



margimedia

**SETTING UP
YOUR BRAND ON
*Social Media***

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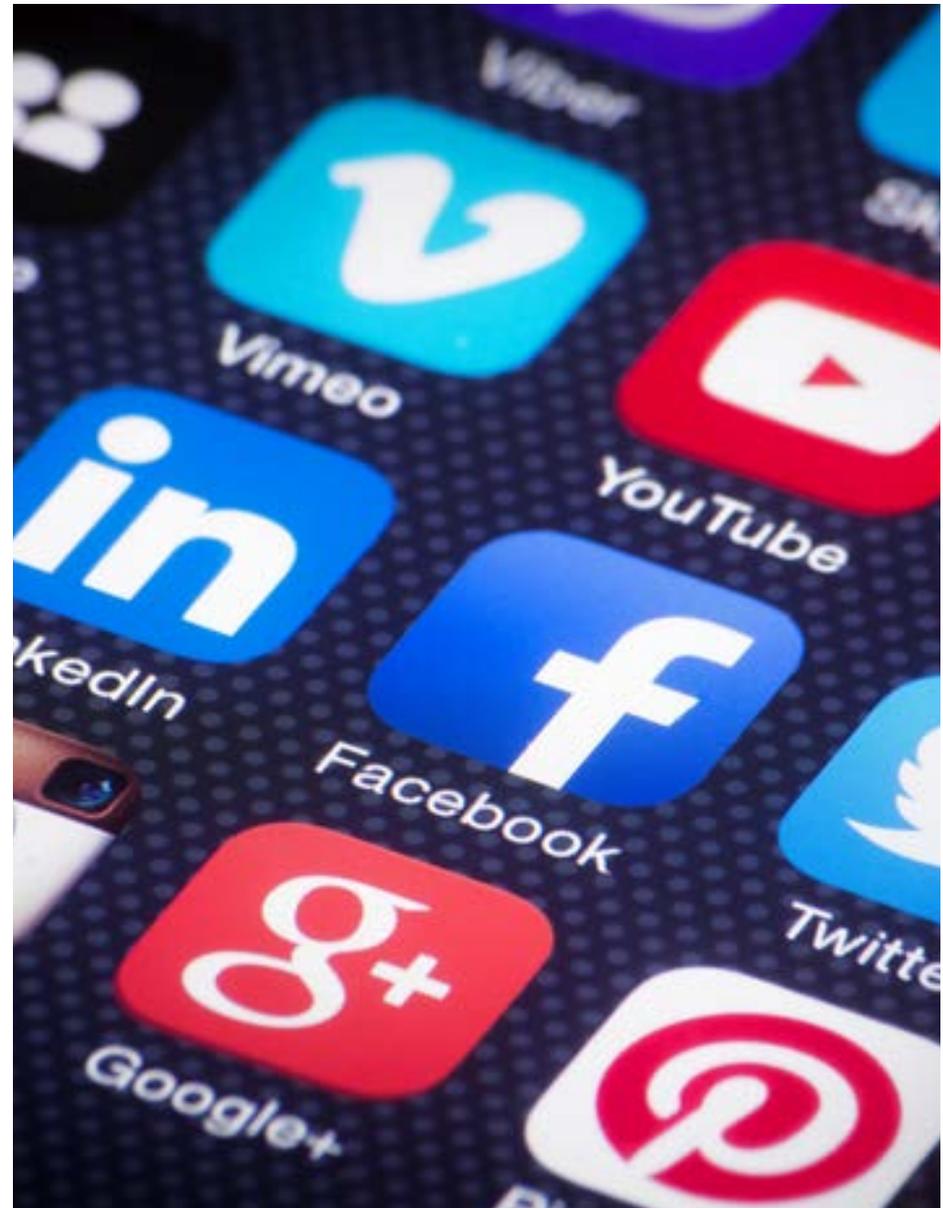
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1. Introduction

In an age where billions of people across the world are a mere click away from seamless communication with each other, where news can travel instantly and become viral, social media is your best friend. Being a large facilitator of this connection, social media provides avenues for forms of communication not possible before the digital age: instant communication, interactive advertising and marketing, transparency, and accessibility are just a few of the benefits this mode of communication brings.

