

# OPTIMIZING FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM



THE SHOE STORY

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## About Me

My name is Christian Casto and I am a junior marketing major with an area of emphasis in digital marketing promotions and a minor is hospitality and tourism at West Virginia University. I am a West Virginia native from Hurricane, West Virginia. I am the Vice President of the WVU Men's Club Lacrosse Team and a member of the WVU chapter of American Marketing Association.

As a member of the American Marketing Association I collaborate, network, and gain experience from marketers of all specialties. I have worked as Google Ads Account Manager this past semester and have gained lots of experience from the many certifications I have earned. HubSpot, Hootsuite, and Google are the three platforms I have used to earn nine marketing certifications.

While working on this plan I have been using all of the experience I have gained throughout my career to improve The Shoe Story's social marketing and have loved working on a plan that can positively impact a small business in Morgantown. Working with social media is important to me because it is a unique way to interact with customers and to get your product to more people. I feel it is detrimental for a brand to have a presence on some sort of platform because social media has become one of the most important tools in marketing.



## The Shoe Story Background

The Shoe Story is a local business that opened in 1999 by owner Julie Jordan and the location's store manager Kim Jordan. The sisters have been fitting clients from infant to adult for their footwear products since they opened over twenty years ago. They pride themselves on their family like hospitality and consider themselves the one-stop shop for your family's shoes year-round. The business's purpose is to fulfill customers footwear needs of all ages and genders looking for fashionably comfortable shoes.



The Shoe Story's competitive advantage is the amount of female comfort shoes that are professional, outdoor, and casual. They are also the only full fitting shoe store in the area which is a great advantage compared to their competitors. These two advantages make it easier for them to generate sales because their competitors lack in both places. The number of female shoes that are stylishly comfortable out numbers their competitors substantially. By being the only full fitting shoe store in the area is huge for the business because the competitors do not offer this service.



Social media can contribute to The Shoe Story's competitive advantage by posting the services and products they have competitive advantage of to get more impressions for the brand. The more people who know about the products and services they offer that other brands can't attract certain target audiences. They would benefit from enhancing their social media accounts by gaining new customers, increasing impressions, and increasing sales at the store.

They are in Morgantown, WV at the heart of Suncrest at 751 Chestnut Ridge Rd, which is in the same lot as Kegler’s Sports Bar and Lounge. The plaza they are located is called the Suburban Lanes Plaza which is on a heavily active strip of road and grants lots of visitors to the store on a daily basis.

### Swot Analysis

| Strengths  | Weaknesses   | Oppurtunities  | Threats   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Hospitality</li> <li>-Number of female stylish comfy footwear</li> <li>-Customer loyalty</li> <li>-Family Store</li> <li>-Location</li> <li>-Facebook</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Instagram</li> <li>-Male footwear</li> <li>-Content</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Only full fitting shoe store in the area</li> <li>-Facebook interactions</li> <li>-Few competitors in the area</li> <li>-Women’s children</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Competitors social media presence</li> <li>-Competitors community events</li> </ul> |

### Research & Listening

The Shoe Story is in the Footwear industry which other than the bigger footwear stores there are only a few other small businesses like The Shoe Story in the area. I investigated two other footwear stores social media and audiences, Classic Kickz and Morgantown Running. Both have more of a presence on social media but have very different target audiences. The industry is



wonderful for expanding a small businesses presence on social media and can boost sales by getting your products out to more people more effectively.

The industry is best paired with Facebook and Instagram depending on your target audience in the industry. Facebook and Instagram work well with the industry because they give multiple posting options and give customers an easy way to interact with the business. The Shoe Story has unlimited opportunities in the industry they are in on social media. Based on all the social media accounts I have researched, most of the interactions are very positive.

### Customer Conversations

Customers interact with each other online by complimenting each other’s footwear purchase and asking questions about the products. They use jargon like berks for Birkenstocks, cute, sparkly, fabulous, and many other trendy and complimentary terms. The interactions seem very friendly and informational. The Shoe Story comments on almost every post they are tagged in and seem to have a wonderful relationship with their customers.

