



How to Do It... and Why You Need To

A Facility Manager (FM)'s guide to using Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube & more to make business better.

Presented by: **ioffice**[®]

Social Media: Facilitating Facility Managers' Jobs

Nowadays, facility management is as much about people as it is places. Managers can't be just managers anymore — they're marketers and communications specialists, too.

From tenants to employees and the public at large, people see the Facility Manager (FM) as a sort of executive liaison for everything pertaining not only to their buildings but also the business conducted inside them.



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To some extent, that's probably always been true. Facilities have always served the needs of both a workforce and a paying public, and their managers have always shared in the accountability for meeting those needs.

But as social media plays an increasingly important role in the way that customers and employees interact with public spaces, engagement with social media becomes especially critical to FMs' success.

Even if you've never used sites like LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter, you've undoubtedly heard of them. They've revolutionized the way we make friends and stay connected. They've generated billions of dollars in revenue. Lately, they've even prompted foreign regime change. The power of social media can't be understated... and not just as a social force, but as a management tool, too.

Social media can help FMs attract new customers, connect with their workforce, and more efficiently improve their operations from the comfort of their own computer chair. In the pages ahead, we'll take a look at five ways in which social media marketing can leverage a direct business benefit for FMs and the spaces they manage.

Then we'll highlight several specific social channels — Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, and YouTube — to explain how even the most technologically disinclined FM can get started by connecting with other FMs online.

5 Business Benefits

The Advantages of Using Social Media in Facility Management

Diving into the social scene isn't just about being fashionable or having fun. Tweeting, linking, uploading, status-updating... these are all activities that can measurably boost a Facility Manager's business prowess. Here are just a few of the ways that social media can make FMs' lives better.

1

Instant Communication

Though it began as a forum for trivial interaction, social media has emerged as a major player in the way the world gets its news. That's true for CNN and the like, but it's *a/so* true for in-house corporate communications all over the world.

Webpages, email blasts, and newsletters take time to compose, and people don't always read or receive them right away. With social media, FMs can reach out to tenants and the workforce with maintenance updates, new service announcements, job openings, and more. Faster communication means faster action and more reliable response.

2

Better, Faster Feedback

FMs must engage the people who work in their facilities. When employees believe they're working in the *best* possible environment, their performance tends to improve. Accordingly, managers are encouraged to designate a social media account specifically for fielding and responding to feedback from workers, tenants, and the public.

For example, an airport FM might launch an @airportcares Twitter account and encourage both the airport's retailers and its travelers to tweet the FM with any questions, compliments, or concerns. It's an effective way of delivering rapid response for unexpected problems while promoting the services/solutions an FM can offer.

3

It's "Legit"

The Millennial generation has learned to associate business legitimacy with an active online profile. In their eyes, anyone who isn't online is automatically suspect — and the less active & prominent its social accounts, the less impressive the business seems. Social media demonstrates that the FM truly cares about his or her job. It's a great way to earn trust and respect from both the customer base and the workforce.

4

Every Facility Needs a Face

Regardless of the industry, customers like to do business with people they can trust. Social media can make facility management feel personable and believable. After all, it's easier to talk to a human than a building, and a social presence can put a friendly face on an otherwise austere facility. Social channels make a location feel hospitable and inviting, which helps to attract major event reservations and high-value tenants.

5

Keep Current & Connected

Just as FM's can use social media to distribute news, they can use it to stay on top of the latest buzz themselves. A social media feed can keep FM's in the know about emerging technologies, trends, and industry activity.

In fact, a number of social network groups exist solely to interconnect FM's (as well as commercial real estate executives & office administration professionals) for sharing tips, opportunities, and ideas.

Those networking forums can be invaluable, and in the next part of this paper, we'll reveal some of the best groups available on Facebook, Twitter, and others, as well as tips for using those networks and more.



