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# Protect Your Reach

How to keep and grow your audience even when social networks change the rules.



# Introduction

Have you heard stories of a shadow ban? Maybe even an open one? Limited reach via an algorithm change?

You're not alone.

Organic reach is something social platforms aim to prevent among businesses and influencers. Why?

Ad revenue. I've put together this guide full of research and actionable advice to help keep your reach with the audience you've worked so hard to build.

## Key Topics

Here's a quick list of exactly what you'll find inside this resource.

- The research. Examples of limited reach from the past, present and future.
- Specific steps you can take to prevent this downgrade and even thrive.
- Further research and tools for you to keep your reach for good.

Let's get started.

*Josh Slone*

Content Marketer for Gist

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# The Evidence of Reach Reduction

Don't just take my word for it. There are hundreds of individual examples of people who have built their audience on a platform they don't own – only to have their organic reach ripped from them. And in some cases, their livelihood. Here is some research that seems to point to a trend in reach reduction.

## Facebook

Starting in 2014, organic reach on FB went from 16% all the way down to 2% (in many cases). Pages now have to fight to keep their engagement up for meager reach.

## Instagram

According to one study, Instagram could be penalizing certain strategies. Research indicates that using phrases like "link in bio" limit the reach of your posts.

## The Future?

In an apparent Instagram design leak, TechCrunch reported images without a like count. This design could foreshadow much lower engagement.

# Is Organic Reach in Trouble?

While the likes, comments, views and engagement flow on some social platforms – it won't always be the case.



(Image Source: Rand Fishkin's Twitter)

**Important:** Facebook has severely decreased organic reach and may have leaked plans to begin the process on Instagram.

# Here's the Problem

It's not Facebook. Or Instagram. When YouTube, Twitter and Snap join in on the reach reduction bandwagon, it won't be them either.

The problem could be... **you.**



## **It's true.**

Any third-party platform (all social media) has the right to change the rules. It's called capitalism. It's their business and they can do with it what they want. Sure, we may not (and often don't) agree.

But it doesn't change facts.

Essentially, you're building on rented land. Say, you're renting a house. Paying the payments and one day, the owner wants to move in and you have 30 days to leave the premises.

Nothing you can do.

If you own the house and pay your payments – no one can tell you to leave. It's yours.

Believe it or not, if the only place you have a following is on a social media platform, you're setting yourself up for a company to come in and say that you can no longer reach your audience for free.

So, what can you do?

Lots of stuff. And the next few pages are devoted to helping you diversify and solidify your stance with a core audience of followers.

# Step One: Diversify Social Accounts

## Pick Platforms

Choose 2-3 other platforms that make sense for you. If you're on YouTube, open an Instagram and Snapchat. And vice versa. They are all visual platforms.



## Optimize Content

Content that is created for one social platform will likely need some tweaking for others. Image sizes and even the way video is created may be different. Check the platform and see the optimal sizes and which posts get the most interaction.

## Republish Posts

Take 10 of so of your most popular pieces of content, optimize them for the new account and put them on there. This gives something for new followers to look at/watch before you get into a posting schedule.



# Step Two: Get a Website

## Set Up Your Site

Get a website up and running (we have a detailed resource on how to do this on the checklist page :) Having your own site is the best way to prevent the loss of organic reach.



Get a Web Address and  
Create a Website



## Publish Content

Did you post your 10 best photos from a trip? Why not write about the trip in a blog and share those photos on a single post. Be sure to include all the places you visited and activities you did!

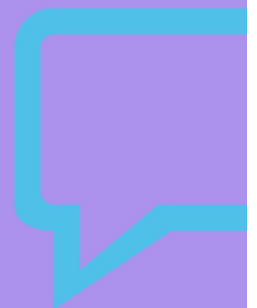
## Interact with Visitors

On your own website, you can interact with live chat and via emails to always be in contact with EVERY one of your followers. It's really the best reach you can get. But it does take work.

