




— HOW TO BUILD —

# **A SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY DREAM TEAM**

HubSpot sproutsocial



One key difference between an average and an exceptional organization is the ability to quickly identify, test and leverage new marketing channels to grow and engage customers. B2B and B2C companies alike are constantly looking for new opportunities to promote their brand and collect actionable audience insights from their inbound marketing efforts.

But it's the most successful businesses that understand social media networks as scalable, measurable resources to harness a growing inbound marketing strategy to fuel lead generation and conversions down the sales funnel.

While social media seems like a no-brainer for modern brands, the cold truth is that many businesses are struggling to make it work. A study from Ascend2 found that [40% of businesses](#) feel social media is the most difficult marketing tactic to execute. However, a successful social media strategy is crucial to fueling and growing a business's inbound funnel and getting noticed by potential new customers. Additionally, [marketers are increasingly](#) using Facebook for business

purposes and LinkedIn for personal purposes, proving the lines of social media platforms are blurring.

However, a lot of the challenges brands face with social begin and end with how they structure, organize and integrate their team within the broader organization. Whether your brand relies on one individual to run the show or unloads the responsibilities onto a team of interns, it's time to reassess how you build your social team and prioritize their efforts toward growth and ROI.

That's why Sprout Social and HubSpot teamed up to combine their knowledge on building and managing data-driven social teams in this guide to building a Social Media Strategy Dream Team.

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# Defining Social Media Roles

ROLE	DUTIES
SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER	This role oversees all of a company's social media marketing efforts and reports ROI to senior members of the marketing organization.
SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIST	Responsible for developing social media goals and crafting a strategy to achieve them.
COMMUNITY MANAGER	A Community Manager drives brand loyalty and customer advocacy by supporting the business's buyer persona on social and actively engaging with the brand's social community on and offline.
SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYST	This person lives in data and metrics. They analyze and measure the ROI of social media marketing efforts and present these findings to leadership and C-suite executives.
SOCIAL MEDIA ASSOCIATE/SPECIALIST	Typically an entry level social media marketer in charge of handling most of the daily, tactical operations of a social strategy such as replying to incoming messages and scheduling content.

The first step to building a social media team is to select which members you need.

Just like other positions, social media marketing can be divided into different specialties, each with their own unique skillsets. Although the roles and titles aren't as established as those in other industries, here are some of the common social media marketing positions your organization can look to fill.





# How to Structure Your Social Media Team

The structure of your social media team will primarily depend on two key factors: what you hope to accomplish with social media efforts and the size of your organization.

Start by having a clear idea of how social fits into your overall marketing and business goals. Then consider the size of your company to determine the best way to structure your team.

Not sure where to start when structuring a marketing team? [Check out this post](#) on how to structure a marketing team of any size.

Once you know how you plan on using social media, the next step is to take a look at the size of your company.

Certain brands have robust social media teams out of necessity. For instance, e-Commerce, SaaS and digital media companies often invest heavily in social media marketing because their business models are completely digital.

A local coffee shop with a single location is going to use social media differently than a digital media company with multiple publications. Instead of having a Social Media Analyst like the digital media company, the local coffee shop may only have a Social Media Specialist who works with a part-time Content Marketing and SEO Specialist. Which roles your business hires for and what your team looks like will depend on a multitude of factors. There is no one-size-fits-all solution.

Before you decide to combine all your social marketing efforts into a single position, like the coffee shop, keep in mind that [78% of businesses](#) have a dedicated social media team. While the jack-of-all trades marketer may work for a mom and pop business, it is becoming a thing of the past for SMB and enterprise companies who are now realizing the importance of having specialists who excel in specific disciplines.



What Do  
You Want to  
Accomplish?

TASK	ROLE
Creating a Strategy	Social Media Manager
Publishing	Social Media Manager
Content Planning	Social Media Manager
Reporting	Social Media Manager
Networking & Relationship Building	Social Media Manager

## Smaller Organization Structure

If you're reading this guide and looking to scale social media marketing, you're likely at a place where you have a designated social media marketer, typically a social media manager. If you still don't have at least one employee then, at the very least, there should be a contract or part-time employee who is charged with handling your accounts.

If you're working with just a social media manager, the structure ends up looking like the table to the left.

As you can see, everything falls on the shoulders of one person and, as your business grows, this remains less and less sustainable. This is one of the biggest challenges facing growing social media teams.



