:

### Website

- + Website sessions
- + Unique visitors
- + Engagement rate
- + Goal conversions and conversion rate

### Social media and advertising

- + Reach/impressions
- + Clicks and engagements
- + Cost per click and cost per conversion
- + Source traffic from social media/ads
- + Return on advertising spend

### Return on Investments

- + Cost per lead
- + Marketing-qualified and sales-qualified leads
- + Lifetime customer value
- + Cost of customer acquisition
- + Website traffic to lead ratio or conversion rate

Once the KPIs are in place, financial professionals should frequently check their progress against these goals. Make full use of the information you gather by utilizing a platform, program, or partnership that presents the data clearly and in context.

## Go-to-market

Most established financial firms have a multi-channel marketing strategy that includes websites, social media, email, apps, SMS and more. An "omnichannel approach" then connects and integrates these channels as part of a seamless and enhanced customer engagement strategy, using a single platform to publish information, store customer data, and analyze closed-loop reports.

An omnichannel approach lets you find relevant licensed content to personalize and share with your target audience. As the industry becomes increasingly tech-centric, modernizing your marketing follow-up and having a way to monitor all channels in one platform provides you with the speed and efficiency your marketing deserves.

## Concorde empowerment.

Concorde foundation hinges on one clear goal: to empower financial professionals, giving them the tools they need to deliver creative, well-thought-out financial planning solutions.

When it comes to marketing, those tools can be a game-changer. These resources, guidance, platforms, services, and expertise can take a sluggish marketing campaign to the next level. Whether you partner with an established institution or pursue your marketing program, developing a more sophisticated and impactful marketing skill set should be a priority for all financial professionals.

Depending on the restrictions based on your position, market, or firm's policies, ensure you're posting compliant content and have posts or profiles reviewed accordingly. Now it's time for you to put these tactics and tips into action and start growing your online empire!

## Outsourcing marketing - as an option

If you do not have the time experience or resources to be your own marketer, consider outsourcing one or more services so that you can focus on your core competency: financial consulting.



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