This guide will cover with the pros and cons of brands using social media, why it's an incredibly useful tool for any business, and some tips for starting off on the right foot.



1.1 Why use social media?

Social media is an effective method of instantly communicating with any number of parties - on a social or professional level. As well as exposure, using it for a brand offers transparency; a face for customers to speak and engage with. Not only that, but it provides a social and communal side to any business that is far more approachable than traditional means of contact.

The fact that millions of people use social media websites every day just paints an example of the potential available markets that your brand can reach. Each social network tends to have a unique mix of audiences, so businesses can switch between platforms to find an ideal demographic that works for them. The sheer number of people subscribed to different sites means that someone, somewhere, is interested in your product - you just have to find them first.

Because of the scale of opportunity that social media presents, there are a number of methods for setting up a brand's social media presence. No matter which method you use, however, there are a few key elements of preparation to keep in mind, such as creating engaging content, choosing the right social networks, effectively engaging with the prospective and target audiences, drawing in followers, maintaining a steady stream of content, customising your content to suit

your image (or vice versa), and revising how to engage with your audience.

If there are a few points repeated, it's because they're key: content, management, engagement, revision. Creating content, managing its distribution and the brand's presence, engaging with the audience, and revising to see what works versus what doesn't are the cornerstones of building a successful presence for your brand on social media.



2. Prerequisites

Setting up on social media takes time, planning, and patience. Not all good things will come at once after the setup is complete, but it's still imperative to be organised prior to establishing your presence. Two key prerequisites you should focus on is having your content figured out and have ensuring you have a Social Media Manager on staff.

2.1 Content

Whether you're a hardware giant or a small startup blog, content is key - it's what you're selling, what you're using to attract your audience, and how you're encouraging them to stay. As a crude example, hardware stores sell products and services, so they'd have pages devoted to the specifics of those tools, which count as 'content'. Because it's what your brand is selling, the content needs to be there from day one.

Having a wide variety of content available prior to launching a social media page ensures that your brand won't have a shortage when it comes to delivering.

2.2 Social Media Manager

The second prerequisite to launching a social media page is to employ, or promote, a social media or community manager. This ensures that at least one person, in direct conjunction with each department head, is in charge of the brand's social media account. This could be one person, or even a team; so long as your brand's social media presence is under direct human control by people who know the company's ins and outs.

A social media manager is important because they prevent the brand's public presence from being a random assortment of ineffective posts, and can instead help foster a community. This means that their role can include damage control, community moderation, troubleshooting, editing, posting, supervising content, and so on. Ultimately, their aim is to be the brand's public representative, while also filtering the level of content to make it more engaging. They draw in an audience and interact with them to keep them interested.

3. Selecting your social media platforms

It goes without saying that each social network provides different tools and features for your brand to take advantage of. By extension, the differing features that make each of them unique can actually divide up a certain demographic on the receiving end - for example, followers on Twitter tend to be more receptive to quick-burst updates than fans on Facebook.

Keeping in mind that each network tends to appeal to different demographics, what follows is a brief summary of how your brand may use each. In this guide, we'll be focusing on four of the most popular social networks: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.



3.1 Facebook

Facebook is easily the most ‘popular’ social media site, with over 1.2 billion users. It is because of this impressively large user base that brands looking to start an online presence often begin here - there are so many potential customers waiting to discover what you have to offer.

Not only does it sport the largest audience of our four examples, but Facebook actually provides useful features for handling a brand page. They have built-in metrics (called ‘Insights’), useful for gauging which posts gain more attention and engagement; and they offer some impressive customisation in terms of page photos, information, status update options, etc.

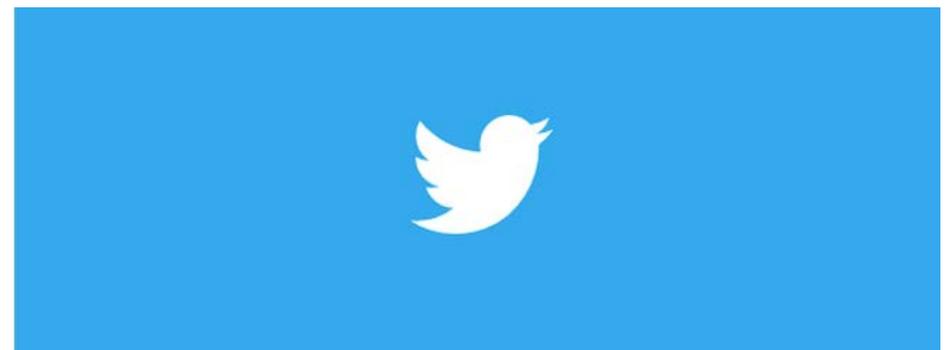
Because of the large number of users, there isn’t one specific audience on Facebook, but it is possible to cater to a number of mini-demographics within it.