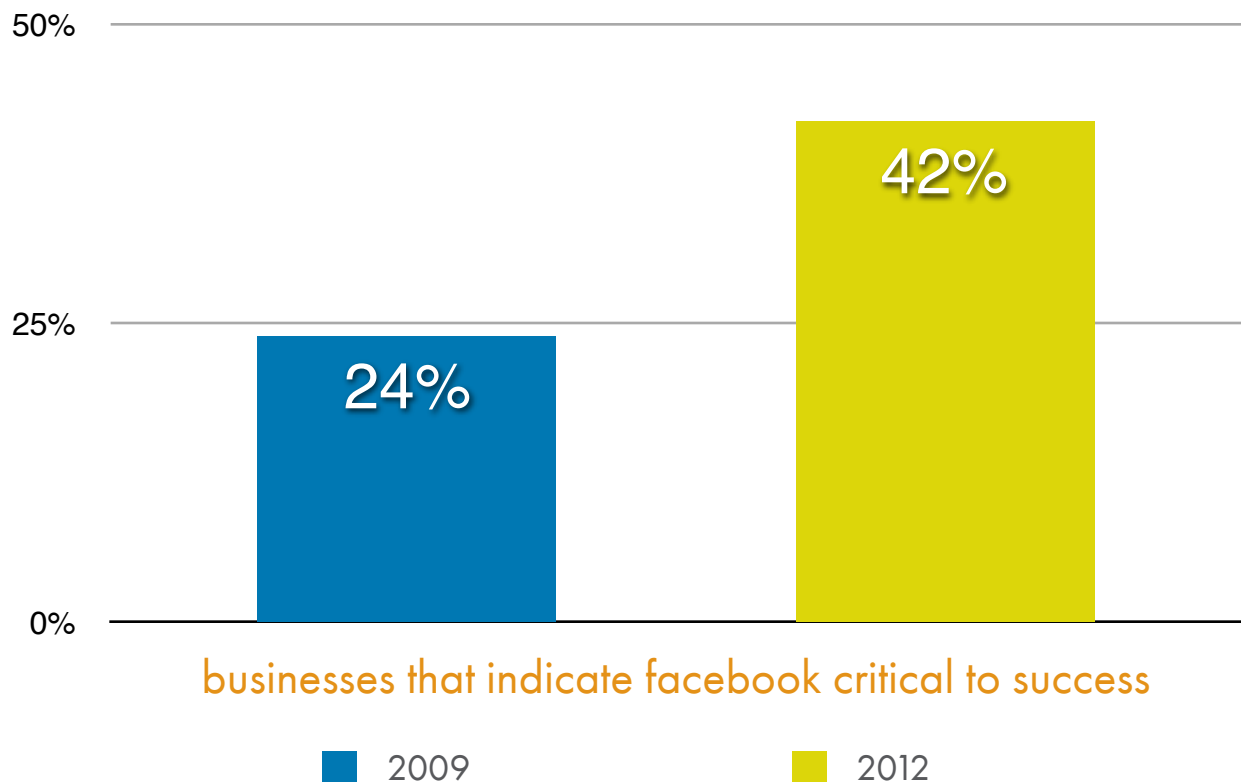
Facebook

To date, Facebook remains the only social medium to have starred in a major motion picture (The Social Network). That tells us a little something about its popularity. In fact, 95% of Americans have an active Facebook account, and the site averages 600 million users every single day. But it's not just for college students anymore.

There are more than 50 million company pages on Facebook, including a few designed specifically for FMs. Take the [International Facility Management Association page](#) for example, with more than 3,000 likes! (A "like" represents a Facebook user who has elected to follow that page's updates.)

To find more great Facebook pages for Facility Managers, check out [iOffice's guide to the best FM pages around!](#)

The number of businesses that say Facebook is critical or important to their business has increased by 75% in just 3 years