### Tone of the Community

Customers love The Shoe Story because of their family like atmosphere they have right when the customers walk through the door. The positive comments were unlimited, and many were about their great hospitality toward customers. Their great service is shown by

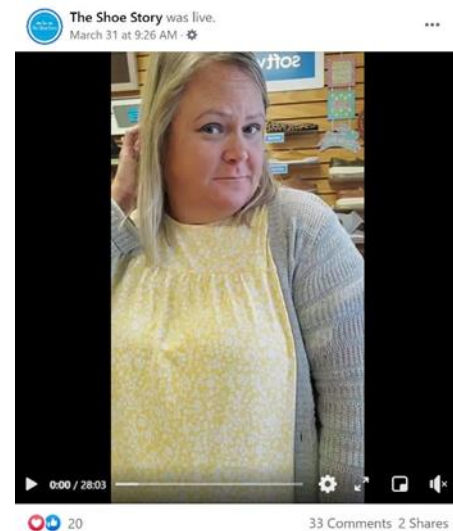


their magnificent review rating on Facebook which is a 5-star rating. Customers talk about loving the selection and the variety of their footwear.

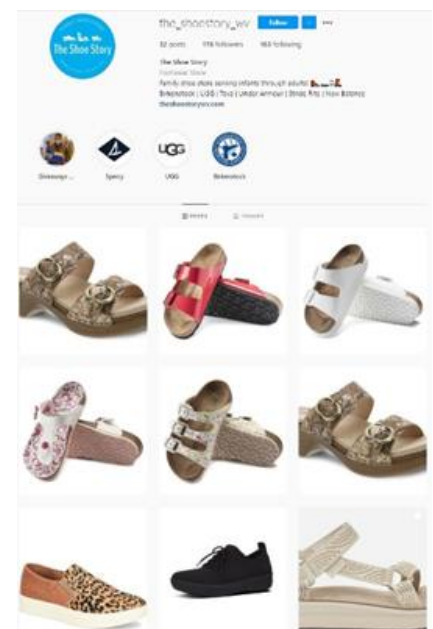


### Social Media Audit

The Shoe Story’s strategy right now is quite clear because their social media activity is based around the target audience I identified when researching their accounts. They post footwear that is steered towards women who are searching for comfortable professional, casual, and outdoor footwear. They post on a daily basis about new footwear they received and existing footwear that is restocked. The strategy isn’t fully transparent because of their inconsistencies on both Instagram and Facebook. They post a lot more content on Facebook and will not post for a week on Instagram. They’re current strategy would be great if they stayed consistent on both social accounts and unified their posts with tools like Hootsuite.



The brand is having success when posting lives and videos on their Facebook account with higher number of interactions than usual photos. They also have more success when they post footwear that is trendier and more geared towards the right audience they are looking to target. They have lots of trouble posting the same content repeatedly. Changing up the posts and making them more appealing to the eye could increase the chance of an impression from a new or existing customer.

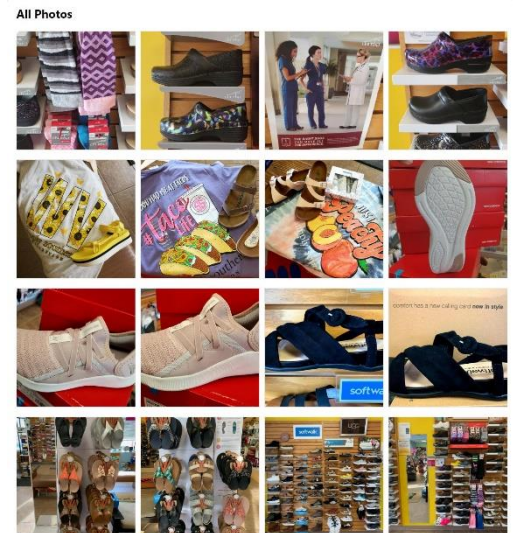


Make sure they are location tagging and using good hashtags that pertain to their products audience can help reach more customers. They

could improve their impressions and conversions by running Facebook and Instagram ads, these ads can reach hundreds of new customers for the business. Something else that would be great for the business would be to use nano influencers to promote the brand to their following. Those two tools can really improve the businesses reach and can grow their social media accounts tremendously.



Classic Kickz get more attention because they are buying, selling, and trading shoes on their Instagram which reaches a larger group of individuals. They seem to be doing the best and The Shoe Story can be right there with them with a full social media marketing strategy to grow their socials.



The Shoe Story seems to be hitting their target audience in most of their social media interactions, but they do not receive a high number of them. The younger portion of the audience is the hardest to reach and Instagram can be key in doing so. Testing out different posting formats like stories and lives may help them find the right style their target audience interacts with most.

Facebook and Instagram are where the target audience is mostly interacted with. The brand has its most success on Facebook because their target audience is active on there the most. Instagram can be used as an outreach to get to the younger portion of the target audience, but it needs to be improved. The Instagram page is repetitive and needs to be optimized to gain impressions for the brand.



