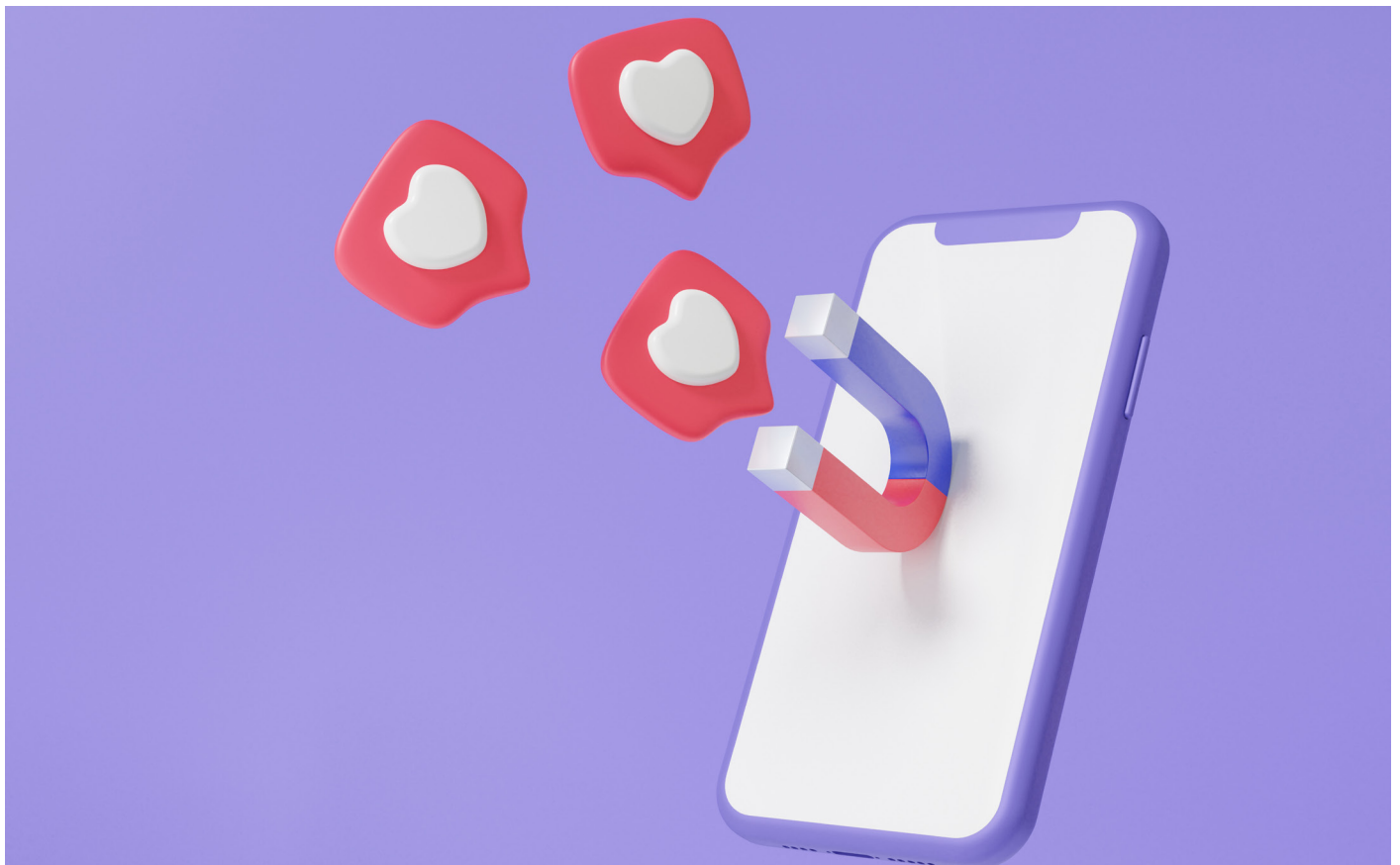


# Insider tips for launching anything on social media

While it is one thing to design an Instagram post and publish it, crafting a launch strategy and implementing it successfully is an entirely different matter. Rick O'Neill gives 10 top insider tips for launching just about anything on social media

