



Business
goes viral

Digital visibility – with the next generation

Make your business go viral!

GUIDELINE FOR SMES

#bogv

Acknowledgements



#businessgoesviral

Empowering SMEs to achieve digital transformation through upskilling young employees

Project coordination

Room466 by WKO Steiermark

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Summary

This guideline shows how small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can harness the digital strengths of young employees to use social media professionally and increase their visibility.

It combines current research, the results of our own research report, and the findings from the pilot phase with 19 companies and 46 participants from Austria, Italy, and Croatia. Based on this, the guideline provides practical advice on how SMEs can develop digital competencies within their own operations and engage young employees as digital ambassadors.

A key tool in this regard is the micro online course "#businessgoesviral," which combines short learning units with practical tasks. It enables young talents—especially Generation Z—to convert their personal social media experience into practical marketing skills and use them effectively within the company.

The results of the pilot phase confirm: The approach is easy to integrate into everyday work, increases employee motivation and independence, and leads to noticeable improvements in digital presence.

This guideline therefore offers not only theoretical foundations, but also a practical way for SMEs to use their existing resources for digital transformation and remain future-proof step by step.

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Introduction

Why this guideline is relevant for your company

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), especially micro and small businesses, are the backbone of the European economy. Yet many of them face major challenges in the digital age: How can they remain visible in an increasingly interconnected world? How can limited human and financial resources be used for modern marketing? And, above all, how can they actively shape digital transformation instead of simply lagging behind?

This guideline was developed as part of the EU project #businessgoesviral to support SMEs, as well as micro and small businesses, on their journey into the digital future. It is aimed particularly at companies with little experience in digital marketing and provides practical guidance on unlocking unused potential – especially among their own employees.

The focus is on Generation Z (Gen Z) – young employees who are digital natives and have grown up with social media. They come equipped with competencies that can, with minimal effort, be expanded into valuable digital skills within the corporate context.

This guideline shows companies how they can specifically activate and promote relevant skills and leverage them for business success. It offers practical guidance for developing a sustainable digital strategy together with Gen Z employees – without external consulting, without high costs, but with recognizable benefits for all involved.

Because: **Digital transformation is inevitable – but it can be shaped together.**

Introduction

Digital transformation requires new strategies

Digitalization is changing everything: business models, customer behavior, communication, and markets. Those who are not visible online are losing relevance – and this at a time when competitive pressure, globalization, and a shortage of skilled workers are increasing.

For SMEs today, online marketing is essential to maintain visibility, reach new customer groups, and raise their profile. Studies show that digital marketing strategies significantly improve the market presence and performance of SMEs (Sharabati et al., 2024).

Yet a significant share of SMEs remain invisible in this central field of competition. The numbers speak for themselves: In 2019, only about half of all companies in the EU used social media (Eurostat, 2020). Four years later, the picture is similar: among small businesses, around 44% are still not present on social networks (Eurostat, 2023). In other words, almost every second company continues to forgo on one of the most important tools for reaching customers, maintaining visibility, and attracting new talent. Yet small businesses in particular have several strengths: They are close to their customers, can communicate authentically, and respond faster than large corporations.

With these strengths, you can achieve a lot in the digital space – if you use them purposefully. A strong online presence is therefore no longer a "nice-to-have," but a fundamental requirement for competitiveness.

Social media as a strategic driver

Social media offers a particularly effective lever here: With manageable effort, significant impact can be achieved, provided the necessary knowledge for professional use is available. This becomes particularly clear when you consider that 80% of consumers are more likely to try a product or service if they have received a recommendation for it on social networks (Lookfamed, 2023). Those who don't use social media are therefore consciously foregoing a crucial factor influencing purchasing decisions.

Used correctly, social media can:

- **increase brand awareness and reach**
 - even without huge budgets,
- **develop new customer groups,**
- **promote bonding and direct exchange,**
- **measurably increase business success** (e.g. through more website traffic or leads),
- and **build brand trust** through **authentic insights.**

Introduction

Overcoming challenges, exploiting potential

The question is no longer **whether** SMEs should use social media, **but rather how** they can build the necessary digital expertise under realistic conditions. This is precisely where the biggest hurdles lie: a lack of knowledge, tight budgets for professional marketing, a lack of time, and too few training opportunities that fit the daily work of small teams.

At the same time, many companies have an often underestimated resource: Generation Z employees. They grew up with digital media and, if properly integrated, can become important drivers of a successful online strategy.

Our solution: the #businessgoesviral approach

This is exactly where #businessgoesviral comes in: We make digital knowledge tangible and immediately usable for SMEs.

- With **customized microlearning** offerings, digital skills are taught in a practical way – flexibly, location-independently, and in small, easily digestible units. This allows content to be absorbed and applied directly in everyday work.
- **The learning modules** are specifically tailored to the needs of young employees and small businesses. They not only impart technical know-how but also promote personal responsibility, creativity, and entrepreneurial thinking.
- **Both sides benefit from this:** Employees gain digital security, and companies gain online presence, visibility, and customer contacts – all with manageable effort and low costs.

The next chapter shows why young talents, especially Generation Z, are crucial for the digital success of companies.

Background

Gen Z: The untapped potential within your own company

Generation Z (born approximately in the mid-1990s to early 2010s) is the first generation to have grown up with digital media from an early age (McKinsey, 2024; Pew Research Center, 2019). For them, smartphones, social networks, and digital communication are not tools to be learned, but rather a natural part of everyday life. This intuitive understanding of platforms, formats, and digital trends makes them a valuable resource for small businesses – especially in areas where such expertise is often lacking.

At the same time, many prejudices exist: in the workplace. Gen Z is often described as impatient, less resilient, or overly demanding. A closer look, however, paints a different picture. The Deloitte Gen Z and Millennial Survey (2025) shows that young employees are highly motivated when three factors come together:

- **Meaning in work** – they want to be part of something meaningful,
- **Responsibility and creative freedom** – not just “going along” but actively shaping outcomes,
- **Participation and development** – their ideas should be heard and learning opportunities should be available.