While small businesses (organizations of 0–200 employees) have far fewer resources than big industry players, they are actually much more efficient at managing their Facebook and Twitter accounts than their medium (201–1,000 employees) and large-sized (1,000+ employees) counterparts, according to the [Q1 Sprout Social Index](#) for 2016.

The average small business receives about 10 messages per employee—compared to just 6 for medium-sized organizations and 0.5 for large corporations—yet they are capable of responding at nearly the same rate. What's more, small businesses actually edge out their bigger rivals by a slight margin, responding to 10.7% of social messages, compared to 10.6% for large businesses and 10.1% for medium businesses.

With a small business, efficiency is key for your social media marketing team. Make sure you're building a team that is able to respond to your incoming messages without getting overwhelmed.

#### Avg. Number of Social Messages per Employee by Business Size

Q4 2015



[sproutsocial.com/index](http://sproutsocial.com/index)

## Larger Organization Structure

According to a [survey from Altimeter](#), the average size of an enterprise organization's (1,000+ employees) social media team is 11 people.

As a result, the workload is able to be well distributed across multiple specialists. Instead of the social media manager having to be in charge of everything, the structure starts to look more like this:

ROLE	TASK
Social Media Manager	Editorial Planning
Social Media Specialist & Strategist	Publishing & Executing Editorial Plan
Social Media Analyst	Reporting
Community Manager	Networking, Relationship Building & Responding to Direct Messages/Comments



Getting to the point of having a more diverse social media team doesn't happen overnight. Since social media marketing is still a new department for most companies, it's not always obvious when you should bring on new hires, particularly when everything seems to be working out just fine.

In some situations, the social media manager is so good at their job that their coworkers and managers don't fully realize how much they're getting done. But simply adding a few additional specialists to the team could lead to exponential increases in value (think: more dedicated time and resources to expand your [Facebook Live strategy](#), or one more person to build out your LinkedIn paid strategy!). Remember to chat with your existing social manager to see what positions could be filled to help achieve greater results.

For example, do you need to bring in a specialist to develop or improve your Snapchat strategy? How about coordinating a new social media channel specifically for an annual conference or event your company hosts? Having these conversations with your social media team will give you insight into opportunities you would otherwise miss out on.



## Working Across Channels

Even with a larger sized team, there's often some collaboration with other departments such as design and sales. Build out a team of internal allies that your social media team can leverage when necessary. Whether it's someone to go to for social media graphics, content ideas or website analytics, the social media team should always work with other departments and vice versa.

While the social media team may be its own department, they're connected to nearly every other team in your company.

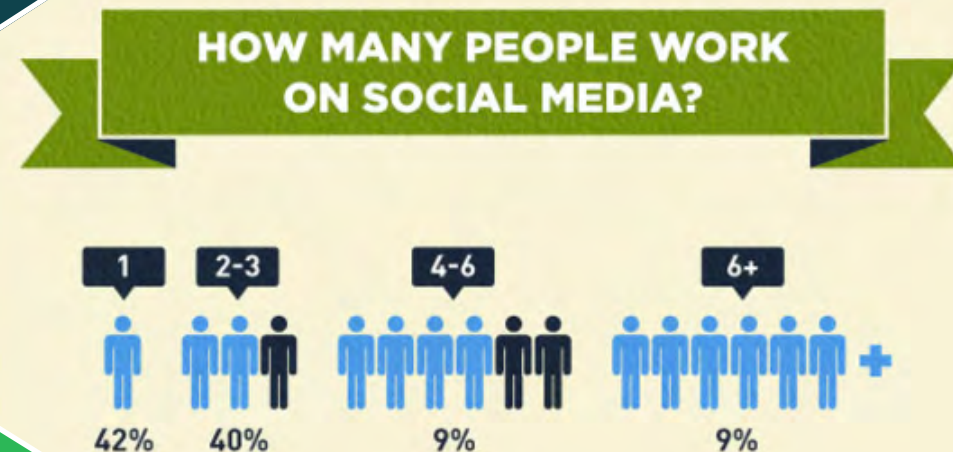
YOUR GOAL	TEAM TO INVOLVE	THEIR ROLE
Customer Retention	Customer Support	Respond to customer issues and questions
Branding	Design	Create necessary visual assets
Customer Acquisition	Sales	Vet and follow up with prospects and leads
Brand Awareness	Content	Create content to be shared
Promotion of large company-wide launch of product or event	Director or VP of marketing organization, PR folks, head of demand generation and/or content	Align on overall goals of launch on social and measures of success (i.e. tickets sold from Twitter promotion, or installs/ clicks from LinkedIn Sponsored Content).

