

Social media marketing agency owner

You run social media and ads for local businesses for a monthly fee. Finding and keeping clients is the job.

TYPICAL INCOME

\$5,000

a year, varies widely

INCOME RANGE

\$0 to \$120k

most to the successful few

TIME TO QUALIFY

1 to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

From home or a small office, working for local businesses such as dentists, gyms, roofers and restaurants

How you get there

- 1 Learn one skill properly** 3 to 6 months
Paid ads, short video or local search. Practise on your own accounts or a family business until you can show results.
- 2 Get proof** 1 to 3 months
Do one or two projects cheaply or free in exchange for a testimonial and real numbers.
- 3 Pick a niche and start outreach** 3 to 12 months
Emails, calls and walking into businesses. Expect most messages to get no reply.
- 4 Keep clients** 1 to 2 years
Monthly reports that show customers and sales, not likes. Retention is where the money is.
- 5 Hire or stay small** Ongoing
Some hire freelancers and grow. Many decide a marketing job pays more reliably.

Pros and cons

- + Very cheap to start, no stock or office needed
- + You learn sales and marketing, which every employer values
- + Work from anywhere once clients trust you
- Most starters never sign a steady paying client
- Clients cancel often and with little notice
- Business owners are flooded with identical agency pitches

Good to know

Business email gets no free pass

The US anti-spam law has no exception for business-to-business email. Every marketing email, including a cold pitch to a dentist, must include a mailing address and a working opt-out.

Finding clients is the hardest part, even for real agencies

In the 2025 BenchPress survey of agencies, 46% named winning new business as their biggest problem, up from 27% two years earlier.

Optional boosts

Paid ads. Sales calls. Short video. Free ad platform certificates.

Where these numbers come from

Federal Trade Commission: CAN-SPAM Act compliance guide for business
Promethean Research: How profitable are digital agencies (2026 State of Digital Services)
Promethean Research: How to calculate a retainer fee
Productive: BenchPress 2025 agency survey key findings

Numbers checked October 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/marketing-agency-owner>



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