If companies create the right framework conditions, Gen Z can become a driving force in digital transformation. They bring creativity, trend awareness, and fresh perspectives, open up access to target groups that were previously difficult to reach, and, are willing to take on responsibility under the right circumstances. In a supportive environment, young talents are not only learners, but true creators—and precisely the resource small businesses need today to establish a successful digital presence.

The next chapter highlights which digital skills matter most in social media marketing today and where Generation Z stands in this regard.

Background

Gen Z: Digital skills between everyday life and work

The young generation is considered creative, tech-savvy, and self-confident – yet many companies experience a daily gap between digital talent and concrete implementation. Smaller companies, in particular, often expect young employees to “naturally” revitalize digital processes.

But what can they actually deliver – and where do they (still) face limits?

To answer these questions, a cross-country research report was conducted as part of #businessgoesviral. Over 300 young adults aged 16 to 25 from Austria, Italy, and Croatia were surveyed about their skills and self-perception in digital communication and social media marketing (BGV study, 2025). The results paint a diverse picture:

Daily use does not equal professional competence



Almost all respondents (97%) stated that they use social media for personal use on a daily basis. Instagram (89%), YouTube (76%), and TikTok (69%) were particularly popular. Nevertheless, self-assessment revealed a clear gap between private and professional applicability: Only about one-third of young people feel confident enough to independently carry out specific social media marketing tasks—such as developing a content strategy, targeting specific audiences, or analyzing reach and engagement rates.

Confidence especially low when it comes to strategic activities: Only 17% of participants stated they could confidently assess whether a campaign was successful. While more respondents feel capable of taking confident taking responsibility for tasks such as community management or planning editorial content, there is often a lack of understanding of structural processes, legal principles, and data-driven decision-making.

Background

Digital natives – but without professional media education

A key finding of the #businessgoesviral study is the realization that daily contact with digital tools does not automatically translate to media literacy. While many of the young people surveyed have a basic understanding of technology and creative expression, they lack systematic knowledge of content, mechanisms of action, and professional application.

Skills gaps of GenZ

- COPYRIGHT AND DATA PROTECTION,
- TARGET GROUP ANALYSIS,
- EDITORIAL PLANNING,
- PLATFORM-SPECIFIC BEHAVIOR,
- INTERPRETATION OF KPIs.

These deficits often lead to insecurity in the professional context. While there is great interest in using social media in the workplace, fears of mistakes or negative public reactions inhibit initiative.

High interest in further development – if the conditions are right

70%

ARE INTERESTED
IN PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

DESIRE FOR SHORT,
DIGITAL LEARNING
FORMATS

WHAT GEN Z VALUES

The vast majority of respondents showed great interest in professional development in the field of **social media marketing**.

Particularly in demand are short, digital learning offerings that are flexible and easily accessible – so-called **microlearning formats**.

- clear tasks and responsibilities,
- practical learning scenarios,
- Feedback and support,
- the opportunity to try things out – without fear of making mistakes.

The #BGV idea

Young talents as digital ambassadors

The previous sections have shown that young employees bring valuable digital skills, representing a key resource for many SMEs. To fully harness this potential in a business context, practice-oriented learning opportunities are needed that facilitate entry and specifically strengthen professional communication skills. This is precisely where #businessgoesviral comes in.

The #BGV approach

Young Generation Z employees have grown up with digital technologies and social media – for them, these tools are a natural part of everyday life. But this natural digital understanding alone isn't enough to operate successfully in a corporate context. The idea behind our project is therefore to address precisely those areas where Gen Z still lacks knowledge and structure – without lengthy, costly training programs that start from scratch.

As part of the project, a free microlearning course on social media marketing was developed. It is specifically tailored to the needs of both young people and companies, enabling practical, fast, and flexible skill development.

Microlearning is the practice of delivering content in small, focused segments, and is emerging as a particularly effective format for independent learning

Our micro online course teaches precisely the digital skills young talent needs in companies in compact, practical units. Learning is flexible, location-independent, and time-saving – making it easy to integrate into everyday work without requiring large time frames or extensive supervision. The new skills can be implemented immediately without disrupting business operations.

At the core of the concept is the development of young employees into digital ambassadors: With up-to-date trend awareness and fresh ideas, they strengthen their company's online presence and provide impulses for marketing, communication, and customer engagement – all with comparatively little effort.

This concept creates a clear win-win situation: young employees feel valued and grow with their responsibilities, while companies remain visible through authentic and contemporary communication and safeguard their competitiveness.

Why this works especially for SMEs

► For small businesses

Small businesses often operate with very limited staffing capacities. This means that individual employees frequently take on multiple roles – from product development and sales to marketing. Traditional training formats rarely work small in companies: seminars or courses are time-consuming, overly theoretical, and difficult to integrate into everyday business operations (OECD, 2021; Cedefop, 2024). External agencies or expensive training courses are simply not an option for many. This makes solutions all the more important that require little effort, fit easily into everyday routines, and still deliver impact. Microlearning formats offer an ideal approach here: short, practice-oriented learning units that are immediately applicable – without high costs or long downtimes. The decisive factor is the direct transfer of knowledge into practice – what has been learned can be applied straight away, creating immediate value in day-to-day business.

Benefits of our micro online course for small businesses:

- **Targeted knowledge transfer without additional effort:** The course is designed to be completed in approximately 10 hours. Even small teams or individual employees can acquire this knowledge flexibly alongside their work.
- **Efficient use of existing resources:** Employees learn to use social media tools and simple online marketing strategies independently. This reduces dependence on external service providers, saves costs, and increases independence.
- **Strengthening motivation and employee retention:** According to the Gallup State of the Global Workplace Report 2022, only around 21% of employees worldwide feel truly engaged—that is, they are emotionally connected to their work, identify with the company's goals, and demonstrate initiative (Gallup, 2022). Investments in digital training—especially for young employees—demonstrate appreciation and increase engagement and retention.
- **Contributes to visibility:** For small businesses, an active online presence can be crucial for reaching local and national customer groups. A digitally savvy team is key to achieving this (Eurostat, 2023).
- **Improved customer loyalty & new market opportunities:** Digital marketing helps local businesses build close relationships with customers, secure repeat business, and reach new target audiences (Yendra et al., 2024).

