

Social Media Content: Owned, Paid, Earned

By Largemouth Communications

Typically, there are three categories of social media content: owned, paid and earned. When crafting a message it is important to consider which of these three will be most effective in reaching your target audience. So what's the difference between the three? It's relatively easy to remember and will change the way you think about your social content.

Owned – Social media content that is original and created entirely by you, is owned. A simple photo, caption, link or video is owned media and considered the core of social content. Without owned media, you would not be able to have paid or earned content, so make it creative, engaging and powerful!

Paid – Have you put any money behind your content? Paid content is becoming more and more important when it comes to sticking out among the masses on social media. Social media platforms are constantly updating and improving their advertising capabilities. From [boosting posts on Twitter](#) and [creating ads on Facebook](#) to implementing a [PPC](#) or [SEO campaign](#), social media advertising comes in a lot of different forms. It's worth the time it takes to figure out what works best for your business. Niche audiences can be targeted and your social content can be seen by thousands more people, by investing a little bit of time and money.

Earned – When creating your owned and paid content, the end goal should always be turning it into earned content. The interactions from your audience, such as liking, sharing and commenting, are the most important content your business can generate, but also the most difficult. It's called earned content because you have to work for it! Each share, like or comment is a testimony by your customers that everyone else on social media can see. You might think that your product or service is the best thing since sliced bread, but to a prospective customer, what their best friend or co-worker thinks is much more important. At the end of the day, earned content is what's going to help you reach your goals, whether that be an increase in sales, followers or awareness.

Ultimately, you should strive for a combination of owned, paid and earned content. A holistic strategy that integrates all three types of social media will have better results than using any one of them alone. How much of each type of content varies between businesses, but it is well worth your time and money to try different combinations and research what is best for your social media platforms.

Start off by making engaging content through owned media, then back up your work with money to extend the content's reach; and finally, earn the trust and favor of your audience so they can become advocates for your brand.

For more information about PR, social and digital media best practices, visit www.largemouthpr.com. Largemouth Communications is a trusted Allied Member of the NC Retail Merchants Association and offers discounted services to other Association members.