

What is The Algorithm?



When you make a post on social media, not everyone sees it even if they follow you. If you have 1000 followers, only a percentage of people will see that content.

This is because every social network wants to serve each person content they will enjoy, so it selects the content they will see. It does this using code known as “the algorithm”.

Each social network has a slightly different algorithm, but a good rule of thumb is to determine if a person will be served your content is:

- how often do they interact with you?
- do they interact with the kind of content you've posted (i.e. image vs video)?
- how recently was the content posted?
- how often do they sign in, or how long is their session time?

What this means is that there are certain things you can do to help your content reach a few more people using organic methods.

Things to think about include:

Create Quality Content

- Follow best practice in terms of content design for the platform you're on
- Review your analytics to see which posts performed best (i.e. High reach or high engagement) and make more inspired by that.
- Post original content (some social networks penalise you for posting from other social channels)

Post Consistently

- Post regularly and post consistently (which isn't the same as posting a high volume of content every day. It's better to post once a week for years, than a lot for a month and then never be seen again).
- Using a content plan and a scheduling tool can help

Create connections and conversations

- Give people a reason to interact with you - post carousels or image galleries, ask people to respond to a question or ask people to save your post for later.
- Post when audience is online (i.e. in the evening / look at your analytics)
- Talk to your audience, respond to comments, comment on their posts.
- Encourage people to send DMs with questions (and respond!) as it's another way you're seen as engaging.
- Run a contest or giveaway (but be aware that these need T+Cs and need to adhere to your local competition law - details at the end of the course.)

Tips to increase reach

Overall, the tips for working with the algorithm is because people have the goal of reaching more audiences.

Here are some other things to make sure you're keeping in mind for each:

- Use a mix of media types - photos, videos, carousels, so your content is seen by different audiences who favour each time.
- Historically social networks try to prioritise new features to get people to use them so try these out. i.e. Reels.
- Use hashtags correctly – research them and use a mix of large and small reach.
- Pay for reach with ads or pay to collaborate with influencers.

The algorithms do change slightly every couple of years, so it's worth keeping across the latest changes as they come.