

A beginner's guide to social

A checklist of social media basics to get you started

Choose your channels

- Build a presence on at least one of the five most popular networks: Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, or Twitter depending on your audiences.
- Facebook is social, friendly and personal. Share pictures, updates, comments, ideas or tips. Business pages on Facebook have limited organic reach (2% actually). Paid advertising works best.
- LinkedIn is for business. Build your resume, get endorsed. Meet potential customers in groups. Share your business advice in original posts. Build your network.
- Twitter is for brief info (140 characters), retweeting your influencers' ideas, following trends and publishing links and images.
- Instagram is visual, mobile. Use photos that represent your brand experience and relevant hashtags.
- Pinterest is for the creatives. Share stunning photos and easy-to-read infographics that link back to your website and content.
- Ready to expand? Look at your competitors. What are they using? Are they seeing response?

Setting up your profile

- Use a good quality profile photo. If it's a personal account, a smiling headshot. If it's a company page, use a logo that fits the space.
- Make sure you have a relevant, welcoming cover photo or header.
- Fill out the 'About' sections with useful information. Include links to your website, business hours, address and phone numbers.
- Use relevant keywords and hashtags to your industry and audience.

- Be professional and personable.
- Choose an owner for all social media. The voice of the account.

Followers and friends

- Leverage friends and followers you have on existing profiles. Invite them to interact with your company page.
- Promote your social media profiles on other social sites. "Like what we have to say? Here's a link to our Facebook page where we share more tips and insight."
- Follow, friend or connect with thought-leaders in your industry and who they follow.
- Comment and participate in relevant groups to become known.

Endorse, share, start a conversation

- Engage your audience with information from many sources. Be authentic, not self-serving.
- Comment on blogs and posts from other companies to gain visibility.
- Post anecdotes—statistics, stories, testimonials from customers, common issues, FAQs, tips about products, industry relevant humor.
- Make it visual! Attach an engaging, relevant photo to your posts and shares.
- Offer links to blog posts, your website or other useful resources.
- Use a call to action. Encourage followers to comment, share a photo or click for more information.
- Tag other pages and followers in posts when you mention them. Use hashtags when appropriate.
- Thank followers for liking and sharing your posts. Respond to

those who comment on your posts.

- Create memes of fun facts, new ideas or surprising images.

Be consistent and available

- Engage as often as you can. Trick: Create a schedule of topics and ideas.
- Link to blog posts, to pages on your website or share information that's useful for your audience.
- Social is about teaching, advising, inspiring and helping your audience, NOT selling. Promote events or offers, but don't sell aggressively.
- Don't just post and sign off—check notifications. If someone comments or shares, be ready to respond.

See what works

- Track which posts, Tweets, etc. get the most likes, shares. Tailor future content accordingly.
- Monitor the times of day you see the best traffic and schedule your posts then. There are apps to help you schedule posts.
- Respond to feedback. What are people saying (or not!) about what you share? Modify your content to increase engagement.

Be yourself, be authentic

Your social presence is an extension of your brand. Be authentic and true to your company's persona.

Don't misrepresent your company to your audiences. Post as you speak and within your brand's messaging.

Need guidance? We can help.

Let's talk about making social media part of your marketing strategy.

