
A Guide to Social Media Marketing for Contractors



Belynda Holt Pinto, Director of Operations
Mike Holt Enterprises

The way companies market their services is in transition, and keeping up with those changes requires lots of time and hard work. This guide was created to help you understand how to build a marketing presence online beyond your own website, and where to spend your time, energy, and resources so that your business does not get left behind. The days of only having a website, company trucks, or an ad in the yellow pages is quickly being replaced with a new reality where customers are expecting to meet and select companies in the online areas where they are already doing business.

The goal of this guide is give you quick tips, and ideas of how to get started so that you can easily apply this information to your own business immediately. Facebook and LinkedIn are the primary focus as I believe that these are the next two areas that companies really need to develop after building out a successful website.

After reading this guide if you have other ideas that have worked or other suggestions on how we can improve it please send them to info@Mikeholt.com. We will incorporate these ideas into the next version of this guide. Our goal is to update it annually in order to make this process easier for you and your business.

We hope this will help you build a stronger business and connect with new customers.

Much Success,

Belynda

www.linkedin.com/in/belyndapinto

Quick Overview of websites that may provide marketing value for your company...



FACEBOOK = The best way to think about Facebook is that it is a FREE website for your company that is easy to use and a slight investment of time to keep up-to-date. See additional information on pages 3—5 in this document. www.facebook.com



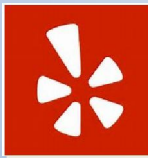
LINKEDIN = Think of LinkedIn as a FREE Billboard and you want to claim yours. See additional information about this site on pages 6—8 in this document. www.Linkedin.com



GOOGLEPLUS = Similar to FACEBOOK but not really as popular and not an area of internet marketing that is currently growing. You will want to [register your business name](https://www.google.com/business/) here, just so someone else does not take it <https://www.google.com/business/>.



GOOGLE MY BUSINESS = Allows you to register your company with Google, so that customers can contact you easily and your information shows up on maps. This will also will help you get reviews, which are primary for online marketing <https://www.google.com/business/>.



YELP = Provides a free way for your company to get listed and reviewed. Again, make sure that on all jobs you are requesting reviews on Yelp, on Google, or on Angie's list. You can't have enough positive reviews about your site. Yelp also allows you to do target marketing <https://biz.yelp.com/>



YOUTUBE = Use your smartphone to take videos to post on YouTube—try to get testimonials from happy customers and (if approved by customers in writing)videos of jobs you did that highlight the quality of your work and installations. www.YouTube.com. These same videos can then be posted on Facebook.



ANGIE'S LIST = Consumer Reports on steroids. Go to this site to register your business to start receiving reviews. Customers that use Angie's list on a regular basis will probably not be hiring anyone that is not listed there and well reviewed. You can also pay for advertising at this site. <http://www.angieslist.com/>



AMAZON SERVICES = Invitation Only site that promotes and acts like a broker for your company. There are no upfront costs, but on any job that you receive from Amazon you will pay them 15-20% commission for those orders. Amazon will deduct that amount from your payment on that service. Amazon.com

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Ask for reviews from all customers that are happy with your service. Updated positive reviews can take a business to another level in this day of Internet marketing. This must be part of your close-out process on a job.



10 Things your company should be doing with Facebook right now...

1. **Make sure you have a Facebook page - this is priority #1.** This is Free Advertising, and if you don't have a page you are wasting a great opportunity. Your competitors are on Facebook and not being there sends a message about your company. Your goal for your Facebook page is to build relationships with current and future customers while building a community. You are creating a page that will allow you to start really connecting with others. Opening a page is easy:
 - Sign up for Facebook (it is easy and it is free) www.Facebook.com.
 - Create a Business Page. This should take only a few minutes.
 - Add an image and your logo to your Business Page.
 - Start posting (see Tips below).
2. **Update it regularly. Ideally you should be the person telling the story of your business, but if you don't feel comfortable with writing simple posts then find someone to write them for you.** It should be the same person in charge of your marketing. This can be one of your employees, your wife, or a person you trust that believes in your business, has the ability to write, and really understands social media. The key is to keep it updated.
3. **Let people know you are on Facebook by adding Facebook icons to all of your advertising:** website, business cards, brochures, signature line.
4. **Send a "Like" invite to everyone you know personally to help get the Likes scorecard up on your page.** People are more likely to "Like" your page if they see that you already have a group of people "liking" your page.
5. **Add the Reviews feature to your Facebook page.** This is a great opportunity to get real-time feedback from customers. Not only will this help you with advertising by having your fans post great comments but it will also give you a great feedback loop if there are any weaknesses in your business that you should be aware of.
6. **Consider how to best utilize the "About" feature on your page.** This is great free advertising and a good way to differentiate yourself from the competition.
7. **Add your company website and contact information to your Facebook page** to make it easy for customers to find out more about you and contact you easily.
8. **Create a photo album that highlights particular projects you specialize in.** For example, if your business has three different areas that you specialize in, create three different photo albums: one can be on lighting solutions, one can be on commercial jobs, and one can be on solar projects. This allows customers to see the type of work you do.
9. **When a post gets a lot of interest, boost it with the Facebook Boost Tool** available for all of your posts.
10. **Create a Facebook URL shortcut.** The automatic URL created for your company page may not reflect how you want to be identified, visit <https://www.facebook.com/username> to change your Facebook address. Check out ours at www.facebook.com/mikeholtenterprises.



