

Social Media Marketing Plan - 88 Tactical

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1. Executive Summary

Through the implementation of targeted social media campaigns the scope and reach of 88 Tactical's brand can find new clients in a cost effective and efficient manner.

Proper utilization of the tools and networks in place already allow a simple message to be broadcast across a network of potential customers. At the same time the brand image and awareness is strengthened by retaining previous clients and reaffirming their commitment to the 88 Tactical brand. By creating and developing content in a repeatable format that can be used across multiple platforms the time from creation to implementation is minimal. Current efforts using mainly Instagram and Facebook are working but the effectiveness of these efforts can be increased with the right mix of social media elements. Competitors are offering different elements that what is being highlighted in 88 Tacticals social media. They include reviews of products, "how to" segments, and the instructors have a presence of their own online. By integrating additional content, in the right format, a single person could exponentially reach more clients each day. The domino effect of content that is created and shared effectively will help bring more visibility to the programs offered by 88 Tactical.

2. Brief Overview

88 Tactical is becoming the leader in bushcraft and firearms training in the Midwest. This is due to the efforts of working with local law enforcement agencies and offering programs that, until now, have had little to no offerings in the marketplace. With the groundbreaking of the new facility off I-80 the need for a comprehensive revamp of the social media presence is

vital to the continued growth of this unique training facility. Through the use of a formatted, repeatable approach to generating content for use and sharing in social media a single person could run an entire program with a wide reach. Taking the reputation already earned in the law enforcement community through classes and expanding that to other markets represented in social media allows the growth of the brand through a cost effective and time efficient manner.

3. Observing Social Media Presence

Currently the brand is represented on Facebook (88 Tactical, 2015, p. 1), Twitter (88 Tactical Group, 2015, p. 1), Vimeo ("88 Tactical Group," 2015, p. 1), Instagram ("88 Tactical on Instagram," 2015, p. 1) and LinkedIn ("88 Tactical on LinkedIn," 2015, p. 1). Each of the segments listed above are represented by the following stats:

Instagram: 2,771 Followers

Vimeo: 6 videos

Facebook: 11,080 Likes

LinkedIn: 4 Instructors bios

The content on these various outlets is inconsistent and does not reflect a coherent brand image. The Facebook page has grown in popularity with the sharing of information that users are able to comment on or share with their friends. Instagram is a growing trend being used by the 88 Tactical instructors because it is a quick and easy way to upload images while training. Vimeo seems to have been abandoned a year ago and no new content has been uploaded. LinkedIn has a minor list of the upper echelon of managers and owners of the company only, none of the instructors are listed on the page. The footprint of online media and content to be shared needs to expand to help drive traffic back to the site and in the front door.

4. Sentiment Analysis

Currently the information that is being shared is class related or, with the recent police shootings, news articles about police. Looking through the comments on the various pages the responses are “pro” 88 Tactical. This is to say that the comment are in line with what you would expect of a military and law enforcement led training facility. There are few, if any, negative comments to be found on the page as there are few people who follow the group unless they are clients or instructors. A search of www.socialmention.com found a neutral response with a push to the positive ratings. However, the findings did key in on “88” and the word “Tactical” so the results are inconclusive for 88 Tactical as a company. ("Socialmention.com," 2015, p. 1) This is also interesting since the bulk of the content provided by 88 Tactical is related to Facebook or Instagram. The company is currently posting at least 2 times a day and more often if there are relevant news articles that tie into the “pro law enforcement” message of 88 Tactical. Recent events have added more news articles than previously to the social media mix. Depending on the content there is a high pull through on interactions with customers. Likes are fairly consistent and frequently reach 20+ in a short period of time. Responses to comments are sporadic and a review of the comments does not show any that require immediate replies. Again, the bulk of the users are former students, military, or law enforcement. They do not expect a prompt reply during normal operating hours and are frequently posting when they have down time. Because the users are “like minded” people there are very few instances of (truly) negative responses to posts. There is a high level of bravo and “colorful” banter that makes its way into the posts. This is normal for the users of this kind of service and is moderated well.

5. Competitive Analysis

Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is an active community of users for this type of material. - Training facilities are few and far between. - Niche classes are a huge draw for these centers. - Mandatory recertification by government agencies helps fund growth. 	Weaknesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social stigma of these types of facilities - Location as it relates to major metropolitan area (ex: Chicago vs. Omaha) - Courses not offered during dates that all can attend. - Single instructor draw factor - Content is similar to competition and can cause debate on technique
Opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of a combined outdoor/indoor training facility on this scale. - Dynamic and vetted instructor cadre - Ease of access to facility with Omaha Airport - Connections to military 	Threats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other training facilities creating a combined facility similar to what is being built by 88 Tactical. - Government funding shifting to require facilities on site rather than private sector. - Sweeping changes in laws that do not allow private ownership of firearms

Based on the analysis above the strengths and opportunities outweigh the threats and weaknesses. The goals going forward should focus on the core of what has made 88 Tactical successful thus far. Building from a strong, reality based, training process and using vetted military and law enforcement for instructors.

6. Setting Goals

With the current climate toward police in America the sharing of news stories on social media is a part of the “calling” for 88 Tactical. However the same stories that fuel this climate of fear and anger can be used to help bolster the support of the community around the classes offered. This should be done building from the strengths of the programs and instructors. Using dynamic media that can be shared across multiple platforms and designed to specifically promote

courses and facilities at 88 Tactical a cohesive social media strategy will emerge. Driving content that compels users to share the information with friends and family will help spread the classes offered. The content will also help establish the level of expertise at the facility and make them a resource for local media outlets. Already several local stations have tapped into the expertise to showcase some “best practices” with regard to security. For example: WOWT had a series with an 88 Tactical instructor about how to “Be your own best bodyguard” (WOWT, 2015, p. 1) The clip provided a short snippet of information that could be used to help gain new clients.

