

# 9 MARTIAL ARTS BUSINESS TRENDS **SHAPING 2024** **AND BEYOND**

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MARTIAL ARTS BUSINESS



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# NEST

As we step into 2024, the landscape of the Martial Arts industry is poised for significant evolution, driven by emerging trends that are reshaping the way businesses operate and engage with their audience. From the surge in popularity of MMA and combat training to the transformative power of marketing strategies, clubs are facing a dynamic and competitive environment.

Let's delve into 9 trends that are set to influence the Martial Arts industry and explore actionable insights to help club owners on this 2024 journey.



IN 2023, PINTEREST SAW A RISE OF...

**265%**

IN  
SEARCHES  
FOR

**KICKBOXING**



PLUS AN INCREASE OF...

**200%**

IN INTEREST FOR

**MIXED MARTIAL ARTS**

AND...

**190%** MORE SEARCHES  
FOR KARATE



It has become crucial for industry players to not only recognise these trends but also to adapt and take advantage of them to ensure their future-readiness.




# GROWTH IN THE MARTIAL ARTS INDUSTRY

The Martial Arts industry is booming, with a significant rise in the number of practitioners, particularly in disciplines like MMA, Boxing, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, and Karate. This growth trend is expected to continue in 2024 so it's worth considering how you can step your club up above the rest.

## TOP 3 TIPS:

1. Diversify your class offerings to include trending Martial Arts disciplines, capitalising on the growing demand in the industry and catering to the evolving preferences of enthusiasts.



2. Host open mat sessions or free trial classes to introduce new students to disciplines, allowing them to experience the diverse training options available at your school and find the best fit for their interests and goals.



3. Foster community partnerships by collaborating with local youth organisations to offer Martial Arts programs, thereby expanding your reach, and contributing to the development of the local community. This not only supports the growth of the Martial Arts industry but also enhances the visibility and impact of your club within the region.





# BUILDING BUSINESS THROUGH MARKETING

There is a strong emphasis on using marketing strategies to build and grow Martial Art schools and businesses in 2024. Marketing is seen as a crucial tool for business development and expansion which is why it's important to decide on your business goals and formulate strategies to achieve them.

## TOP 3 TIPS:

1. Prioritise marketing strategies so you have a clear aim to build and grow your school, focusing on brand development, customer acquisition, and retention through effective marketing initiatives and industry expert advice.
2. **Conduct a comprehensive marketing audit to assess the effectiveness of your current marketing strategies, identify areas for improvement, and realign your efforts with your business goals. This can involve evaluating your online and offline marketing channels, messaging consistency, customer touch points, and overall brand presence to ensure a cohesive and impactful marketing approach.**
3. Develop a referral program that rewards current students for referring new members to your school, leveraging the power of word-of-mouth marketing, and incentivising your student community to contribute to the growth of your business.

# MARKETING TRANSFORMATION

Martial Arts marketing is undergoing a significant transformation, with a focus on building real connections with your students. Taking the time to focus on a marketing strategy for creating lasting relationships with your students for the year will ensure that your student numbers grow consistently as well as maintaining a steady cash flow through-out the year.



## TOP 3 TIPS:

- 1** Focus on building genuine connections with your students through personalised interactions and community engagement to create strong connections and attract new students. This could be anything from a 1-on-1 conversation or a group activity where students can invite their friends.
- 2** Make the most of influencer marketing by partnering with local fitness or Martial Arts influencers to further promote your school and reach a wider audience. This will not only leverage their credibility and reach but collaborating together will showcase the importance of building a better Martial Arts community together.
- 3** Implement a customer relationship management (CRM) system to personalise communication with potential and current students, ensuring that your marketing efforts are tailored to individual preferences and interests. As well as automating all your communication, you will reduce time spent with doing it manually and will contribute to building on that connection with your students, vastly improving retention.

# DIGITAL AND PRINT MARKETING



The evolution of digital trends and the comeback of print media are changing the marketing game for Martial Arts schools. Despite the rise of digital marketing, the appeal of print marketing is not lost, and there is a trend towards integrating digital and traditional marketing strategies.

## TOP 3 TIPS:

1. Integrate both digital and print marketing strategies to reach a wider audience, utilising online channels such as social media platforms, while also leveraging the effectiveness of localised print marketing such as poster, flyers, and leaflets, to target potential students from the local community.

2. Implement geo-targeted digital marketing campaigns through Facebook, Instagram, and Google ads to reach potential students in your specific local areas, complementing your localised print marketing efforts for a comprehensive local outreach strategy.

3. If you are feeling particular future forward, you could utilise augmented reality (AR) technology in print materials, such as flyers or brochures, to create interactive experiences that engage the local community and provide a unique perspective on your Martial Arts training, setting you apart from your competitors.