3.2 Twitter

Twitter is one of the most unique social networks out there. By limiting tweets to 140 characters, and providing three distinct interactive options (reply, retweet, favourite), communication is concise and to the point.

Hashtags are also an incredibly useful feature, in that they allow you to monitor specific topics currently being discussed. From a business perspective, a brand can use this to their advantage and customise content or tweets to fit specific hashtags, or even create their own. This ensures that your content not only reaches a specific audience, but can also drive a wider, customised discussion (note: there is a fine line in using hashtags, especially when jumping on board one already created. Make sure to use them wisely and appropriately).



3.3 Instagram

If Twitter is unique in that it only allows communication through 140 characters, Instagram is its photographic twin. Instagram currently has over 150 million users who communicate by taking photos or videos, and captioning them if they want. The service allows for a more visual approach to interaction, encapsulating the old adage that a picture paints a thousand words - for everything you can't say in text, you can say with a photo.

Similarly to Twitter, Instagram's key age bracket is estimated to be between 18 and 34, meaning that your brand's potential audience will be largely young adults. With Instagram, you can use it to post a more 'human' side of your business - show off works in progress, employees doing something fun at the office, special occasions, promotions, and so on. Providing something about your brand that's unique to this platform will encourage your audience to engage with it, potentially across multiple social media sites. Just make sure that, on a visual level, your posts truly stand out.



3.4 LinkedIn

LinkedIn's unique appeal comes with the fact that it is very much business-orientated, playing host to more than 259 million employees, employers, job hunters, head hunters, and businesses alike.

Because of its professional nature, LinkedIn is perfect for the corporate side of your brand, and particularly ideal for B2B companies. You can directly engage with your employers/employees, link with potential clients, and share content with millions of people who work in the same or related fields as you. As such, content on LinkedIn is generally of a 'business-focused' nature.



4. Starting out

Once your brand has selected its key social networks through which to interact with millions of potential customers, there are a few simple rules to follow - create and engage. These will fuel the four steps of 'content, management, engagement, revision' discussed earlier.

4.1 Posting a variety of content

The key to engaging with an audience on any social network is to create two types of content - content that drives the audience back to the main website, and content that inspires engagement on the social network itself.

For content that drives people to your site (known as direct content), this could include links to your latest blog posts, a landing page with your latest free offer, an entry form for a contest/competition you're currently running, and more.

For content that doesn't link away from the social network (known as indirect content), you can ask questions, post photos and videos, provide general updates on your business (e.g. recent changes, new staff members, etc.), and show off products - although you shouldn't be pushing sales-heavy posts all the time.

Below is some additional information regarding both direct and indirect content.



4.1.1 Articles

Articles are a great way to show off your brand's knowledge of the industry that you're involved in, and can be anything like a review, step-by-step 'how to' guides, industry updates, or even fully-fledged industry investigations/exposés - this will all depend on the extensiveness of your brand's expertise.

A band page won't post articles discussing film analysis and critique; nor will a video game developer generally write an article about their favourite song to share with their audience. The key to all content is to keep it relevant - articles are a great way to drive an audience to the your main website, but only if they're relevant.



4.1.2 Pictures

Pictures are another great example, as discussed above in the 'Instagram' section. Photos offer a look into your brand's world - they could be photos of your latest project, behind-the-scenes shots, or photos of something relating to your brand, like an appropriate meme. What's more, using photos generally increases an audience's level of engagement by catching their attention and feeding their eyes as much as their brains.