Why this works especially for SMEs

► For medium-sized businesses

Compared to small businesses, medium-sized enterprises often already have initial digital structures in place—such as websites, social media channels, or basic marketing processes. However, these resources are not always consistently used or strategically developed. According to Eurostat, while around 73% of medium-sized businesses in the EU used social media in 2023, almost a third still had no digital presence (Eurostat, 2023). This represents enormous potential, which can be specifically unlocked through our microlearning online course.

Benefits of our micro-learning course for medium-sized companies:

- **Practical enhancement of existing skills:** The course builds on existing knowledge and complements it with current trends, platform know-how, and effective tools – without lengthy or expensive training.
- **Empowering young talents as a drivers of innovation:** Young employees can be specifically involved as catalysts of digital transformation. Studies show that engagement and motivation increase significantly when young employees assume responsibility and have opportunities for further development (Gallup, 2022; Deloitte, 2025).
- **Cost efficiency and time savings:** A trained internal team increases impact across digital channels, improves customer outreach, and secures long-term market position.
- **Strengthening competitiveness:** A trained internal team increases effectiveness in digital channels, improves customer engagement, and secures long-term market position.
- **Greater attractiveness as an employer:** The Deloitte Gen Z and Millennial Survey shows that training and modern working practices are decisive factors in how young talent perceive an employer's attractiveness (Deloitte, 2025).
- **Attracting top talent:** Bitkom (2025) highlights that digital marketing is becoming strategically crucial for companies. As the demand for skilled professionals grows, the professionalization of digital channels signals how innovative an employer is perceived to be.

Advantages for young talents

The microlearning course creates a win-win situation: Companies benefit directly from the improved digital skills of their young employees, while the employees themselves acquire valuable qualifications for their professional future.

Hands-on learning that builds on existing digital skills and specifically strengthens them. Learning opportunities are particularly valued when they take place directly in the work context – at the workplace or through practical projects – as they combine development with responsibility and thus make an important contribution to motivation (Deloitte, 2025).

Flexible training that can be easily integrated into everyday work. Studies show that microlearning formats are particularly effective, increasing knowledge retention by 18–20% and reducing learning time by up to 50% compared to traditional training courses – a decisive advantage for small teams with tight schedules (Shail, 2019; Speach.me, 2023; eLearningIndustry, 2025).

Personal and professional development that extends beyond the current employer and is relevant to the entire career path. The fact that 94% of employees would stay with a company longer if they invested in their training highlights how closely learning opportunities are linked to retention and motivation (LinkedIn, 2022).

Strengthening self-confidence and personal responsibility through active participation in digital projects. The younger generation, in particular, increasingly strives to take on responsibility and be actively involved—factors that have a direct positive impact on motivation and satisfaction (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022; Gallup, 2022).

This dual effect not only strengthens companies' competitiveness, but also fosters the motivation and retention of young employees – thus creating a reliable foundation for sustainable success.

The learning platform

simple. fast. effective

The previous chapters have shown why digital skills are equally crucial for companies and young employees. To ensure this potential doesn't remain theoretical, a tool is needed that imparts knowledge in a practical way and makes it directly usable in everyday work.

This is precisely where the **#businessgoesviral** e-learning platform comes in. It forms the core of the project and was developed to help small and medium-sized businesses embark on digital transformation while simultaneously providing young talent hands-on training in social media marketing.

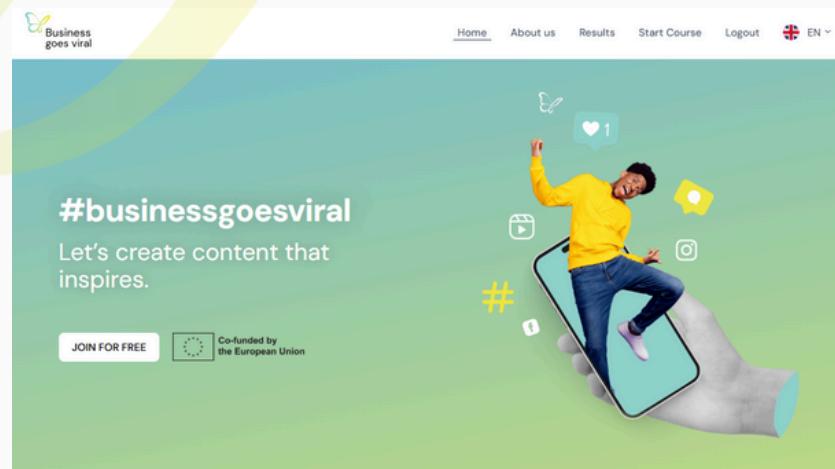


Figure 1: BGV homepage

What sets our platform apart

free access:

Platform, content, and the micro online course on marketing are freely available

hands-on & directly applicable

- Exercises tailored to real business situations
- Immediate, transferable value

flexible & user-friendly:

- Access anytime and anywhere (desktop & mobile)
- Self-directed learning paths with short microlearning units

guidance & support:

- Feedback and assistance from #bvg tutors

community & exchange:

- Opportunity to connect with other participants in the accompanying Facebook group

The course

“Social Media Marketing Success”

The #businessgoesviral course was developed specifically for young employees in small and medium-sized enterprises. Its goal is to transform existing – often personal – social media experience into professional online marketing knowledge. This is done step by step, in a practical way, and designed so that both individuals and small teams can use the course – regardless of whether they have prior knowledge or not.

The course consists of six self-contained modules that systematically teach the fundamentals of a successful social media presence in a corporate context. On average, the course lasts approximately 10 hours, but the actual duration depends on the participants' personal learning path.

Each module combines several formats:

- **Interactive video lessons** – short, engaging units (max. 10 minutes) that present content in a clear and practice-oriented way.
- **Text versions** – all content is also available in written form, ideal for review, revision, or as a reference in daily work.
- **Quizzes** – short tests to check and consolidate knowledge.
- **Transfer tasks** – practical exercises directly linked to the participant's own business context, ensuring immediate applicability
- **External resources** – supplementary guides, templates, and checklists that support participants from strategy planning to creating their first content.

Is the course ONLY suitable for Gen Z?

No. While the course is specifically tailored to the needs of this generation, it is equally suitable for other age groups. It is particularly valuable for freelancers, entrepreneurs, and anyone looking to build or further develop their digital presence.