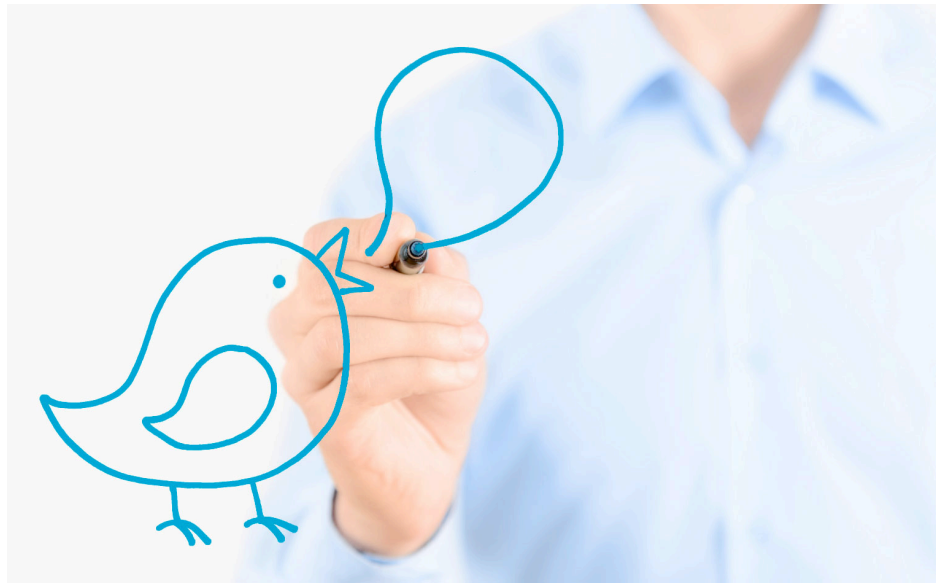
* Source: State of Inbound Marketing, HubSpot, March, 2012

Twitter

A “tweet” used to be a sound that only birds could make, but now it’s something that humans send to each other too. You might have come across a tweet before — any message that someone posts on Twitter.com is a “tweet,” and those messages can be about absolutely *anything*, however mundane it might seem. On Twitter, every aspect of life becomes a **shared experience**, and that’s part of the fun. But like Facebook, Twitter has emerged as a power player in the business world, too.

Here’s how it works: Tweets are text-based messages that are limited to a maximum of 140 characters. Anytime someone submits a tweet, the message automatically appears not only on their own Twitter blog but also on the home page of anyone who “follows” that person.

As whole groups of people start to follow one another, communities begin to build... and that’s how Twitter has grown into one of the most influential social networks on the web.



Communicating on Twitter

But of special interest to Facility Managers is a relatively recent trend: the “Twitter chat.” These regularly scheduled gatherings are similar to traditional chatrooms, except they take place across all of Twitter at the same time.

Participants simply add a designated **hashtag** to each tweet to include it in the chat. (A hashtag is any term/phrase with a # symbol attached to the front it, e.g. [#facilitymanagement](#).) It’s an easy way to make new contacts, get important FM-related information, and build a Twitter following all at the same time.

For example, the hour-long [#HBRChat](#) is hosted by *Harvard Business Review* (@HBRexchange) every Thursday at noon (CST). To find out about other worthwhile Twitter chats for Facility Managers and to learn how to get started on Twitter as an FM, take a look at the [iOffice Guide to Twitter for Facility Managers](#) online!

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is different from Facebook and Twitter in that it's far less dependent on personal interaction. In fact, calling it "social media" might be a bit of a stretch! That's because LinkedIn is primarily a professional networking community.

When someone creates a LinkedIn account, they do so in their professional capacity — these aren't the kinds of "personal profiles" one would find on Facebook.

Corporate Real Estate Executives, Office Administrators, and Facility Managers fit right in at LinkedIn. In fact, in today's virtual business world, it's practically expected that any executive-caliber professional maintain an active LinkedIn page.

every second,
2 new members
join linkedin



One of the most important aspects of LinkedIn is its collection of industry-specific networks, which FM's can join to find others in their field.

These networks are the perfect place to turn for tips, feedback, support, and new ideas. They can also help to attract the attention of potential tenants, future employers, and new hires.

Take, for example, the Facilities Management Group, which currently has 30,000 members!

It's just one of nearly a dozen professional networks available to FM's, and iOffice has assembled [a helpful index](#) of those to help FM's get started.