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*Response levels have a direct impact on the engagement that will be seen from followers*

Creating engagement for an aesthetic clinic on social media seems to be getting harder by the day. Instagram and Facebook are more crowded than ever before, with aesthetic clinics fighting for the precious attention of potential patients and clients online. Additionally, the ever-changing algorithms that determine the success or failure of content can sometimes seem impossible to master. The truth is that there is no magic pill when it comes to social media success, it is just hard work, plain and simple, and it takes careful

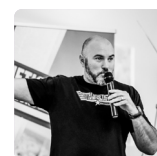
planning and consistent effort. In this guide to launching just about anything on social media, the key stages and disciplines required for a successful treatment or service launch will be discussed.

## 1. First, know your goals

It may sound obvious, but many people do not know what 'success' actually means for a particular social media launch. They have immediately skipped to deciding what to post. However, before a practitioner plans, implements and measures any campaign, they need to know what success looks like.

Relevant aims include:

- ▶ More (relevant) followers
- ▶ More appointments booked
- ▶ More likes on social media
- ▶ More clicks to a web page
- ▶ More comments and engagement.



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Decide what will be measured and be specific. If launching a new treatment, and seeking consultation bookings, decide the number of bookings that would make this a success. Is it 10? Is it 100? Be 'SMART' about your goal: specific, measurable (how will this be tracked), attainable (is it doable?), realistic (do you have the skills, or do you need help?) and time-bound (set a deadline to hit this target).

As an example, a practitioner might be launching a social media campaign to promote a new laser treatment their clinic is now offering. They want the campaign to achieve 20 consultation bookings for this new treatment in its first month, and some agency help will be needed to produce all of the creative content for it.

Once a goal and the specific parameters around it have been identified, the target audience needs to be recognised.

## 2. Know your audience

The question of who is trying to be reached needs to be answered (clue: it is not everyone). Understand the demographic and the ideal patient profile. Pull together the ideal respondent, considering:

- ▶ Gender
- ▶ Age bracket
- ▶ Interests
- ▶ Location
- ▶ Income bracket
- ▶ Conditions or issues they are dealing with (i.e. skin conditions or signs of ageing, etc).

This audience profile then gives the practitioner the ability to specifically tailor the targeting and messaging of their campaign. For example, if targeting sporty women from Glasgow, who are in their fifties and want to look younger, then a campaign can use this to influence their choice of imagery, targeting criteria for any paid ads, and the messaging you use. For example, 'Are you tired of looking tired, even when you're full of energy and living life to the full?' (with an image of two women in that age bracket playing tennis).

The social media habits of a target audience can also be examined further. For example, look to find out which social platforms they favour and what times and days of the week they are most active

online. There is a lot of data out there, so take the time to do some research on the latest insights into your demographic and their social media habits.

*» Engaging with followers through their own content (or yours) also increases your rank with Facebook and Instagram's algorithms, meaning your content will be shown to more people «*

## 3. Map out the content calendar and create the buzz effect

Once the first two steps have been taken, the content calendar for the campaign can be mapped out from start to finish. The great movie franchises, such as Marvel, are the best in the world at building excitement. They know how to throw out signals, entice and tease their releases. Practitioners need to do the same to optimise their campaigns for success and achieve maximum engagement.

Here are the steps to follow:

- ▶ Establish the headings/messages of social media posts for the 3 weeks leading up to the launch. Start with simple signals that 'something' is coming. Then, gradually release more details, and hold the best back until the last minute. Set up a waiting list that people can join to be the first to know more
- ▶ Plan the dates and times they will be posted. Use the insights into the audience's social media habits here. For example, if the target audience is mostly on social media at lunchtime on a Monday, then this is when the posts need to go out

- ▶ Collect or create the imagery or videos that will be needed for each post. Create a library that suits your messaging and target audience
- ▶ Research and prepare the most relevant and active hashtags to accompany each post. Use tools such as Ingramer.com or the HashtagExpert app
- ▶ Create the posts in advance, in all the required formats, and use a scheduling tool, such as Buffer or HootSuite, to pull it all together and have it ready to go out automatically.