The course content

The course is structured to guide you step-by-step through the most important fundamentals of a professional social media presence. Each module covers a clearly defined topic, builds logically on the previous content, and concludes with practical exercises. This creates a common thread that guides participants from their initial introduction to the implementation of their own social media strategy. At the same time, the course does not have to be followed in a fixed sequence: modules can be selected, skipped, or taken in any order, depending on individual needs.

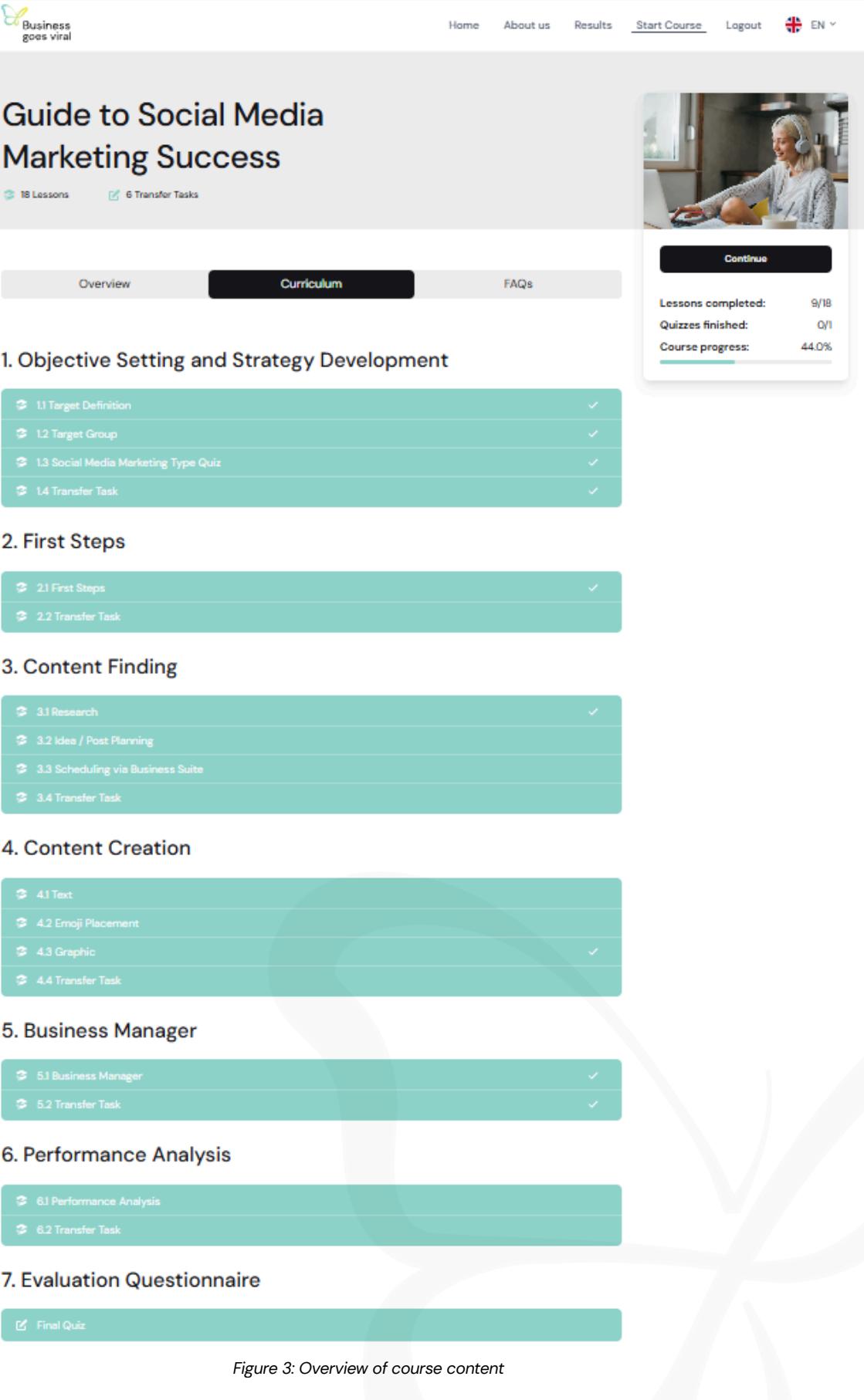
CONTENTS AT A GLANCE

- Strategy development
- Goal definition
- Target audience
- Copyright in social networks
- Legal obligations
- Data protection
- Content planning
- Idea generation
- Content creation
- Design insights
- Meta Business Manager
- Campaigns
- Performance analysis
- Benchmarking
- Key social media terms



Figure 2: Course view

The course content



Business goes viral

Home About us Results Start Course Logout EN

Guide to Social Media Marketing Success

18 Lessons 6 Transfer Tasks

Overview Curriculum FAQs

1. Objective Setting and Strategy Development

- 1.1 Target Definition ✓
- 1.2 Target Group ✓
- 1.3 Social Media Marketing Type Quiz ✓
- 1.4 Transfer Task ✓

2. First Steps

- 2.1 First Steps ✓
- 2.2 Transfer Task

3. Content Finding

- 3.1 Research ✓
- 3.2 Idea / Post Planning
- 3.3 Scheduling via Business Suite
- 3.4 Transfer Task

4. Content Creation

- 4.1 Text
- 4.2 Emoji Placement
- 4.3 Graphic ✓
- 4.4 Transfer Task

5. Business Manager

- 5.1 Business Manager ✓
- 5.2 Transfer Task

6. Performance Analysis

- 6.1 Performance Analysis
- 6.2 Transfer Task

7. Evaluation Questionnaire

- Final Quiz

Continue

Lessons completed: 9/18
Quizzes finished: 0/1
Course progress: 44.0%

Figure 3: Overview of course content

The course

TRANSFER TASKS

Microlearning is most effective when new knowledge is applied immediately. For this reason, the transfer tasks form the core of the course: After each module, participants are given a practical task that enables them to directly transfer what they have learned into their professional practice. Examples include defining a target audience, planning a campaign, or creating an editorial calendar.

