

## About me

Hi, I'm Lee and I run a business call Sullivan Window Cleaning. My background is in I.T support and sales. In August 2010, I decided it was time to hang up the phone and start a window cleaning business. I spent a great deal of time testing out many different marketing methods including door knocking, local ads in newspapers, and using social media to reach the right audience. I want to share with you some tips and advice, including what's worked for me to help other window cleaners and even other businesses get their business off of the ground and break free from the daily grind of working 9-5 for someone else.

## This blog

I'm going to put together a series of blog posts about different types of marketing. I'm going to start with the hot topic of Facebook as it is what's working for me and seems to be the most popular amongst the masses.

## Marketing using Social Media Platforms

Firstly, there is NO quick fix in business and this rule still applies when marketing across social media platforms. Like any business, it takes time to develop relationships and grow your brand. In the same way that it does if you're using leaflets, or door knocking, it all takes time, however if you send the right messages to the right people, through the right platforms you can get there quicker and provide a much better service for your customers.

## Why Facebook?

Facebook is currently the most populated social media platform in the world, with well over 1 billion users; 30 million of them are here in the UK. Just think about how many of us use Facebook, you probably stumbled across this on Facebook yourself. People are quick to underestimate the power behind Facebook advertising as they feel that their trade or business just doesn't 'fit in'. We are communicating through Facebook more and more. I have friends on Facebook that I've never met! If your business doesn't have a Facebook presence, then how will people view the services that you offer or recommend you to their friends? Make it as easy as possible by asking them to send a link over to your page, where they can easily contact you.

## Facebook Business Pages

I'm often asked by window cleaners, where do I pick up most of my business? The answer is Facebook. Why would you spend a whole day knocking on 200 doors, when you could target thousands of potential customers for the cost of around £10 and 10 minutes of your time? Just think about how much time you could save and how much more targeted your marketing could be.

"Do you need a business page?" Yes.

"Can I just use my personal page and change my name?" No. This is against Facebook policy and they will shut down your Facebook page if they suspect you are using it for business.

The first step is to set up a business page. Facebook have made it really easy to set one up. Click the top right arrow on your Facebook homepage, followed by the create page icon. I have my page set up as 'Local Business or Place'. This one gives you the option to set opening times and year founded etc.. If anyone needs help running through the process of setting up a page, let me know and I'll put together a walk through video to show you how it's done. I will also put together a business page checklist including branding tips and advice at some point during the future.

## Content

Content is key! Customers aren't going to come to your page if all of your status updates are '10% off all window cleaning this week only' or 'Book a regular clean and get the 6th one free!'. That would be like standing in the middle of a street and shouting offers at houses hoping that someone will walk up to you and ask for a quote.

People are much more likely to come and read something interesting. It could be an article on local events to add to your diary, or 3 tips to a cleaner oven? It's all about the value that you bring, so start thinking about what it is you speak to your customers about on a daily basis and share that with your followers. Why not put a blog post together on a gutter cleaning job that you did last week? Or even a video? More on videos later, but I have to say video is already huge!

The better your content, the more Facebook will allow it to appear in peoples news feeds. Facebook doesn't want to show your customers boring posts about 'save 10%, book today!' that wouldn't help the Facebook brand. They want to show great content. How does Facebook decide whether your content is good enough to appear on more new feeds? Through seeing how many 'likes', 'comments' or 'shares' your posts get. Encourage interactions through asking your audience questions (audience being your 'likes') after all, this is a social platform, so let's get social.

I will go into more detail with content over time as it can be divided into many sub categories. Again, I plan to tailor this blog to my audiences needs, so the more feedback you provide, the more I know what to write and help you get the results you are looking for.

## Facebook Adverts

Facebook make their money through advertising. You may have seen sponsored adverts appear in your news feed for an online accountancy package or marketing course - especially if you are listed as a director or owner of a business.

There are a many ways to create adverts for your business page, I'm going to talk about the two most common. One which encourages 'likes' of your business page and another which 'boosts' posts to a targeted audience. The difference between them is that the first one promotes only your page and the second promotes a particular post, which could be a series of photos of some recent work or blog post.