Understanding a Facebook Company Page

The screenshot shows the Facebook profile for Mike Holt Enterprises. The cover photo features a seminar announcement for 'See Mike Holt Live! 2015 CEU SEMINAR' with dates for Orlando (June 5-6) and Coral Springs (July 31-Aug 1). The page includes a navigation menu with 'Timeline', 'About', 'Products', 'Reviews', and 'More'. On the left, there are statistics for likes (4,911), location visits (23), and reviews (4.7 stars). The 'About' section provides the company website and a brief description. A central post from Mike Holt Enterprises promotes a free newsletter. On the right, there is a 'Create Page' button, a year selector (with 2014 highlighted), a sponsored ad for 'Easy Brunch Casserole', and a 'Post' box for sharing content. Numbered callouts (1-10) identify key elements: 1. Year selector, 2. About section, 3. Contact Us button, 4. More menu, 5. Sponsored ad, 6. Like count, 7. Post box, 8. Reviews, 9. Invite friends, and 10. Like/Comment/Share buttons.

1. Timeline. Tells the story of the activity on your Facebook Page.

2. About. Free Advertising for you to tell your story about your company.

3. Contact Us. Gives customers an easy way to contact your company.

4. More. You can add on more features to your page and control which ones appear on this menu.

5. Advertising. Run ads & save money by targeting it to people that are most like your customers.

6. Likes. Scorecard for you to track the size of your Facebook Community.

7. Post. Share a message with your customers—add images, tell stories, and share valuable information.

8. Reviews. Provides an opportunity for your customers to share their experiences with your company.

9. Invite Friends. Make it easy for others to promote your page.

10. Like, Comment, Share. Customers can like a post, comment on it, or share it on their page.

TIPS FOR POSTING TO FACEBOOK

- Keep it simple; you are not trying to write an essay just a quick connection with your customers.
- Make it personal; don't be too serious - write as if you are talking to a friend.
- Post weekly; don't wait months between posts, that is almost as bad as not being on there at all.
- Ideas for posting photos
 - Photos of jobs (before and after photos are always interesting)
 - Photos of customers (with their written permission)
 - Photos of your community
- Don't just post great things about your company; provide additional value so customers will want to read your posts. Share interesting information like:
 - Electrical safety tips your customers should know
 - Great quotes
 - Holiday messages
 - Community information - be a great resource for your customers
 - Testimonials from customers
 - News articles that might relate to electrical upgrades and anything else that will make your customers have a better sense of who you are as an organization and who you are as a person.
- Use photos as much as possible when posting; find a way to make your posts visual.
- Find the Insights tab on your main page to see which posts your customers really like, and do more of those.

TIPS FOR FACEBOOK ADS

- Facebook has a great resource for suggestions on improving your ads; read that before you begin.
- For these types of ads to be successful you need to know and understand who your current customers are - their age, sex, and the area they live in, so that you can target that same group when creating your ad. The great thing is you get to decide exactly who sees your ad, by location and other demographics you choose and you pay only when they are posted to someone's page.
- You get to choose the budget you can afford, so getting started is really easy.
- Format of an ad
 - Use the first sentence of your ad to describe why the customer should care about you.
 - Use the second sentence of your ad to tell customers what to do after seeing the ad.
 - Add a Call-to-Action to your ad.
 - Make the ad short and sweet, each word should focus on your core message