While completing the transfer tasks is not a requirement for completing the course or individual modules, it is strongly recommended as it deepens the learning effect and ensures sustainable results.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The course combines technical know-how, creative skills, and entrepreneurial thinking into a holistic learning path that not only imparts knowledge but also strengthens action competence. Specifically, it focuses on the following five areas:

- **Defining brand identity** – clearly articulate your brand and position it authentically on social media.
- **Developing and managing a social media strategy** – create a well-thought-out concept that supports corporate goals and provide targeted support for implementation.
- **Designing visual content** – produce engaging, professional-looking posts that increase reach and recognition.
- **Applying storytelling** – craft narratives that captivate users, build trust, and create long-term loyalty.
- **Understanding digital trends** – recognizing current developments in online marketing and harnessing them for your own business.



CERTIFICATION

Figure 4: #BGV badge

At the end of the course, there is a final quiz to test the acquired knowledge. Upon successful completion, participants receive a certificate and a digital "Social Media Hero" badge. This badge can be integrated into online profiles such as LinkedIn, for example, and makes the acquired skills visible to business partners, customers, and potential employees.

Pilot phase

In a pilot phase, the course was first tested in Italy, Croatia, and Austria before its official launch. The aim was to test the practical suitability of the microlearning approach and determine its actual benefits for companies and young employees. The evaluation was based on two survey rounds – before and after the course – with companies and learners surveyed separately. In total, 19 companies and 46 learners participated, providing valuable feedback on content, methodology, and applicability in everyday work.

The results speak a clear language:

- The course could be **integrated flexibly into daily work** – without additional organizational effort.
- **The content** was rated as **practical** and immediately applicable, for example when creating editorial plans or analyzing existing social media channels.
- Young employees felt **encouraged to take on responsibility** and contribute their own ideas.
- **Even participants with prior knowledge benefited** from the in-depth approach and structured presentation.
- **Companies reported first measurable effects**, such as increased reach and higher interactions on social media.

The **conclusion** is clear:

The #businessgoesviral microlearning course was positively evaluated by all participating companies. The next section presents key insights, feedback from the pilot phase, and concrete figures demonstrating its impact.

Pilot phase

Results of the pilot

The survey evaluation shows significant progress. Several participants mentioned specific tools they plan to use in the future as a result of the course—including social media management applications, analytics tools, and platforms for content creation and campaign planning. At the same time, many reported noticeable improvements in their confidence when working with digital marketing tools.

This combination of numbers and personal feedback makes it clear: The participants have not only gained more confidence in using digital tools, but are also motivated to actively apply their new knowledge in practice.

Results at a glance

80%

OF LEARNERS
RECOMMEND THE COURSE

20 out of 25 participants would recommend the course. The main reasons they cited were the clear structure of the modules, the easy-to-understand explanations, and the strong practical focus. Many also reported that the course gave them greater confidence and motivation in handling digital marketing tasks.

**Rise in marketing
tool expertise**

Before the course, most participants had little prior knowledge of digital marketing. After the training, however, an average of two-thirds reported feeling more confident using marketing tools such as Canva, Meta Ads Manager, Business Suite, or Trello – and expressed their intention to actively use them in the future.

**15 of 19
companies**
REPORT
IMPROVED ONLINE
PRESENCE

The companies also confirmed the positive effect: Around 80% of companies saw an improved online presence as a result of their employees' training. In addition, concrete improvements were noted in marketing strategy, trend awareness, and customer engagement – with some even reporting increased reach and brand recognition.

Pilot phase

Voices from the pilot

What companies say



K, Croatian

"As a small business owner who was already active on social media, I can say that the online social media marketing course has proven very valuable to us. This has translated into a more targeted and effective online presence. We've achieved better reach, seen more views, and experienced higher engagement on our social media channels. Overall, I'm very pleased with how the course has helped us expand our online presence."



D, Croatia

"The #bgv online courses were extremely helpful for us. They helped us better structure our social media communications and emphasize the key messages about our product. Thanks to the tips from the courses, we were able to improve our Facebook presence and increase interest in our work. The quality of our posts and our external image have improved significantly, which is also reflected in the increased traffic to our website. We are very satisfied with the experience and would definitely recommend the courses to other young entrepreneurs."

What participants say



X, Italy

"The materials and modules are excellent, very focused, and well-tailored to the needs of modern business. I highly recommend them and hope the training continues in other formats and topics."



M, Italy

"I think it was one of the best online courses I've taken, and I regret not spending as much time on it as I would have liked. It's interactive, interesting, enjoyable, and not tedious."

Pilot phase

Success stories

In addition to the evaluation in the pilot, learning success could also be measured through an improved online presence, as was clearly demonstrated by the example of an Italian company.



MENNA CAMILLO SRL, Italy

"Menna Camillo srl's participation represented an important opportunity for growth and innovation in digital communications and the strategic use of social media. The main added value came from the project's training of an employee, who acquired targeted skills in social media marketing, content management, and strategies for increasing online engagement. These skills were immediately applied to the management of the company's Facebook page, yielding tangible results in terms of visibility and engagement."

Specifically, the learning success was reflected in concrete figures:

- The company page gained 78 new followers.
- The reach of individual posts exceeded 7,000 people.
- In total, almost 9,000 views were achieved.

Partecipazione Menna Camillo srl Progetto Erasmus+ "Business goes Viral" Posta in arrivo x silvana@cispe.it x

carmen@mennacamillosi.it <carmen@mennacamillosi.it>

a silvana -

La partecipazione della Menna Camillo srl al progetto Erasmus+ "Business Goes Viral" ha rappresentato un'importante occasione di crescita e innovazione per l'azienda nel campo della comunicazione digitale e dell'utilizzo strategico dei social media.

Il valore aggiunto principale è derivato dalla formazione di un dipendente aziendale all'interno del progetto, che ha acquisito competenze mirate in social media marketing, gestione dei contenuti e strategie per aumentare l'engagement online. Queste conoscenze sono state prontamente messe in pratica nella gestione della pagina Facebook aziendale, con risultati tangibili in termini di visibilità e interazione.