Start Using

**LIVE CHAT  
& EMAIL**

TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR AUDIENCE





# Step Three: Collect Emails

## Create an Offer

Why do people follow you on social? Maybe it's because you take awesome pics. Create a guide to helping them take great photos on their phone. Think of what you know how to do and tell others how to do it.



## Collect Emails

A great resource deserves something. Ask for their email address in exchange for your awesome content. With a tool (like Gist), it's super easy. Consider email addresses your follower count.

## Automate Email

You can write super personal emails and have them automatically sent to your new subscribers. Make them feel welcome and they'll enjoy your new platform that is free from reach controls.



# Step Four: Ramp Up Content

## Create a Pillar

Instead of compiling your posts into a bigger piece of content, now you can create a large video or blog with all kinds of value (pictures, tips, etc.). For example: write the big post about your trip *first*, before you post each piece to social media.



**Create  
Social  
Posts from  
Your Pillar**

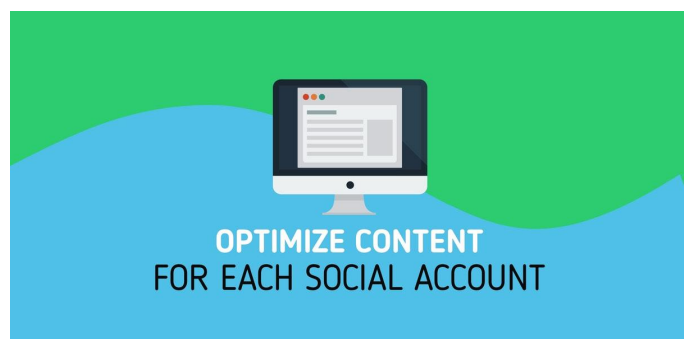


## Break it Up

Once you have the pillar, you can break it down. Edit your video into stories. Quote your blog with an image. Make sure to point people to your website – that's your hub of communication with your audience.

## Optimize Each Piece

Post all of the pieces of your pillar to your 2-3 social channels, making sure to optimize for each one. (i.e. longer videos on YT, shorter for stories, etc..)



## 1. Diversify

- Choose 2-3 popular social media platforms
- Open accounts and complete setup
- Optimize some of your best content and post
- Invite followers to follow you on the other platforms
- Continue to post on the other platforms

## 2. Get a Website

- Find and buy a domain (Your web address)
- Choose a host (e.g. Bluehost or Siteground)
- Build your site (we prefer WordPress)
- Setup Gist's live chat (it's free and takes 2 minutes)
- Here's a resource on [building a WP site](#)
- Another resource on [setting up Gist](#)

## 3. Collect Email

- Create an awesome resource (kinda like this one)
- Create form to collect email addresses
- Create an email sequence to send subscribers emails
- Set up automations for emails to be sent automatically

## 4. Increase Content

- Create pillar content (a video, or a big blog post)
- Break it up into 10-20 social posts
- Optimize them and publish on your social accounts!

# Additional Resources

## Choosing the Best Social Platforms

Great read [here](#) from Mavsocial about picking which social media platforms may be best for you.

## Being On Multiple Social Platforms

Here's a [great video interview](#) on YouTube with Gary Vaynerchuck explaining how to own multiple social platforms at the same time. (Warning: Profanity)

## Creating a WordPress Site for Beginners

Incredibly detailed [guide](#) from Smashing Magazine that covers every single detail from start to finish about creating your own wordpress site.

## Creating Pillar Content

A [blog post](#) from [Content Marketing Institute](#) that breaks down exactly how to create and publish a piece of pillar content for your audience.

## How to Setup Gist on Your Website

Here's a [look](#) at how to quickly offer Live Chat and Emails to your audience on your Wordpress blog (and our other tools, too)!



## Try Gist for Free!

Have a website already or about to set it up?

You can try Gist free!

GIST FREE TRIAL