Google+

Google launched Google+ in the hopes of challenging Facebook's sizable grasp on the world wide web. Though it's yet to catch on with quite the same fervor, Google+ nevertheless commands an impressive base of 500 million registered users (nearly half of which are active every month). That's a big enough number to make a compelling business argument: FMs should be plugged into Google+ too.



It works a lot like Facebook. Sign up for free, create a clean and professional-looking profile, and occasionally post new content relevant to your field. The key operational difference between Facebook and Google+ is the latter's "circles" feature, which allows users to form groups by inviting other users into their circle.

Pro Tip for FMs: Get started by adding the [Buildings.com Google+ page](#) to a new circle and follow their lead. It's a great example!

YouTube

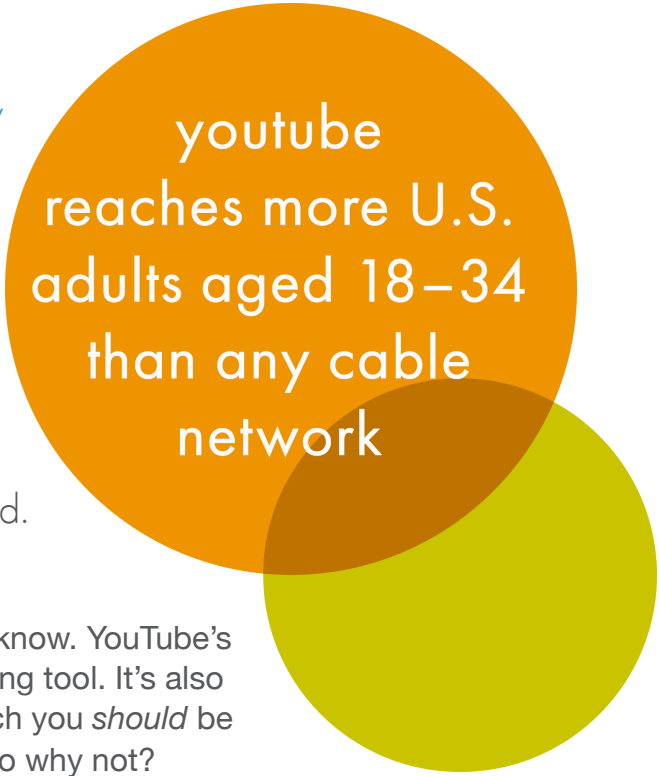
If there's one online community you already know about, it's probably YouTube. Who hasn't killed some time by watching a hilarious prank or "awww-ing" over some adorable kittens on YouTube?

But there's more to it than that. Did you know there's a social component to YouTube too? Try looking for videos in the Facility Management field. You might be surprised by what you find.

When you like a video, let the person who uploaded it know. YouTube's "comments" feature can serve as an effective networking tool. It's also a good way to get attention for your own videos... which you *should* be uploading. It's *free* exposure for you and your facility, so why not?

Pro Tip: Finding relevant videos on YouTube will give you something to talk about on Facebook, Twitter, and your other social channels. Send out tweets and status updates containing a link to the video to let others know what you've found!

To help you get started, we've put together a short list of some of the **best FM-related videos** on YouTube. Give them a look and get inspired!



youtube
reaches more U.S.
adults aged 18–34
than any cable
network

- [Facility Management: The Business Case](#) by FMA CEO Chris Hoar
- [Careers in Facilities Management — A World of Choice and Opportunity](#) by British Institute of Facilities Management
- [Facilities Management](#) by Pratt Institute
- [Meet iOffice](#) by iOfficeCorp

Now's the Time to Go Social

Success in business is a lot easier when we're willing to interact with others. Social media may have once seemed like a teenaged fad, but it's since become an inescapable "must-do" in today's business world. Networking has always been part of professional life — now, it just happens online. For FMs, that's a good thing, as it increases their potential reach, streamlines their communications, and helps them become better leaders.

If you're a Facility Manager, go ahead and dive in! It's easier to get the hang of than you can imagine. And if you're not sure where to get started, we're here to help.



iOffice is a provider of software that helps FMs run their buildings smarter. We're actively engaged in social media, too! Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), or at iofficecorp.com!



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