# How Many People Does Your Team Need?

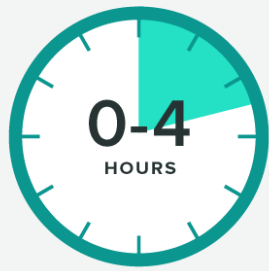
A team of one is never really a team.

However, according to Go-Gulf, over 80% of social media teams have fewer than four people. So it should come as no surprise that one of the biggest challenges social media managers face is the amount of work that gets put on their shoulders and then number of hats they have to wear.

At the same time, the reality is most companies won't have the resources or even the need to have a strategist, community manager, analyst and other specialist positions.



### People's Wait Time Expectation vs. Brand Response Time on Social



CONSUMER  
EXPECTATION



AVERAGE BRAND  
RESPONSE TIME

sproutsocial

## Ideally, your social media team should have at least two people. Here's why.

Having multiple people on your social media team gives you an extra set of eyes. People interpret situations differently, so it's best to get more than one point of view. Having more than one person on the team also creates a system of checks and balances, where one person isn't the sole decision maker.

One critical, yet often overlooked benefit of having at least two people on your social team is the ability to respond to incoming messages quicker. Social media doesn't shut off at 5PM when everyone leaves the office. Companies need a strategy for managing social media during nights and weekends. [Sprout's Q2 Sprout Social Index for 2016](#) found that consumers expect a response from brands on social within four hours. Yet the average brand's response time is 10 hours.



## You can easily close that gap by splitting up the duties between two or more people.

Lastly, having more than one person on your social media team allows you to produce better results.

You're able to play to the strengths of each individual and have everyone focus on the functional areas they're most passionate about. Forcing a social media marketer that doesn't enjoy customer support to be in charge of your inbox will hurt your overall strategy. It's better to find out what they actually enjoy doing and let them double down on it.

Deciding how many people to have on your social media team boils down to ensuring you're not lacking in any key areas. If you're unable to respond to all the incoming support questions from Twitter, you may need to add someone who specializes in social media support.

If your Instagram following has been stagnant for the past few months, consider hiring someone who specializes in social media analytics to dig deeper into what's working and what's not.

Never stop looking for opportunities to scale your team.



# What to Look for in a Social Media Hire

Given the amount of work social media marketers are tasked with, it's no surprise that they need to embody many different traits.

One day your social media manager could be your designer and the next they could be a customer service agent. Great social media marketers have a combination of the following traits:

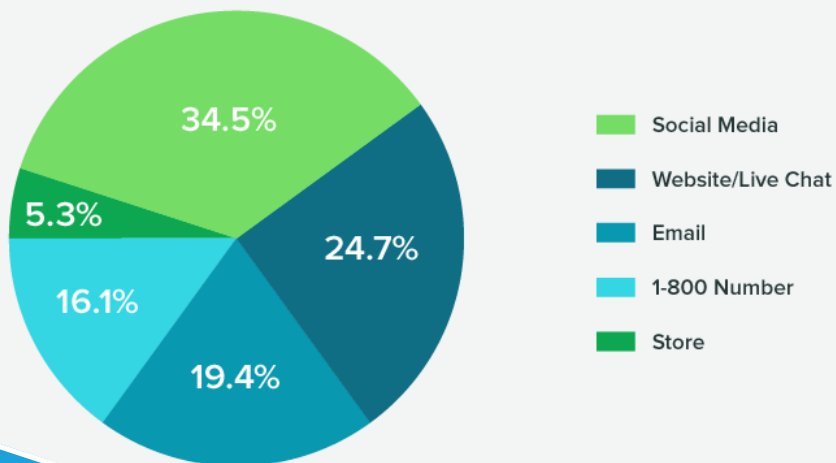
## Patience

Sometimes social media professionals will find themselves in difficult conversations with annoyed or angry customers. Social media is the top place consumers go for customer care.

Your social team is at the front line to take the abuse for situations they really have no control over. The typical reaction of an individual may be to get defensive, but great social media marketers are patient, and they navigate with those customers until the issue is resolved.

## People's Top Choice for Customer Care

Q1 2016



sproutsocial.com

## Technical Aptitude

Some people think social media marketers just sit around Twitter and Facebook all day, but there are so many technical nuances and strategies that social professionals need to stay on top of. Whether that's choosing the best meta data to share in posts, leveraging Boolean search operators on social sites or digging through social media analytics to figure out what's working, it's important to hire someone with a strong technical aptitude.