10 Things your company needs to know about LinkedIn...

1. **LinkedIn is a free Billboard online.** Your customers are often on LinkedIn and having a page there adds legitimacy to your company. This is Free Advertising, and if you don't have a company page you are wasting a great opportunity.
2. **You need a LinkedIn Company page, not just a personal page.** Signing up is easy:
 - Sign up for a personal LinkedIn page (it is easy and it is free) www.Linkedin.com.
 - Create a Business Page. This should only take you a few minutes.
 - Add an image to your Business Page.
 - Add your logo to the Page.
 - Start adding updates.
3. **You don't need to post daily - less is more.** Posts are your way to connect with customers so share a photo of a project you are doing, an article about home electrical safety, information about work you are doing in your community or an inspirational quote. People love photos so include them frequently but make sure that any photos you share are your own or you have permissions from the person that owns the copyright. If you are looking for a copyright free image you can do an internet search on this topic to find lots of great sites to get these images.
4. **Let people know you are on LinkedIn by adding LinkedIn icons to all of your advertising:** website, business cards, brochures, signature line.
5. **Build your personal LinkedIn page to help build your company brand.** You are the face of the business and customers want to know more about you; your personal Profile page is a new way for you to connect with them. Check it weekly to respond to Connection Requests, and post personal updates sharing your company's message.
6. **Your company or personal updates are not meant for over the top company promotion.** LinkedIn is a different audience than Facebook, read other company's posts to see the tone of how to share company updates.
7. **Your LinkedIn InMail is another way for customers to communicate with you.** You will be notified when customers send InMail messages directly to your own email. This is a great feature of being on LinkedIn.
8. **LinkedIn is a great networking tool.** This is a great opportunity for you to reach out to others you meet and extend the relationship - think contractors and other business people in your community.
9. **If you connect with a customer on LinkedIn see if they will give you a personal recommendation.** The Endorsements on your personal page will also help build your online reputation.
10. **You can post jobs to your LinkedIn company page.** This is just another way to advertise an opening.



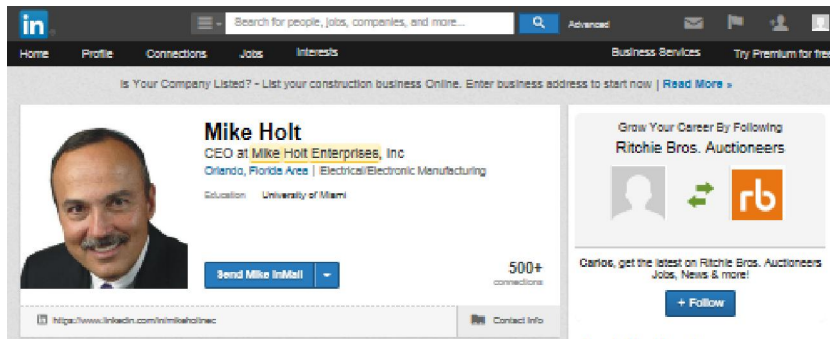
Anatomy of a LinkedIn Company Page

The screenshot shows the LinkedIn profile for Mike Holt Enterprises. Numbered callouts identify the following elements:

- 1. Logo: Mike Holt Enterprises logo.
- 2. Followers: 2,048 followers and a 'Following' button.
- 3. Analytics: 'Analytics' tab in the navigation bar.
- 4. Notifications: 'Notifications' tab in the navigation bar.
- 5. Share with: 'Share with' dropdown menu.
- 6. Company image: A carousel of images showing electrical training materials.
- 7. Recent Updates: A video update titled 'Electrical Instructors Ask Mike Holt: Question 2 - Students know more than you? (3min:18sec)'. Below the video, engagement statistics are shown: 1,628 Impressions, 6 clicks, 3 interactions, and 0.55% engagement.
- 8. Engagement: The engagement statistics (1,628 Impressions, 6 clicks, 3 interactions, 0.55% engagement).
- 9. Sponsor Update: A 'sponsor update' button.
- 10. People Also Viewed: A section showing related companies like Allstate, IAEI, NFPA, and NECA.

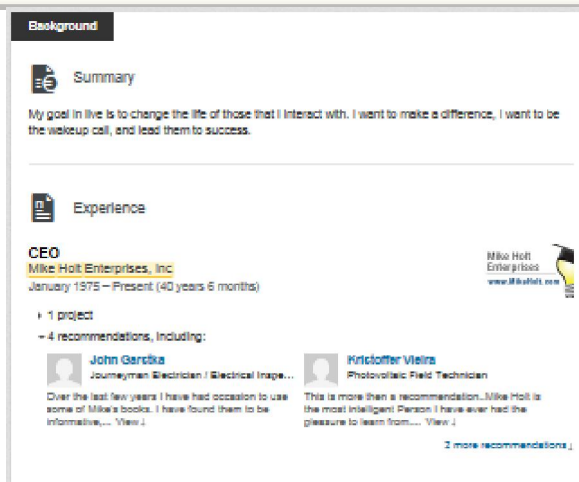
1. **Logo.** Helps viewers identify your brand.
2. **Followers.** Shows you all the customers that are part of your LinkedIn Company page.
3. **Analytics.** Is the dashboard of how well elements of your company LinkedIn page are performing.
4. **Notifications.** Gives you an update of recent activity on your LinkedIn page.
5. **Company Update.** Share a message with your customers, a quote, image, or video.
6. **Company image.** Great space to share your story; this is what the customers see.
7. **Recent Updates.** Allows your customers to see your previous company updates.
8. **Engagement.** Displays how many customers were interested in your update and connected with it.
9. **Sponsor Update.** Allows you to share successful updates as an ad to get more followers.
10. **People Also Viewed.** Shows you what companies your customers are also interested in.