In particolare, in seguito all'applicazione delle competenze acquisite:

- il numero dei follower della pagina è aumentato di 78 unità;
- la copertura dei post ha superato le 7.000 persone;
- le visualizzazioni totali hanno raggiunto quasi 9.000.

Questi dati dimostrano chiaramente l'efficacia del percorso formativo e l'impatto positivo diretto sull'attività di comunicazione dell'azienda. Il progetto "Business Goes Viral" si è quindi rivelato non solo un'opportunità formativa, ma anche uno strumento concreto di crescita digitale e rafforzamento della presenza online per la Menna Camillo srl.

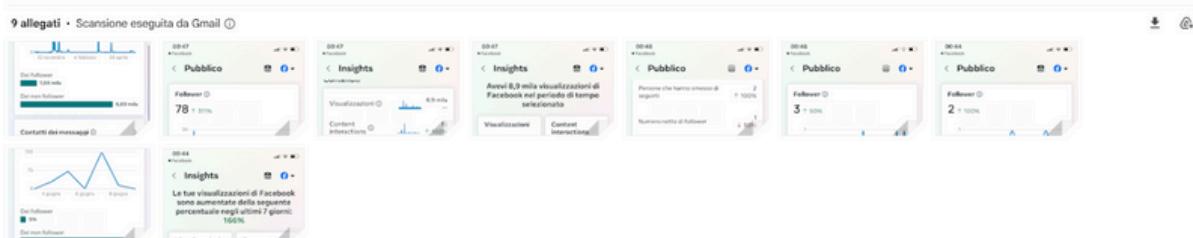


Figure 5: Email screenshot



Pilot phase

Success stories

Visual presence: IGPDecaux, Italy

In addition to improved metrics, the success of our #bgv online course is also reflected in design: The example of another Italian company illustrates how promising ideas can evolve into clear messages and professionally prepared content that visibly strengthen the brand profile.

before the #bgv online course

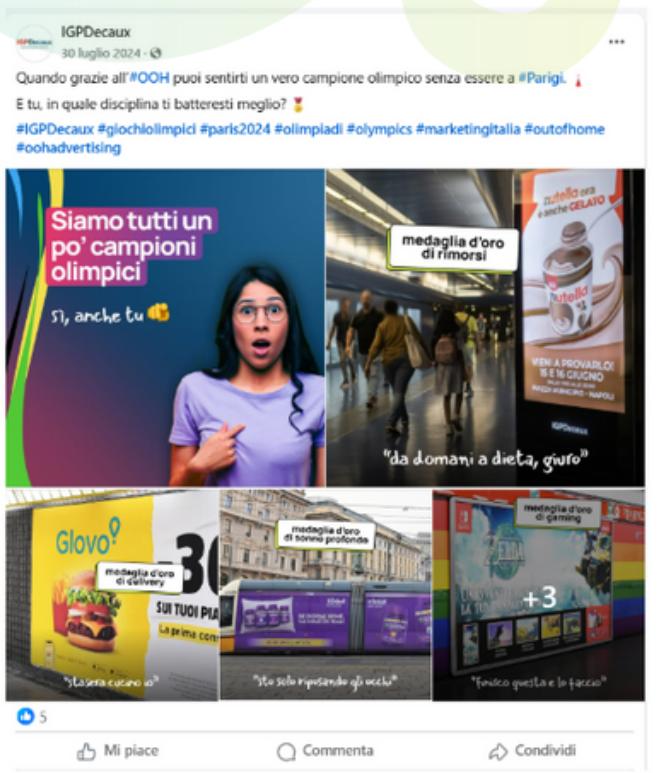


Figure 6: Social media presence 1

after the #bgv online course

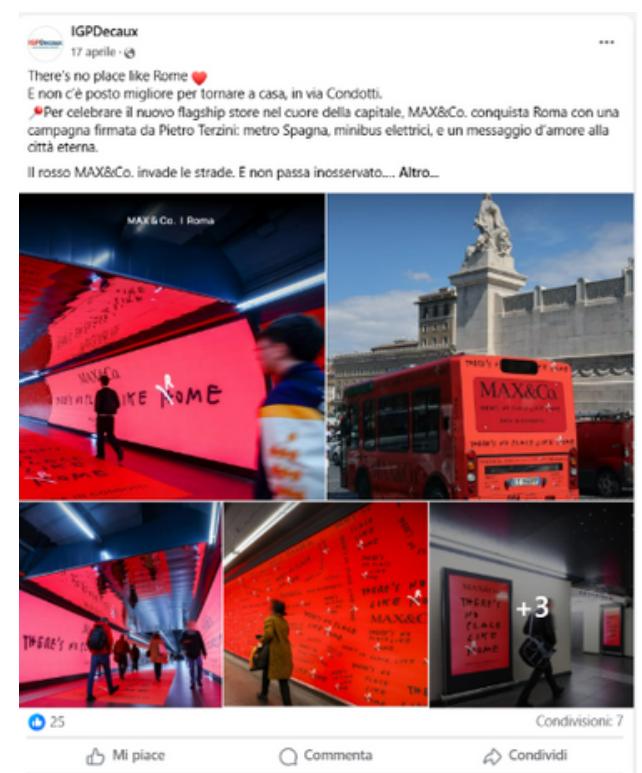


Figure 7: Social media presence 2

Basic requirements

For the course to unfold its full impact, access to the learning platform alone is not enough. What is crucial is how it is embedded within the company—who uses it, for what goals, and under what conditions. The following section outlines general recommendations that apply regardless of company size, followed by examples of how implementation can look in practice depending on the size of the business.

Key success factors

Clear decision and signal from management

The willingness to build online marketing skills within the company must be visible and tangible. At the outset, make it clear that social media is becoming a new strategic priority. Briefly present the course and its objectives, and ensure the entire team knows that this area will now be actively developed and professionalized.

Appoint a responsible person:

Assign a dedicated person to complete the course and subsequently act as a digital ambassador for social media. If someone already manages social media, this role should be officially confirmed and strengthened through the course.

Hold an alignment meeting:

Before the project begins, a joint discussion on goals and expectations should take place. Clarify what management is aiming for (e.g., greater visibility, regular posts, a more professional presence) and what employees would like to contribute (e.g., more responsibility, learning opportunities, freedom for their own ideas). Also discuss the desired style, possible limitations, and clear “no-gos.” Available resources – especially time – should be addressed openly as well.