## Proactive

Whether you're aware of the conversations or not, there is a good chance that at any point in time someone is mentioning your brand or products on social media. Great social media marketers will proactively go out of their way to find conversations which pose an opportunity to start a conversation. Whether someone mentions your page without tagging you, or simply mentions needing a product similar to yours, your brand needs to actively look for opportunities to engage, instead of waiting for them to come to you.

## Daring

All marketers need to be bold, but there is a certain level of fearlessness that goes hand-in-hand with social media. With so much content being shared across your networks all of the time, there is a much greater chance that one thing you do may not work as well as you think. Not to mention the amount of risk that comes with creating social presences on newer networks. It's important not to let these fears of failure get to your team and to be daring on social.







## Passion

Passion is the most important trait to look for in a social media manager. Social media marketing is something that a lot of people think they can do, but it definitely takes a certain breed. There needs to be a strong desire for learning new trends and tools because the social landscape is always changing.

In addition to being passionate about social media, they also need to be passionate about your brand. When a social media marketer truly believes in what they are sharing, their content strategy becomes more genuine and the messaging resonates with your audience.

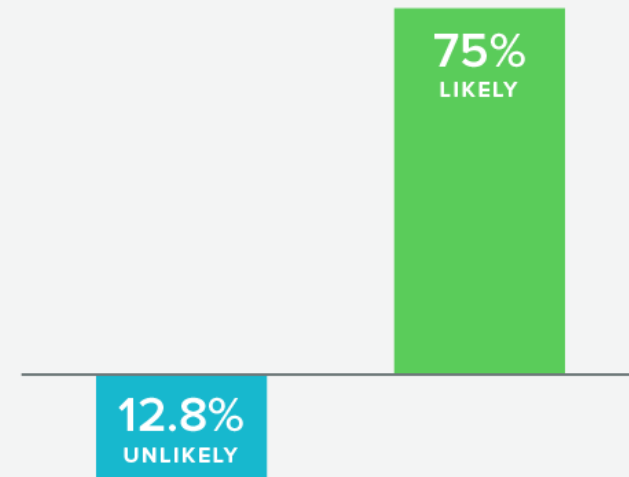
## Level of Experience

The level of experience that you look for really depends on the needs of your team. If you have a smaller social media presence, or are looking to supplement an already amazing team, you can likely choose someone with a bit less experience. If you're a large brand, or if you have a larger team that requires leadership, you may need someone more seasoned.

## Customer-First Mentality

Social media marketers, especially Community Managers, are on the front lines of communication between your customers and your brand. Arming these front lines with social marketers that have a customer-first mentality will ensure your customers have the best experience and are the top priority for support and answers. On top of that, when people have a positive experience with brands on social, they're more likely to share it with their audience. That means extra exposure for your company.

### Likelihood of Sharing a Good Brand Interaction on Social



[sproutsocial.com/index](https://sproutsocial.com/index)

Most organizations already have a process in place for onboarding new hires, so in this section we're specifically addressing how to onboard new social media hires. In Sprout's experience, the entire process has taken around a month.

The first important piece of the process is to take a good amount of time to sit down and start really getting to know the new individual. Really dig into what their strengths and weaknesses are, and figure out what exactly they enjoy doing on social media. Then you can try to parlay that into the overall strategy and play to their strengths and desires. One of the worst mistakes you can make is forcing them into a role that doesn't match their skills or abilities.

After that, you can start to teach them about your current social media strategy and the overall brand voice. This is key in order to maintain a cohesive voice even with a newer individual on the team.

A photograph of a man sitting at a desk, looking extremely stressed or frustrated. He is resting his head on his hand while looking at a laptop. The laptop is covered in various social media stickers, including recognizable logos like Twitter, Facebook, and others. The background is slightly blurred, showing an office environment.

## Onboarding New Social Media Team Members



We recommend coming up with some best practice guides and cheat sheets that outline the brand voice, frequently asked questions and even smaller tips on what type of grammar and punctuation to use.

These can be consulted quickly to help ensure all social media activity is on-brand and new members aren't left in the dark.

Sprout's social media teams have also found it helpful to conduct a series of meetings to talk about more nuanced strategies, with separate strategic sessions to discuss important issues such as:

- The best posting times.
- How to format posts for individual networks.
- The best types of assets, and how to request them internally.

These sessions should be much more two-way rather than "training" meetings. New hires should be encouraged to share some of their own strategic advice and experiment with new ways to generate leads or improve processes. Never think that you have everything down perfectly. It's important to be open-minded and leverage the experience and fresh eyes of your hire to help plan.