## Likes

Should I aim to get more likes?

Yes. Likes are important, but its the right likes we are looking for; people who are actually interested in your business and using your services. They need to be people that are local to you and within your demographic. Don't make the mistake of setting up a campaign to get more likes and not choosing a target area. There is no point getting likes from companies or people based in Edinburgh if your company is in London! Some people think that more likes instantly makes you more popular, but the fact is, when you pay to target the people who 'like' your page later down the line you'll be paying to reach people who aren't going to be using your services. The reason you may choose to pay to target "People who like your Page and their friends" is because only a small percentage of people who "like" your page will actually see your posts - unless you provide excellent content as mentioned above.

## Boosting Posts

Using the boost feature allows you to boost a post to a targeted audience. This means that you can target men, women or both, age groups, marital status' and even what their hobbies or interests are, just to name a few! I want to share with you some of the success I've had through boosting and give you a few tips to help you along the way.

Here's an example of a post that I boosted in January 2013. I kept it simple, just an image of a clean window with the caption above:

“Does your window cleaner clean the entire frame, sill and window?”

If not, why not?

We clean these on EVERY wash!”

The screenshot shows a Facebook Boost Post interface. On the left, the post content is visible, including the business name 'Sullivan Window Cleaning', a 'Sponsored' label, and the text: 'Does your window cleaner clean the entire frame, sill and window? If not, why not? We clean these on EVERY wash!... See More'. Below the text is a photo of a clean window. On the right, the performance metrics are displayed: 4,104 Paid Reach, 127 Actions, and £54.59 Budget Spent. Below these metrics are tabs for 'Actions', 'People', and 'Countries'. The 'Actions' tab is selected, showing a bar chart with the following data: 1 Video Play, 96 Photo Clicks, and 9 Page Likes. There is a 'See More Details' link below the chart. At the bottom of the interface, there are buttons for 'Terms & Conditions', 'Close', and 'Create New Boost'.

Metric	Value
Paid Reach	4,104
Actions	127
Budget Spent	£54.59

Action	Count
Video Play	1
Photo Clicks	96
Page Likes	9

So this little post above cost me £54.59. The photo had 96 clicks and my business page got 9 new likes. As a result, I got 16 new customers, which bought in £428 of new business in January which equated to £1563 in repeat business from that one ad to date!

I use this as an example as I haven't been through each month yet to add up all of the totals but as soon as I have the data I will share it with you all.

## Boosting Your First Post

Once you've created a new post, a 'boost' button will appear on the bottom right corner. Click on that and you'll be given a few options. The first is to decide who you want to see the ad. When I had little followers and I wanted NEW customers, I would select the 'People you choose through targeting' option. You can then set a maximum budget. I would go for £10 to start with. You can always add more later if your ad is doing well. If your ad is going REALLY well, Facebook won't start charging you until people have lost interest. If people who like your page start liking and commenting, then Facebook see this as an interesting post and won't charge you to show people.

You then want to set the town or area you want to target. Keep it local, just think how many houses are in your home town, if you had 10% of them would you be happy? I like to keep things as local as possible, and Facebook allows you to do this.

I always target a specific area, gender and age group. The ad shown above targeted women between the ages of 37 and 60 who live in Guildford (my home town). Why? Because most of my customers are women, between those ages. I have experimented with different age groups, but it seems the 37 - 55 is the sweet spot. I believe in 2013 the average age of the first time buyer was 37, so that seemed like a good place to start. You can go as far as targeting people interested in all kinds of subjects. I've often wondered if targeting people interested in gardening might work as you'll often find people who take pride in their homes and gardens will also want nice clean windows to look out of!

Ultimately, you can boost ANY post, but not EVERY post will yield results. It all goes back to great content and delivering the right messages to your customers. The key is to build trust with your customers through good content, this could be pictures of customers pets (just ask permission) or a picture of you cleaning some windows. You want to use Facebook as a platform to showcase your work rather than a place to shout offers and occasionally post a picture of a clean window or two.