Steps to a Great Personal LinkedIn Page



1. Great photo. This is the first thing that people notice, make sure it is professional and that you look friendly.

2. Change your headline. Currently your job title is automatically listed, but change it to a powerful statement of what you want people to know about you.



3. Highlight key points in your Summary section. Either make a personal statement about your goals for your customers or list your five biggest accomplishments in bullet form in your "Summary" section.

4. Add images to your Experience. You can add an image portfolio to your experience of jobs if relevant to your work or industry.

5. Ask for Recommendations/Endorsements. This is a great way to build your online reputation. If you have customers or someone you have done work with that are on LinkedIn, ask them for a recommendation for your profile. These help you stand out in the crowd and add real value to your LinkedIn page.

6. List the jobs that make sense. You don't need to list every single job you have ever had, just the ones that will make an impact.

7. List relevant projects. Highlight important projects that will better explain the work you did for that company.

8. Post website links to your company. Make sure you are adding links to any company websites to make it easy for customers to get to your website and learn more about your company.

Social Media Frequently Asked Questions

- ? **What about Twitter, should my company have an account?** Your customers are using Twitter for their own personal use and the value for your company having a page there is very small. So at this time it is not recommended that you get on Twitter unless you have extra time and are interested in Twitter.
- ? **What is Pinterest and do I need to care about this?** Pinterest is a way for companies or individuals to share ideas in a visual style bulletin board format. If you are selling services where customers need to make choices for products, then having a Pinterest board with options is a great idea. This makes it easy to visually organize images of the products that your customers can select from. You can also post images to Pinterest of images that will give your customers ideas about how they can upgrade their electrical systems. You will want to integrate this into your company website so it is easy to find. Here are some examples of bulletin boards that you might create that would be appealing to your customers: LED lighting solutions, Outdoor lighting ideas, Kitchen lighting, Wall lighting, Fans, or Electrical Upgrades.
- ? **Do I need a blog?** If you enjoy writing and have something of value to say on your site that would be quality material for your customers, then you can create a blog. Other than that there is no need to spend the time or energy creating a blog.
- ? **Why are reviews so important?** Customers like to buy from people that are safe choices. When they see that others have already used you successfully, it lowers their resistance to hiring you the first time. So make sure you are asking for reviews during all visits that have gone well, and make that easy with a follow-up email thanking them for their service.
- ? **What about Instagram, Tumblr, or Google Photos?** All of these sites can be helpful for you to keep images of jobs you have done. You don't need to be on these sites, but if you deal with a lot of photos you may want to explore how to use these sites to organize them and share them with customers.
- ? **What are hashtags? I keep hearing about them and seeing these # signs on different social media sites.** This is a way to tag your posts by topic so that others can easily search for them using the hashtag . To use a hashtag, just use the # symbol followed by a word or words without any spaces. For guidelines on how to use hashtags visit each of the social media sites you use to see their recommendations on how to use them effectively.
- ? **Should I pay someone to create my social media sites for my company?** You can always pay someone to help with your site, but I recommend you learn more about social media before hiring out anything. Get started by doing all of the steps listed in this document and watch your sites for a few months. See what you learn, see how easy it can be to maintain them and see if there are any areas where additional help will make a difference. Once you have a basic understanding of Social Media, you will then have more information about what type of help you may need, and in the process will have an easier time identifying a partner that really knows what they are doing.

Final thoughts about Social Media

- Get started, and don't worry about making it perfect. Everyone has to try different things to see what works for their business. There is no one better than you at telling your story and connecting with your customers.
- You can also use Social Media to get updated information about the industry. To get started Like us on Facebook, www.facebook.com/mikeholtenterprises and Connect with us on LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/company/mike-holt-enterprises-inc. You will also want to check out manufacturer sites, association sites, and join relevant groups to help you grow your business.
- Enjoy the process, this is a great way to connect with new customers, new colleagues, and grow your sales. Good luck!