

Social Media Marketing: Extend Your Business Presence With Foursquare

Nobody disputes that Facebook is the king of social media. With [1.11 billion monthly active users as of March 2013](#), there's an easy case to be made for why it's an essential part of social media marketing for small business. But what about [Foursquare](#), the smartphone app that helps friends share and explore the places they visit?

Because its user base is substantially smaller (33 million as of April 2013), it's easy to dismiss it as unimportant. But ignoring it might be a mistake for your business. Here are 4 good reasons Foursquare can be a solid platform when it comes to certain social media marketing for small-business situations.

1. **It's free.**

Yes, most social media platforms are essentially free, but to paraphrase George Orwell, "[Some social media outlets are more free than others.](#)"

While LinkedIn, Google+, Facebook and Twitter all charge for many of their business tools, Foursquare might be the ultimate in free social media marketing for small business.

In addition to giving you a free page for your business, Foursquare has three free tools to help your business make the most of its capabilities:

- **Updates** let businesses share the inside scoop with audiences, or as Foursquare puts it, "it's like a digital chalkboard for your store." Restaurants can post off-menu specialties. Retailers can post new merchandise arrival alerts. And service providers can provide last-minute appointment openings.
- **Specials** allow your business location to stand out within the Foursquare application by giving potential customers a specific reason to come see you — a free sample, a discount... you name it. Your imagination is the limit.
- **Analytics** give you valuable data on who's visiting your location and how often. It's how you know your marketing efforts are paying off.

2. **Guess what: you're probably on it already.**

Because earning points is at the heart of Foursquare, users are encouraged to add the places they visit. So if a Foursquare user has already added your store and checked in, get ready to "meet the mayor" when you [claim your business](#).

When a business owner finds that he's already a part of the Foursquare community, the question of "Why Foursquare?" really becomes "Why not?"

3. **It's Connected.**

When visitors check in via Foursquare, most of them share that activity with their

friends on Facebook and Twitter, making Foursquare an easy, automatic extension of your presence on those networks.

Moreover, if you're already on Facebook, Google+ and Twitter, you may already know that managing pages for multiple locations can be a challenge in social media marketing for small business. The customers of your downtown store may be very different from the folks you see in your suburban location, for example — and you might have multiple accounts on each platform by necessity.

But here's where Foursquare is super-business-friendly. They make it easy to manage the Foursquare activity for each one of your stores. Just let them know where your locations are, and you're ready to start interacting with each audience in whatever ways you wish, from companywide to location-specific messaging.

4. **It's Fun.**

From its quirky badges to its mayorships and everything in between, Foursquare is fun because it's gamified from the ground up. It even has the capability to allow your business to check in to other businesses.

Say you're a restaurateur using Foursquare to check in to a local farmer's market to see what's fresh. Your nearby fans can be on the lookout for you just to say hi, you can tease up today's specials, and your lunch crowd followers will love knowing their salads are fresh from the field. Or if you're a realtor, you might let your followers know they can find you at the fall home and garden show.

You get the idea. When it comes to social media marketing for small business, Foursquare can be the versatile, connected and fun friend in the crowd. Its small audience of very loyal and engaged users likely wants to get to know your business better, shop in your store and tell their friends to do the same.