## LOCALISED MARKETING

Print marketing allows Martial Arts schools to focus on the immediate vicinity, targeting potential students from the local community. This localised approach to marketing is becoming more significant as businesses aim to attract nearby potential students.

### TOP 3 TIPS:

1. In key seasons through-out the year, such as half terms and summer holidays, you can alter your marketing strategy to target and attract students from the local area through targeted print marketing initiatives such as posters and flyers.



2. You could sponsor local community events or sports competitions to increase your school's visibility and engage with potential students in the area, demonstrating your commitment to the local community and attracting interest in your specific Martial Art.

3. Establish partnerships with local businesses, such as fitness centres or health food stores, to cross-promote each other's services through your online shop or products in your club. This will expand your reach within the community, fostering a network of like-minded organisations and building on the Martial Arts ethics and community.



# AUTHENTIC SHORT-FORM VIDEO



The use of authentic short-form video, such as reels, is becoming a powerful tool for marketing within the Martial Arts industry. This form of video content is gaining further popularity and is being used as a main marketing strategy to attract and engage potential students.

## TOP 3 TIPS:

- 1** Create authentic short video content on your phone to promote your school, highlight your club's atmosphere and create a strong online presence for your brand. This could be done through Facebook/Instagram reels or on TikTok and other video focused platforms.
- 2** Training and informative video content is great for those who may not be able to attend a class more than once a week. Not only does it highlight your training techniques and your instructor's expertise, but it provides an online platform for students to progress at home too.
- 3** Collaborate with local content creators or videographers to produce high-quality video content that showcases the dynamic and authentic aspects of your school, resonating with potential students and driving further engagement on social media platforms.



# MMA AND COMBAT TRAINING

Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) is growing incredibly popular, with combat training being a significant trend in the industry. The rising popularity of UFC and MMA has seen a surge in the number of practitioners, and combat training is projected to continue growing.

## TOP 3 TIPS:

1. Consider incorporating MMA and combat training programs into your school to cater to the growing demand for these disciplines, even if you offer one class a week or month.

2. Collaborate with other experienced trainers or professionals to offer specialised training programs, attracting new students and serious practitioners to your Martial Arts school increasing numbers and a renowned club reputation.

3. Host workshops or seminars featuring guest instructors who are well-known in the MMA community, attracting enthusiasts and providing an opportunity for students to learn from additional respected figures in the field. This will help keep your students engaged and improve retention.

# INNOVATION IN COMBAT TRAINING



The future of combat training is increasing and evolving, with the future potential involving revolutionary technology, specialist equipment and even hologram training. COVID-19 has sparked innovation in group training, and the integration of technology into combat training is expected to continue evolving into 2024.

## TOP 3 TIPS:

1. Stay informed about the latest advancements in training equipment and methodologies from key manufacturers. Consider integrating innovative training solutions into your teachings to offer a competitive edge and attract tech-savvy Martial Artists to your school.
2. Introduce themed training events or camps that incorporate these new technologies or training methods. This will create unique and memorable experiences for students and positioning your school as a leader in progressive training approaches.
3. Embrace virtual reality (VR) technologies to simulate realistic combat scenarios, providing trainees with immersive and interactive experiences that enhance decision-making, situational awareness, and tactical proficiency.



# SPECIALISED TRAINING EQUIPMENT

High-performance Martial Artists are now using more specialist equipment and even incorporating technology and scientific equipment into their training. With the potential for endless innovation, why not get a head of other schools by investing in high end equipment and technology for your students.

## TOP 3 TIPS:



1. Consider investing in specialised training equipment such as ankle and wrist straps, resistance bands, and technology-integrated gear to enhance the training experience for your students and attract high-performance Martial Artists to your club.

2. Host one-off classes or activity days to provide guidance on specialist training equipment and insights into the benefits of using certain equipment for your students. You could host this as a exclusive paid event for additional revenue.

3. Partner with leading equipment manufacturers to offer exclusive access to their latest gear and technologies through your online shop. Not only will you generate additional income, but it will differentiate your school from others as a hub for cutting-edge training resources.





The year 2024 presents a compelling array of trends that are redefining the Martial Arts industry, encompassing diverse facets such as training methodologies, marketing dynamics, and technological innovations.

By embracing the growing demand for MMA and combat training, leveraging the power of digital and print marketing, and fostering a culture of continuous learning, Martial Arts businesses can position themselves for sustained growth and relevance in the ever-evolving market.

By implementing any of these actionable points, Martial Arts business owners can align their strategies with the latest industry trends and enhance their competitive position in 2024 unlocking new opportunities for success for their Martial Arts school.



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