7. Determining Strategies

Looking at the very loose structure of 88 Tactical as it sits now and as it is about to become a formalized and centralized entity determining the right strategy involves some tact. Ideally the plan would be to have a program where a single person could run the program(s) and then as the need expands a team could be brought on to implement and monitor the activity. A combination of creating dynamic content and using a main source to link to will help the overall campaign stay coherent as it evolves.

8. Identifying Target Market

The target market for an offering like what is found at 88 Tactical is difficult to narrow down to a specific demographic. Virtually anyone of any age can benefit from some form of preparedness and/or additional training in skills they may already have. There is never such a thing as “too much” training when it comes to firearms. However, having said that it is important to target the social media efforts to individuals who are in the market place and are

able to make the decision to utilize the facilities. Depending on the class being promoted the demographics shift. For primal defense a demographic of female between 18-50 would be ideal as the class is geared toward experiences they may run into. An anti-bullying class would have a much younger demographic for the class attendees but the parents would be the target of the social media efforts. Anything law enforcement or military exclusive is obviously going to be reserved for people who qualify. Lastly, the generalized classes with firearms should, by design, be promoted as an “all ages” environment to keep the learning experience open to new input.

9. Selecting Tools

When selecting what tools to use to increase social media attention it's important to build on what is already working. Facebook has a high number of users but they need to remain engaged or the algorithms will void any efforts to stay connected. Instagram is gaining in popularity but a lot of the “alpha male” mindset people may not see a photo editing app as a way to get information from their tactical gurus. YouTube offers an avenue to not only host material but build a database of videos that can be shared and linked to the website and other social media. The content that becomes most sharable online is content that is humorous or informative. Using the personalities of the cadre at 88 Tactical a series of short educational videos or tips should be produced. These should all include a “hook” at the end where viewers are invited to follow the channel on YouTube and visit the website for more information. The most difficult hurdle for anyone of the students is a question of what “gear” is best for their needs. There is an enormous amount of access to equipment but there are few people who are reviewing the individual items or non traditional uses for equipment. Becoming a source for reviews and tips makes the content more shareable.

10. Implementing

To implement the programs and videos listed above a program such as Hootsuite is recommended. This allows a single person to publish scheduled content to multiple sites. An individual could, in theory, spend a week and plan out several months worth of posts and links. This allows them the opportunity to react in real time to any news stories that may come out or address comments in real time. The need to create and post content becomes automated.

11. Monitoring

As discussed earlier the challenge of monitoring the 88 Tactical brand online is the lack of a minority opinion. Either people like the content or they avoid it. Very rarely do you see anyone stating anything derogatory or negative about the group in a social media setting. By allowing the posts to become semi-automated a person can periodically check the accounts throughout the day and address any issues as needed. Metrics of what the current traffic or following should be kept to track any growth or decline based on what is being offered. Also, the types of posts and times should be monitored to identify the key times to post information. For example: Information beneficial to law enforcement should co-inside with the shifts most departments operate on. The likelihood of an officer checking their social media after a long shift is much higher than someone who is on duty.

12. C-Suite Buy In

Currently the approach to social media has been handled by whoever was available to do it. In an effort to focus on the plans surrounding the development of the facility this makes sense. However as the facility gets up and running the ability to do both the marketing and the everyday running of the business gets harder. By adding a dedicated marketing person to the mix who's focus is promoting the brand online the growth of the company will increase exponentially. More interest online means more people in classes. Packed classes means there is a need for more classes or the pricing can be adjusted to reflect demand. Either way the revenue from activity on social media will compound over time.

To accomplish this goal a budget will need to be set. The main expense of a budget for a plan like this is the salary of the employee who is implementing it. From there the budget should reflect the capacity of the staff and facility. Currently the staff and facility are running well but are on a limited potential. Scheduling with instructors makes it difficult to do weekly rotations of classes. As the full facility comes online the ability to schedule more increases. The budget should be a foreshadowing of things to come. The recommended lead time is no less than 2 months of promotional planning. Other elements outside of the salary would include video production and advertising for the various social media outlets. Production costs should include an initial ramp up with a base of media to support a prolonged campaign. As things progress the budgetary requirements will decrease as these videos can be produced in smaller batches. Initially \$50,000 should be set aside for the production of the initial "batch" of videos. This includes the purchase of equipment needed to produce the videos going forward. After the initial batch a budget of \$10,000 biannually would suffice barring any major production needs that may be justified. Considerations for any products being reviewed and the possible one time costs of these items if they are not available to be "on loan" from various sources.

By the time the building is complete in fall of 2017 the goals of the program are to increase the social media presence on Facebook by 35%, Instagram by 20%, and build a catalog of sharable media that can be used to promote the new facility.

For the cost of a full time marketing salary (suggested \$50,000+ depending on qualifications) and the investment in production quality equipment the revenue stream going forward will grow. One class of 10 students at \$400 a person is \$4000 in revenue. If the demand for the class through low cost, low effort, effective marketing generates a second or third class per month the revenue from one month of classes more than covers the costs of the biannual production budget. Long term the benefits of having a full time marketing person lead to consistent quality and overall feel of the brand and takes the burden off other staff. When planning a mission the tools you take are essential to the completion of the objective. “Two is one...one is none” is the adage for the ideal equipment load out. By slightly altering the current marketing strategy you are doubling and tripling the capacity for mission success.

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