Create routines

Set a fixed time for social media work—for example, one hour per week (e.g., Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.). This ensures that activities continue consistently even after the course has ended. It is important to coordinate this social media time with other tasks from the very beginning so that it is not treated as an “add-on,” but rather as an integral part of work planning.

Basic requirements

Allocate time within the workday

The course itself requires dedicated time frames to ensure it is truly completed. Ideally, plan small, regular learning sessions (e.g., 30 minutes per week) and set a clear target date for course completion. This creates commitment and prevents the course from being overlooked among other tasks.

Empower with trust and creative autonomy

Young employees, in particular, take their role as digital ambassadors seriously when they are not only executing tasks but also contributing to shaping them. Their own ideas or new formats should be explicitly welcomed.

Designate points of contact

The #BGV research report showed that the biggest barrier in using social media in the workplace is the fear of making mistakes. This uncertainty holds back initiative, even when there is genuine interest. To counter this, a dedicated contact person or learning mentor should be appointed to coordinate the process, collect questions, and monitor progress. This provides reassurance and creates accountability.

Feedback and brief check-ins

Regular short feedback sessions – for example every two weeks – create clarity, make progress visible, and keep motivation high. The aim is not to be social media experts: even feedback on tone of voice, customer focus, or alignment with company values is valuable. At the same time, employees should feel free to openly discuss what is working well and where they need support.

By taking these requirements into account, you lay the necessary foundation on which all further steps can build.

Working effectively with Gen Z

Beyond organizational conditions, collaboration is the key factor in determining whether the digital strengths of the younger generation can have an impact within a company. Gen Z brings a lot to the table: technical understanding, a sense of trends, and digital fluency. But to ensure this potential does not dissipate, trust, clear structures, and space for creativity are essential.

What matters most in practice:

Open communication:

Young employees want to know where they stand. When goals, responsibilities, and scope are clearly defined, it is easier for them to take on responsibility and identify with their role as digital ambassadors.

Mentoring & Exchange

Support is crucial, especially in the initial phase. A designated contact person who provides feedback, answers questions, and provides guidance makes all the difference. Short check-ins every one to two weeks also provide security and commitment.

Space for creativity

Innovation happens when employees are allowed to try things out. Pilot posts, test formats, or new content ideas offer the opportunity to experiment without pressure and often achieve surprisingly good results.

Choosing platforms & formats

Especially when working with Gen Z, it is worth focusing on platforms and formats that resonate with this generation. These include TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat, which are known for short videos, creative content, and visual story formats. New, emerging platforms also play a role, as young users quickly pick up on trends and spread them. Those who find the right approach here not only increase team motivation but also achieve greater reach and visibility among the target audience.

Working effectively with Gen Z

Use digital tools

Take advantage of the younger generation's digital affinity and employ smart assistants. Tools like ChatGPT can support you in creating posts – from creative ideas and specific content suggestions to text for captions. This saves you time and generates new ideas.

Build a trend radar

Encourage employees to consciously follow relevant competitors, partners, or other inspiring profiles. This allows them to identify current trends early and adopt ideas specifically for their own company – tailored to their own style.

Understand & use impact

When employees track and analyze metrics themselves, they gain clarity about what content resonates and what does not. This fosters continuous learning and enables them to use social media more strategically over the long term.

Empowering employees as brand ambassadors

Social media thrives on people, not just logos. When employees are involved – whether through co-creation, personal testimonials, behind-the-scenes insights, or social media takeovers—a sense of closeness and credibility is created. Clear content guidelines provide consistency, while recognition of individual contributions strengthens motivation and creativity.

Making successes visible

Whether it is a successful story, a high-reach post, or positive customer feedback – small successes should be consciously acknowledged. This increases motivation, shows appreciation, and makes the contribution to the company tangible.

Implementation suggestions for small businesses

For small businesses that have so far made little or no professional use of social media, #businessgoesviral provides an easy and practical entry point. Even if just one person completes the course, they can provide a solid foundation for digital visibility. Lasting impact, however, depends on management actively supporting the process and clearly signaling that social media is a key element of the company's strategy. Especially in small organizations, the role of digital ambassador can be established particularly quickly and effectively: decision-making processes are shorter, measures can be tested immediately, and results are immediately visible.

Clarifying fundamentals or revitalizing existing practices

Whether you are starting from scratch or reviving an existing channel, the first step is a brief assessment. Review which channels already exist, what has worked well so far, and where gaps exist. Based on this, you can define goals and plan the next steps—be it opening a new profile or revitalizing existing accounts.

Start with a clear focus

Especially at the beginning, it makes sense to focus on a clear goal or a single platform. This keeps the effort manageable, initial successes become visible more quickly, and experience can be expanded step by step.

Start mini-projects:

For example, a three-month Instagram campaign centered around a product or service. This creates focus and a quick sense of achievement.

Make first investments

Even small purchases can significantly enhance the effect—such as a simple tripod, a mini microphone, a good light source, or a phone stabilizer. Such basics do not cost much, but they instantly make posts more professional.

Make use of existing materials

Look at what is already there: photos of products, impressions from an event, or texts from a newsletter. Often, such materials can be used for social media with little adaptation – saving you time and money.

Implementation suggestions for small businesses

To achieve lasting results, social media tasks should not be considered solely on a project-by-project basis, but should rather be integrated into existing responsibilities early on. This ensures that knowledge remains within the company and visibility continuously grows over time.

Focus on authenticity

It does not have to be perfect: genuine insights from everyday life often appear more credible than highly polished productions. Showing how things truly work fosters closeness and builds trust in the brand – because people seek an emotional connection, not just product advertising.

Connect to trends

Embracing current social media trends in your own style can boost reach and signal that your company is at the forefront. The key is to adapt trends in a way that feels authentic to your brand and relevant to your industry.

Share resources cleverly

When several small businesses from the same region or industry collaborate they can share content with each other or launch joint campaigns ("We from the region"). This increases reach without creating additional work.

Involve customers as a community

Your first followers are often your existing customers. By engaging them actively—through surveys, small contests, or feedback questions—you make social media directly meaningful for your business.

