

Creating successful social media competitions

 By [Julia Rhodes](#)

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If you're looking for an affordable and engaging way to increase brand awareness, social media competitions could be exactly the boost you need.

When done right, a social media competition can be a great vehicle for driving engagement and rewarding brand loyalty. They're also an effective mechanism for gaining 'likes', email subscribers and sales leads.



Image © Maria Frangieh's "[7 Tips to Run a Successful Social Media Competition](#)"

So, what's the secret to making a competition engaging? As with all forms of marketing, social media competitions need to be strategic. They should:

- Entice your target audience
- Reward them with prizes tailored to their interests

Here are some successful social media competitions:

Instagram:

[National Geographic](#) asked their audience to "capture glimpses of the unforgettable people, places, and experiences that have impacted their lives from their travels around the world," and then share these images on Instagram with [#wanderlustcontest](#).

#wanderlustcontest

54,370 posts



The competition was so successful because their social media strategists recognised what their audience is most passionate about: photography. And, the prize catered to their passion: a Photo Expedition to Yosemite National Park!

Facebook:

South African e-cigarette manufacturer, [Twisp](#), produced this simple, but very effective Facebook competition to create hype around their new and improved device, the Aero X.

Fill in the blank and stand the chance to win the amazing new Aero X device!

The Aero X boasts exciting new features like the integrated atomizer base and the #Twisp _____ with a five-part LED light that accurately indicates battery capacity.



This post earned over 300 organic comments and, due to the high levels of audience engagement, Facebook deemed the content relevant and ranked in the newsfeeds of people who are, or have friends who are, interested in the brand.

Snapchat:

The latest brand utilising social media competitions to conquer Snapchat is Burger King. Tapping into their unique selling-point – flame-grilled patties – they challenged users to ‘Snap’ their regular, non-Burger King burgers to their Snapchat profile, and then add Burger King’s signature grill marks to the image. For every Snap received, Burger King responded with a Whopper voucher!

[Burger King / Snap King \(case\)](#) from [Art&Dan](#) on [Vimeo](#).

The campaign reached 4.1 million people and was so popular that the the vouchers (which were meant to last for two weeks) were gone within two days!

And competitions that perform well are often the ones that think outside the box.

Mercedes-Benz recently ran a very innovative campaign: they created hype on Twitter by sharing a video clip of a car chase and then allowed the Twittersphere to vote for the outcome they wanted.



By making the process interactive and handing 'power' to consumers, the video generated an impressive amount of buzz. It was one of the first examples of combining TV advertising with social media, and with amazing results!

So before launching a social media competition, consider these helpful tips:

1. **Clearly define the competition goals before planning.** Do you want to grow your email list? Promote a new product? Or are you looking for a bunch of user-generated content?
2. **Come up with a unique hashtag that reflects your brand and the competition.** Use it to extend the reach of your competition across multiple social media channels.
3. **Set a time frame.** Decide how long your competition will run and let your audience know.
4. **Make sure your competition is mobile-friendly.** Most people use social media via their mobile devices. Some competition software works seamlessly on mobile devices, others not so much. Avoid forcing entrants to watch long videos – data is an expensive commodity in South Africa!
5. **Choose a compelling prize.** You want to grab the attention of easily distracted internet users, so share an enticing image of what they could win.

Some tweetable facts about social media competitions:

- The more creative the idea, the better. A #SocialMedia #Competition needs to stand out to people, so taking part is just as fun as winning.
- The incentive of possibly winning a prize can help you successfully create awareness & drive sales. #SocialMedia #Competitions.
- A good #SocialMedia competition basically pays for itself because it allows your audience to do the marketing for you by spreading the word.

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ABOUT JULIA RHODES

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