Using graphic design software and apps like Instories and Canva to make posts more appealing would help them reach the younger portion of their target audience. The brand is on the right platforms for their target audience, but they need to optimize them to improve their following and to gain more conversions online and in person.

## Competitor Analysis

The Shoe Story has two small business competitors in the footwear industry in the Morgantown area. The two competitors are Morgantown Running and Classic Kickz which both have a good presence on social media. Classic Kickz has the best Instagram that they use to drive conversions on the app and post multiple posts on a daily basis. Now Morgantown Running is more popular on Facebook which they post running footwear and products a couple times daily as well. Morgantown Running uses Facebook as a way to connect to their customers and have daily group runs which they post about each day on their account.



Both competitors' strategies are very clear and work well for their intended audiences. Classic Kickz strategy is to drive conversions via Instagram and Morgantown Running's strategy is to drives sales and community interaction for the brand. These strategies work well for the most part but they both have weaknesses that The Shoe Story does well in.

The brand personality of Morgantown Running is very down to earth, wholesome, and outdoorsy because of their persistence of getting outdoors and running with the community.

They seem to care a lot about the community and love getting to meet them outside of business.

Now Classic Kickz's brand personality is very trendy, reliable, and cool because of their collectors and throwback shoes they sell. They always have the trendy footwear the cool young people of the university love to wear. They seem to have good brand loyalty because of many purchases made by existing customers.

The two competitor's social media presence compared to The Shoe Story has lots of differences. Classic Kickz has the larger following on Instagram but does not receive as much customer love as The Shoe Story does. Though they do not receive much customer responses they are the most consistent of all the brands on social media and drive the most conversions through social media.

Morgantown Running is quite like The Shoe Story on Facebook, but they get more involved with the community via Facebook scheduled events outside of the business such as group runs and races. The Shoe Story's Facebook has way more customer interactions and seems to communicate with them on social media a lot better than the competitors. On Instagram, The Shoe Story is dominated by both competitors by a substantial amount. Both have a great following on the platform that is very ahead of The Shoe Story.

### Target Audience Profile & Analysis

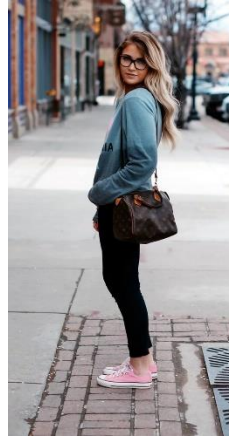
The Shoe Story's target audience stated on the bio of their Instagram is mostly families that extend from infants through adults seeking comfortable work, casual, and outdoor footwear. Though their Instagram suggests this, when researching the products on their website they seem



to mostly steer towards young and middle-aged women based on the number of products listed for those two groups. Women with children need comfortable shoes that look professional and college students love comfortable casual shoes to go to class in. The Shoe Store focuses its posts towards these two types of customers the most. A lot of the people who follow and interact with their social media are young women in college to middle aged women with families.



Demographics include females aged 20-45 either a college student or a parent in the Morgantown area. Psychographics include women that are on their feet a lot that are looking for stylish comfortable work, casual, and outdoor footwear that have a low to high middle-class income.



This is The Shoe Story's most important target audience because it is the group that visits and interacts with the brand the most. They also are the audience that the store supplies the most footwear for and seems to post the most about. This audience is very important for The Shoe Story's social marketing because they are the people who share and post the most on social media that the brand focuses on.

Targeting this group can help gain new customers through Facebook and Instagram by satisfying existing customers' needs which they will post about. Especially the parent portion of the audience can bring in the children which likely results in a larger conversion. Women in the audience love the store already and by enhancing their social media to pertain to them can result in a positive impact on the brand's conversions, impressions, and social following.

### **Communications Plan**

The goal of this plan is to increase the social media following and to run paid ads to get more impressions. This plan will be six months long and will include Facebook, Instagram, and

paid advertising. The goal is to increase their Instagram followers by 300, to diversify content to be more aesthetically pleasing on both platforms, and to start using paid advertising on platforms. Using this plan will drastically improve their social activity.