Celebrate first successes

Be it a well-performing story, a post with strong reach, or the very first customer inquiry via social media – small wins deserve to be celebrated. Milestones such as gaining 50 new followers boost motivation, show appreciation, and make the benefits for the company tangible.

Implementation proposals for medium-sized businesses

While small businesses are often still taking their first steps in social media, medium-sized companies are usually at a different point: Structures are in place, initial channels are already being used – but the full potential is rarely exploited. It is no longer just about "being there," but about managing social media professionally, scaling impact, and unleashing innovation. This is precisely where **#businessgoesviral** comes in: Young talent is specifically integrated to breathe fresh air into existing processes, embrace trends early on, and strategically expand the digital presence.

Integrate social media into your corporate strategy:

Instead of viewing social media in isolation, it is worth linking it specifically to corporate goals – for example, in employer branding, sales, or product development. This turns social media into a strategic tool that directly contributes to growth and visibility.

Targeted expansion of activities

Many medium-sized companies already have their first social media channels or a small team. The next step is to upscale and professionalize these activities – for example, through clear responsibilities, new roles (e.g., content creation, community management), or additional resources. This turns individual measures into a solid foundation.

Strengthen employer branding:

Actively involve young employees as company ambassadors on social media—for instance through campaigns on training, career paths, or sustainability. This fosters authenticity and enhances your appeal as an employer.

Introduce KPIs and reporting:

Establish clear metrics (reach, engagement, leads, applications) and present the results regularly at management meetings. This will demonstrate impact and increase the visibility of the topic within the company.

Form digital ambassador teams:

Instead of appointing a single person, designating three to five employees from different departments (e.g., marketing, HR, sales) as ambassadors. This ensures diverse perspectives and distributes responsibility.

Implementation proposals for medium-sized businesses

Invest specifically in tools and equipment

Medium-sized companies can take social media to a new level with appropriate investments – for example, in digital tools for planning and analysis or in technology such as microphones, lighting, or tripods. Such purchases are usually manageable, but significantly increase professionalism and efficiency.

Targeted use of young talent as an innovation driver

Medium-sized companies benefit when young talent is integrated into the team as innovation drivers. Read on to learn more about how this can work.

1. Trendradar:

In medium-sized companies with an existing marketing structure, young employees can be deliberately positioned as drivers of innovation. Instead of simply integrating them into ongoing processes, it is worthwhile to assign them a clear role as "trend radars." This means they continuously monitor new platforms, formats, and digital trends and bring these insights and impulses into the company – for example, through short trend updates within the team, pilot projects, or their own small formats (e.g., Reels, Stories, experimental posts).

Establish regular Trend-Updates:

Have junior employees regularly (e.g., once a month) present short trend reports – whether new platform features, content formats, or best practices from other companies. This way, the entire team stays up to date.

2. Internal multipliers and initiators:

Furthermore, Gen Z employees can act as internal multipliers: They share their knowledge with colleagues, inspire with best practices, and motivate others to try new things. In doing so, they expand existing marketing capacities not only operationally but also strategically – as a source of inspiration for fresh ideas and digital development.

Establish internal mini-workshops:

Participants in the #bgv course can share their knowledge with colleagues, for example, in the form of short workshops or "Lunch & Learn" sessions. This multiplies the impact of the training within the company.

3. Developing new target groups and formats:

Gen Z not only brings a keen sense for digital trends, but also a deep understanding of younger target groups. Companies can leverage this perspective to tap into new customer segments or communication channels – for example, by testing emerging platforms (e.g., TikTok), using new content formats, or addressing previously unreached audiences. This expands the company's reach and strengthens brand presence across a broader spectrum.

Launch targeted pilot projects

Launch targeted pilot projects where individual ambassadors can experiment with different formats, like Reels, TikTok videos, or interactive surveys. Successful formats can later be incorporated into the standard program.

Sustainable anchoring

From course to learning culture

The #businessgoesviral course is not intended as a one-time measure, but rather as a starting point for long-term development. To ensure that young talents can fulfill their role as digital ambassadors in the long term, a conscious transition into everyday business life is needed after completing the course.

1. Make results visible and actively use them

What was created in the course (editorial plan, post examples, analyses, lists of ideas) should not be “filed away” but be used as a foundation for further work.

2. Maintain learning context instead of falling back into routine mode

To keep new learnings from getting lost in day-to-day work, it helps to introduce small, regular touchpoints such as, e.g.:

- monthly micro-check-ins (“What should we try next?”),
- short internal exchange rounds (“Which posts worked well – why?”),
- shared inspiration (e.g., looking at good social media examples from the industry once a quarter).

and at the same time help to keep the motivation high.

3. Enable further development

The course provides the foundation—but it is essential that young talents continue to grow afterward. By taking on specific responsibilities, experimenting with new formats, or attending further training, they keep developing. This not only sustains motivation and skills within the company but also makes social media efforts more professional in the long run.

Conclusion

Achieving digital visibility – together with the next generation

Digital transformation cannot be stopped – but it can be shaped. Small and medium-sized enterprises do not have to "accept" it; they can actively embrace it – using the resources already available within their operations.

The #businessgoesviral course is not a one-time training session, but rather the starting point of a development process. By making results visible, establishing small routines, and continuously advancing learning steps, you permanently embed digital competence within your company – and ensure that the younger generation can fulfill their role as digital ambassadors in the long term.

The focus is not on technology, but on empowerment: Young employees take on responsibility, develop new skills, and visibly shape the future of their company. This creates a true win-win situation – greater visibility and competitiveness for the company, and more self-confidence and development opportunities for the younger generation.

Digital transformation is not a one-time project. It develops step by step – through continuous learning, experimentation, and reflection. The transfer tasks in the course are a key tool in this process: they ensure that knowledge is immediately transferred into everyday life and the impact is immediately felt.

This guideline invites you to start right there:

- with the talents already working in your company,
- with learning formats that can be seamlessly integrated into your everyday work,
- and with a course that not only teaches digital skills but puts them into practice immediately.

Use this potential – and let your business go viral!

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Contact



Thank you for taking the time to read this guideline!

If you have any questions or would like to discuss our results in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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