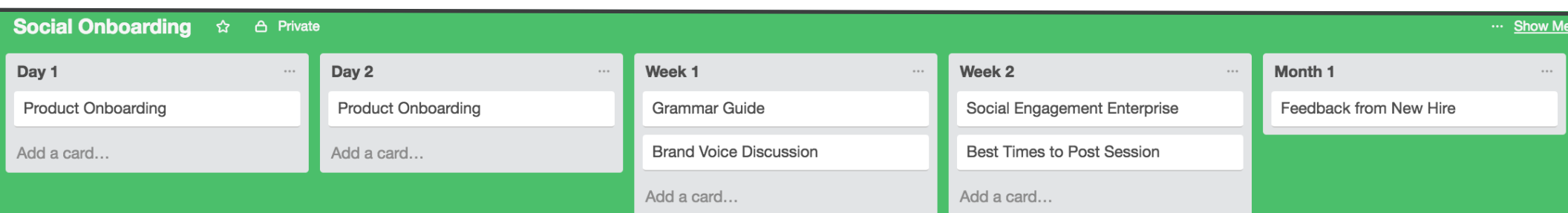


While new hires are getting accustomed to your procedures, brand voice and strategies, there's inevitably going to be a learning curve.

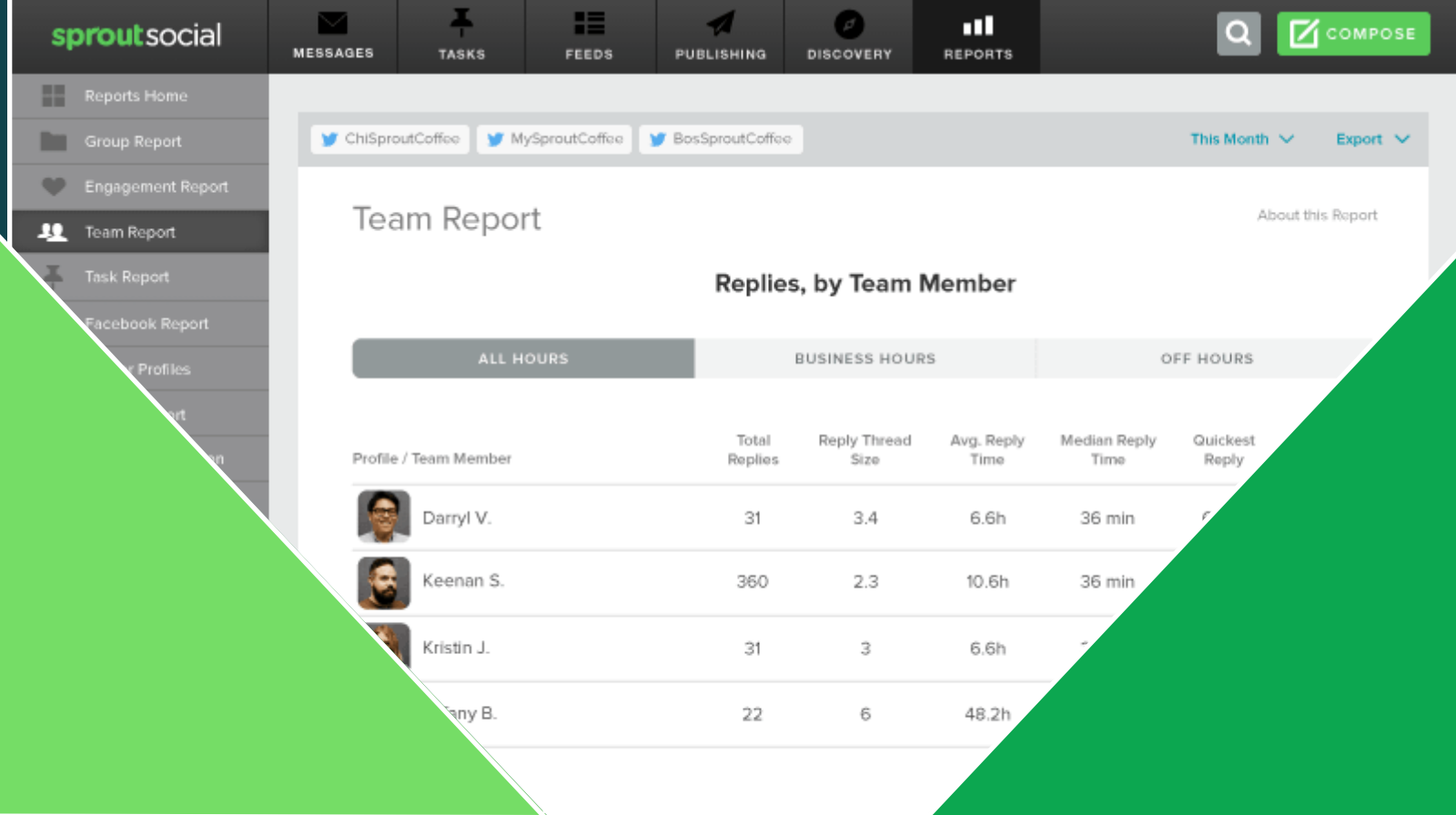
However, with social media, mistakes can be very costly. We've all seen horror stories of big brands Tweeting something inappropriate or responding negatively to customers. You don't want to go viral because a new employee made a mistake.