4.1.3 Videos

Videos are another visual medium that are exceptional at engaging audiences. Some personalities, such as those who frequent YouTube, use video as their main source of engagement and income, often encouraging their audience to visit their other social media accounts or websites through their videos. Posting videos relevant to your brand, or videos that your brand has made, can either show off a creative side to your company, or provide the audience a good reason to stay on your page for a few extra minutes. Original content or not, ensuring the videos are relevant is another key point.

Also worth remembering is how long your videos run for. The longer the video, the more likely it is that the average user will not watch it. So the more concise your videos are, the better it typically is for you. This another reason why Instagram's 15-second videos and Vine's (owned by Twitter) 6-second looping videos have proved popular.



4.1.4 Tips, questions, and great insight

Aside from posting excellent content, a brand needs to engage personally via social media. Just posting content is great, but it won't help nurture and grow an audience - it's the hook that reels them in, but ultimately the brand's interactions encourage them to stay. The social media manager(s) can use social media to post helpful tips, poll their audience, and accompany all content with a touch of humanity. Human interaction is always more personal than its robotic counterpart, and that's how your audience will remember your brand.



4.2 Engaging with your followers

After ensuring your brand has the appropriate level of content, the next step is to effectively engage and interact with your audience. This is one of the greatest benefits of having a social media account: it gives your brand a voice with which your audience can actually converse. It's also one of the hardest parts of managing a social media page.

After tailoring the content to different social media sites, your brand should be engaging with the audience. This may seem like a given, but if a customer/viewer asks a question - especially when it's a support or troubleshooting question - it's important that you answer. When the customer is satisfied, they have a memorable experience with your brand, and they'll most likely be back.

Asking questions is also good because it encourages direct audience involvement: depending on your brand's area of expertise you could ask what movies they saw over the weekend, what games they played, when the last time they used one of your products was, and so on. Running competitions and giveaways is also a surefire way to encourage audiences into being creative and engaging at the same time. Interacting with other brands in similar fields is also another way to stay relevant in the right circles.

If there's one point to take away from this section, it's that it's always about your audience, so don't neglect them.



5. *Moving forward*

5.1 Content

After establishing your brand on social media, it's imperative to look to the future and enact long-term policies and goals. In terms of content, your brand should always be analysing which posts do well and which don't, which articles receive more views than others, and which posts the audience respond to most. Should your brand share more self-generated content? Should it post more relevant memes? Should it create more events? Should it share more audience-generated content?

The key to analysing these statistics is not just to absorb them, but to do something about it. If you find that photos generate more traffic and engagement, then try posting photos with more of yours posts. If you find that human-interest articles drive more traffic than their opinion-based counterparts, try creating/posting more of those. Generating feedback is only useful if you do something with it - and doing something with it is always useful.

5.2 Audience

Similar to content, your brand should always re-evaluate how to better interact with its audience. It's simply not enough to churn out content and respond to a couple of questions, because the audience isn't a static mass of readers; they grow, they learn, and they have interests and opinions.

As well as analysing which posts gain the most traction, it's also useful to straight-up ask your audience what they want - do they want something specific out of your page? Do they prefer news posts to videos? All feedback should be taken on board, no matter how big or small.

After trawling through analytics and feedback, it's worth taking everything and using it to experiment with the brand's method of posting. You could see if your audience likes shorter posts compared to longer posts, memes accompanying their articles, or questions accompanying pictures or articles, and so on. There isn't really a wrong formula - it's all about what works for your brand and its audience. After a lot of trial and error, there will eventually be a glove that fits.

6. Conclusion

Millions of brands use social media for two main reasons - promoting their content or services, and growing their audience and customers. It's especially important for the second reason because it allows direct communication to a brand's viewership. To do this, we covered four main steps throughout: content, management, engagement, revision. It's a never-ending cycle that will greatly benefit your brand if you follow it.

The importance of using a variety of content, no matter which social networks your brand employs, can't be understated. Content draws in customers, so a wider variety of content will draw in a wider audience.

Keeping them there by providing engaging content and a memorable, human experience is the trick.

If you're looking to set your brand up on social media but still aren't 100% sure of how to get started, Margin Media can help. We offer a range of social media-related services, including comprehensive social media strategies that we can set up for you to follow or that we can handle on your behalf.

To find out more, visit our [Contact Page](#) or call us on 1300 798 848.

