

Maximizing Your Marketing

This year, it has been my privilege to share some of my favorite apps for improving your work and personal life. But today, we're going to deep dive into a few tools that we use here at Saffire (and I use personally) to manage our digital marketing. The best part is that all of these tools are absolutely free!

IF (IFTTT – If This, Then That)

IF is one of my favorite all-time digital life enhancers. Not only is it great for marketing, but it's useful in other areas of your life!

The essence of IF is that you create recipes – if THIS happens, then make THAT happen. For instance, IF I post a photo to Instagram, THEN also post it to Facebook. Or IF I post a photo to Instagram, THEN also post it to Twitter. (A nerdy note: These posts will all be “native”, meaning; they won't look like they are copied over. Facebook likes native posts and they look better to users too!)

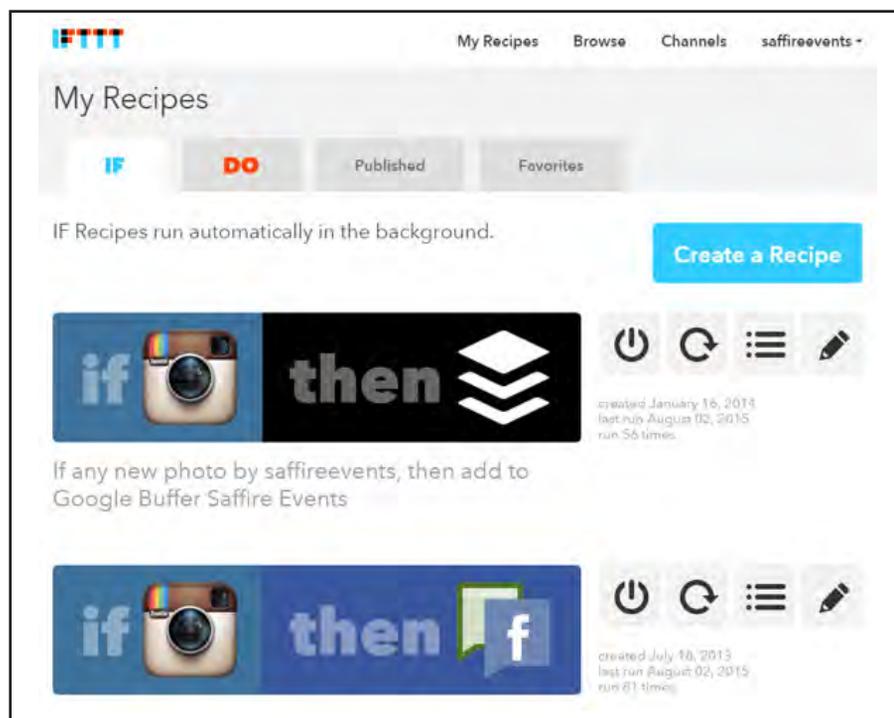
We often recommend IF to customers who want to streamline their social marketing. Another useful recipe is IF I post to Instagram, THEN post to BufferApp. Buffer is another awesome app that lets you “buffer” posts to a time when your followers are most active (more on Buffer below).

Now, let's talk about some fun you can have with IF. It can text you when allergens are high, so you know to take an allergy pill. You can also get a nightly text with the next day's weather. You can even receive a text when someone enters your home or office, which is nice for peace of mind when you aren't there.

You can also use IF for things like concert tickets or Etsy items – IF they go on sale, THEN you get a text or email. IF you take a photo with your phone, THEN it can save to Dropbox. There are literally thousands of uses for IF.

BufferApp

BufferApp is a great tool if you want your posts to go out when your followers are active instead of when you think of them.



The only reason we can't recommend Buffer as your sole social streamlining app is that it doesn't include Instagram. Obviously, Instagram should be in your marketing mix (Another nerdy note: It's not Buffer's fault. Instagram requires that you start any rule with them. The way Buffer works doesn't allow that.)

For what it is, Buffer is incredible! At any time of day you can post, and it will schedule it to go live at just the right time. You can even highlight text on any web page and it will post that text at the next best opportunity.

You can also see when your customers are online with your Facebook statistics.

There's a great little tool called Tweriod that will tell you exactly when they're online and active, based on when they are posting.

In combination with IF, BufferApp is a winner (Note: Hootsuite is good too. Give their free trial a shot and let me know what you think!).

Canva

Let's say you're posting, you're tweeting and you're blogging. However, you aren't thrilled with the results. Could it be that your posts aren't beautiful? Ten percent of the photos taken in the history of the world were taken in the last 12 months,

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so the bar is really high for great imagery.

If you aren't a graphic designer, but a mere mortal, you need Canva. Canva gives you everything you need to design beautiful graphics for your posts, website, presentations, posters and more... all in a few easy steps.

First, you can tell Canva what your designing needs are – let's say you'd like to create a Facebook cover image (since we all need to change those more often!). Then, Canva gives you lots of Facebook cover layout options, which consist of images with overlaid text. Pick a layout and get to editing. Upload your own photo background by using its beautiful, flexible filters to get it just right. Then, edit your text (and even the font, color and size), placing it wherever it works best on the image.

Inspired? I hope so! Of all the things I speak about, Canva is the tool people write to me about the most, saying how life changing it is.

Thanks for allowing me to share some digital tools with you this year. I hope

they have helped save you time and will make your life better. But most of all, I wish you peace, whether you're a closet nerd or just getting comfortable with technology. Here's to using technology to enhance, not control, our lives!

Kendra Wright started her career managing non-profit fundraising events. Then in an "about face," she took a job managing global Internet strategies at a Fortune 1000 company in 1995, just as the Internet came to being. She left that company in 1998 to found Wright Strategies, working with clients like KEEN Footwear, Nike, Jeep, Chrysler, Intel and Panasonic. Then in 2009, Kendra launched Saffire to do integrated online marketing and ticketing for hundreds of events, venues and destinations. It's been a wild ride! Kendra can be reached at kendra@saffire.com, and more information about Saffire can be found at www.saffire.com.