

## The differences between Paid and Organic social media

### **What is organic social media?**

Organic social media is free content that all users, including businesses and brands, share with each other on their feeds. This can range from posts, photography, videos and stories.

As a brand, when you post organically to your account, you can expect that the people who will see it are:

- A percentage of your followers ('organic reach')
- Your followers' followers (only if people choose to share your post)
- People following any hashtags you use

Brand use organic social to:

- Establish their personality and voice
- Build relationships by sharing informative, entertaining, and/or inspiring content
- Engage customers at every stage of their buying journey
- Support their customers with customer service

However, depending on the businesses needs, there are disadvantages to using organic social. Because all the major platforms use ranking algorithms, only a small percentage of your followers will see your organic posts.

For instance, the average organic reach for a Facebook post is about 5.5% of your follower count. For big brands with large followings, it's often even less.

Organic social reach has been declining for a few years now. As social media platforms reach saturation, attention spans shorten, and platforms priorities meaningful user experiences. It's harder than ever to get your brand's content seen by your own audience, let alone new audiences.

This is where paid social media comes in.

### **What is paid social media?**

Paid social media is another word for advertising on social media platforms. It's when brands pay money to Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, etc. in order to have their content shared with specific new targeted audiences, in specific areas who are likely to be interested in that topic.

More so than organic content, paid posts are a good way for brands to target new audiences on social media and convert them to customers or loyal supporters. Businesses use paid promotion on social to:

- Raise brand awareness and attract new followers
- Promote their newest deal, content, event, service, product etc.
- Generate leads
- Drive conversions

### **Paid vs organic social media**

An organic social media strategy nurtures your relationship with your customers or audience. It helps you:

- Establish and grow your brand's presence where people are already spending their time
- Support and retain existing customers
- Convert new customers by showing them what you're about

However, organic is often slower to reach business goals, and while it's technically free, it takes a lot of time, resource, experimentation and/or experience to get right.

Meanwhile, a paid social media strategy is how you connect with new customers or audience members. It helps you:

- Reach a larger number of people
- Target your ideal customer more precisely – especially if they are from a specific area with specific interests
- Hit your business goals faster

However, it does require a budget.

### **REFERENCES**

Paige Cooper, Hootsuite blog, November 2021, *Paid vs. Organic Social Media: How to Integrate Both into Your Strategy*, <https://blog.hootsuite.com/organic-vs-paid-social-media/>