## 4. Blog it

Social media launches do not just happen. Plan, write and release a blog article each week during the campaign, giving a little more away in each article leading up to the big 'go live'. Link back to these blogs in social media posts and use them to generate email updates that complement everything being done on social media.

Post these blog updates into your Google My Business Profile, so that those searching for a clinic or related services can instantly see that something new is coming and click through to find out more.

Optimise these blog articles for search too, using the most pertinent keywords or phrases in the titles and body copy, so that those searching for such treatments or services are likely to find your website.

## 5. Video, video and video

Video is the most engaged with format of content online. Create video content for each step of the campaign, whether it is an Instagram reel, a longer IGTV video or stories clips—video is the prime way to get your message across on social media. Use captions for the majority who consume social media on mute (make this easy using a service such as ZubTitle) and ensure that videos always include a call to action (CTA), for example, 'Subscribe to our waiting list to be the first to know when this new treatment goes live'.

Practitioners should upload the same videos to both their website and a YouTube channel in their clinic's name to maximise their web presence on this type of treatment. Ensure that the titles that accompany these videos use the most searched keywords and phrases around this treatment, as well as the name of the clinic and the town/city.

## 6. Partner up

Often, it takes a great strategic partnership to see a social media campaign reach its true potential. So, take a look around and ask: who else is targeting the same audience as you, but does not compete with you? Going back to the example of sporty women in their fifties, perhaps it is the local leisure centre or country club. Research and list all the potential partners that fit your goals, then reach out to them.

Partnerships like this can take many forms. Perhaps there is an influential person who fits the target audience, or with whom your target audience resonates, whom you can invite onto Instagram Live, who would be prepared to share the content from the campaign or, even better, discuss it with their followers. Alternatively, a takeover of the Instagram of a local tennis club could be arranged. Be creative and think about the ideal partner, then just talk to them about how to make it work for everyone.

## 7. Create a challenge

Some of the most successful social media campaigns in history have started as a #challenge of some kind. Remember when everyone was throwing buckets of ice-cold water over themselves?

The goal is to get the target audience engaged to the point where they are motivated to share content of their own to help raise awareness of a campaign. Sticking with the tennis-playing 50-year-olds, this could involve a #challenge where they are encouraged to share photos of

themselves playing their favourite sport, along with a campaign hashtag (for example, #SmashingItInMy50s).

Ask participants to follow a few steps to help a campaign succeed for a chance to benefit from a discounted consultation or gift voucher:

- ▶ Use the campaign hashtag
- ▶ Tag a friend
- ▶ Tag the clinic's Instagram.

## 8. Be super responsive

Throughout a campaign, to keep engagement high, ensure there is time (or extra help) to promptly respond and react to comments, direct messages (DMs) and enquiries.

Engagement levels have a direct impact on the engagement that will be seen from followers. Engaging with followers through their own content (or yours) also increases your rank with Facebook and Instagram's algorithms, meaning your content will be shown to more people. It also means that followers will feel drawn to this content in future, as they know they will get a response and feel welcome.

## 9. Live stream every week!

No matter how scary it might be, going live on Facebook and Instagram is a must-do for the ultimate social media campaign. There is no better way to engage directly with an audience, keep them updated and take their questions in real time. Additionally, live-streamed content gets more reach and engagement than any other format of content (although

Instagram reels are certainly giving it a run for its money—see my guide on Instagram reels for more information).

Set a day and time and stick to it consistently, so followers come to expect it and even have it in their diary. Bring guests on, keep it lively and collect questions beforehand via Instagram stories to keep the content and conversation flowing and ensure people feel involved.

## 10. The launch is the start, not the end

Remember: the launch date is the start, not the end. Keep the conversation going on social media and engage with those who adopt the new product or service. Have them submit testimonial content that can be used to promote your service further.

Build case studies with patients for the new treatment, and diligently convert this into social proof for the website, reviews for Google and social media content to keep the awareness going.

Keep the audience informed. People love a success story; it gives them the confidence to get involved, too. Give regular updates on the new treatment and how it is being received by patients, share PR wins and be proud of your success.

So, if you are looking to launch or re-launch a treatment on social media, I hope this guide has given you a framework to follow and some top tips to help you succeed. I look forward to seeing it hit Instagram soon!



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