## 1. Increase Instagram followers by 300

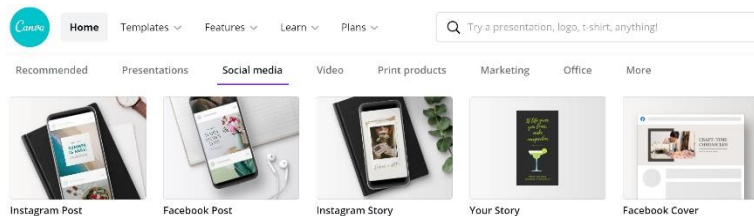
### 1. Share account on Facebook

1. Post on Facebook to bring over existing customers
2. Link account on Facebook page
3. Get loyal customers to share the post



### 2. Diversify content

#### 1. Use apps like Instories & Canva for Instagram stories & posts



2. Use aesthetic backgrounds when posting footwear. Outdoor shoes should have an outdoor background.



3. Post photos of the inside of the store of the variety of products they have



### 3. Interact with potential customers

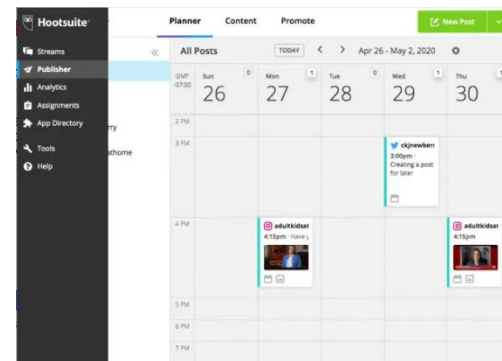
1. Like, comment, follow on potential customer's page
2. Post customers who purchase products on Instagram story if they give permission
3. Promote brand hashtag #theshoestorywv so customers can post about the brand on social media

**2. Be more active and consistent on Facebook & Instagram to gain more attention**

1. Post a weekly report of shipments of footwear coming to the store
  1. Let customers know of in stock items that were out of stock
  2. Give information on new footwear to followers
2. Have a weekly Facebook live
  1. Show off products to a live audience
  2. Ask customers what shoes they would like to see
  3. Answer any questions customers have for the store

**3. Create a posting schedule**

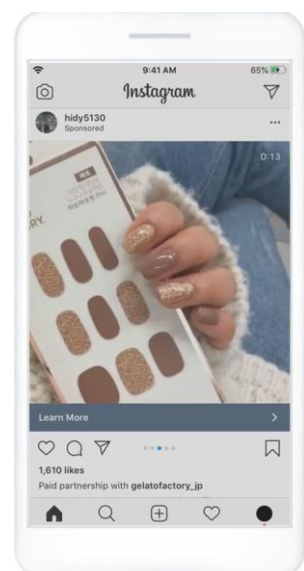
1. Hootsuite can organize postings on all social platforms
2. Post multiple times daily with different content



**3. Use paid ads to drive traffic to socials and to physical store**

1. Use Google Ads
  1. Focus campaign on target audience of women aged 20-45 with location link
  2. Use search ad campaigns that are linked to Instagram account
  3. Gain a CTR of 7% with at least 1,500 impressions
2. Use Facebook & Instagram ads
  1. Turn existing posts into linked ads to drive conversions
  2. Use the carousel tool to post up to 10 photos with links of products

The Shoe Story offers



3. Create a Facebook ad campaign that is focused on maximizing clicks and the target audience

3. Get 2 nano influencers or ambassadors who have a good following are in Morgantown to post about the store and products.



1. Have the influencer post about the store and its products on Facebook and Instagram. Pictures of them wearing footwear with The Shoe Story tagged in the post.

2. Having the paid influencers alternate posts every week. A post every other week per influencer about products.

3. Have a Facebook live even with the influencers to talk about what they love and give the chance for customers to ask them questions.

### Conclusion

This social media marketing plan will help The Shoe Story gain a lot of traction on Instagram and Facebook. Using the strategies and tactics in this plan they can impact the amount of conversions from their social accounts and bring in the right audience. When increasing their following on Instagram they will be able to reach the audience they have had the most trouble getting to and to successfully do that they need to follow step by step. With an enhanced Facebook page, the brand can gain a larger following while retaining existing customers. There is some slight freedom in the plan for the brand to use the resources they think are needed such as picking ambassadors or influencers. This is key in getting the brand out there and having an increasingly successful presence on platforms. The sky is the limit for the brand on social media and they have lots to improve on and that is why this plan will work specifically well for them.

I loved working on this plan and hope it works well for The Shoe Story. I think this plan can really improve their social media activity and their presence in the industry. If they take control of Instagram and Facebook, they will take control of the industry which in my plan I created it can happen in six months. Six months is the plan's life cycle, but it can be reused for another term to help the brand grow significantly online. They will be at the top of small footwear businesses in Morgantown by the end of this plan.

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