One amazing way to keep your peace of mind with a new hire posting to your social channels is to find a social media tool like Sprout Social with a [message approval system](#). That way, your new hire can create drafts to post on social media but those posts will only send if you approve of them. This will not only give you peace of mind, but it allows you to close the feedback loop with your new hire by quickly explaining why a message may not be a good fit.

You can use a tool like Trello to outline your onboarding process. Having your process written down allows you to stay organized and have something to refer back to when new hires come aboard. Not sure how to organize campaigns and projects for marketing teams using Trello? [Check out this guide](#).







# How Do You Measure Individual Success?

Although the social media team works together as a unit, it's important to measure their individual efforts and progress.

With social media management software like Sprout Social you have team reporting that allows you to measure individual metrics for team members involved with publishing and engagement. This makes it easier to see who's doing well and who needs a little more help.

The KPIs for these team members might include:

- **Engagement Rates:** How often are they engaging with incoming social messages?
- **Response Time:** How long does it take them to reply to people?
- **Posting Frequency:** Are they publishing content on a consistent basis?

For team members who work behind the scenes on strategy and analytics, much of their performance will be judged on how your brand profiles are doing as a whole. So their KPIs might include:

- **Engagement:** How many likes, shares and comments are their posts receiving?
- **Reach:** How many people is your content reaching?
- **Followers:** How many new followers are you getting month over month?
- **Traffic:** How many new users are coming to your website from social media?
- **Conversions:** Are you generating new email subscribers, leads, or trials from social?

Set expectations and KPIs for each individual team member, and review their progress on a regular basis.





## You also have to go beyond social-specific metrics.

Often, there are tasks that come up that require social media team members do work within the entire organization, such as creating content to be shared or helping with webinars and other activities that might not be directly related to their core responsibilities. Make sure you're accounting for those efforts too.

Lastly, in addition to the hard metrics social media professionals are judged on, there are also some less quantifiable metrics you should measure:

- **Attitude:** Are they positive and enthusiastic about your brand and social media?
- **Internal Team Feedback:** Do they work well with members of the team and other stakeholders like designers and content creators?
- **Social Love:** Take note of social wins like positive replies and praise from your audience.

Although it's fun and exciting, the role of a social media manager, strategist, or other position can be very draining.

Not only that, but social media marketers are in high demand. Job postings on LinkedIn for social media positions have increased by over 1300% since 2010. In order to keep your team happy and avoid employee turnover, you need to be proactive in making sure they aren't burning out. Instead of waiting for issues to arrive, implement some of these practices:

- Make sure that you give your team time off.
- Validate the work that your employees are doing.
- Make sure that your social team has time to unwind.
- Maintain a robust content calendar—social doesn't sleep.
- Instill a culture of flexibility.
- Try to create a team.

One of the most important ways to keep your team from burning out is to not put all the weight on one team member. Even if you only have a single social media manager, make sure they have the resources and tools they need to be successful.



## How to Keep Your Team From Burning Out





# Closing

Data from the [Duke University Fuqua School of Business](#) estimated that businesses will increase their social media budgets from 9.4% of the total marketing spend to 21.4% by 2019.

This reflects the change in how consumers shop and connect with brands.

With social media marketing becoming such a priority, having a strong team is more important than ever. It's no longer just something you hand off to the interns. It needs to be a core part of your company, like paid advertising, search engine marketing, or any other department.

Take the time to hire the right team members and create an environment for them to thrive, and you'll see just how valuable social media can be for your company.



# Learn How Sprout Fits Your Business



## Social Media Management

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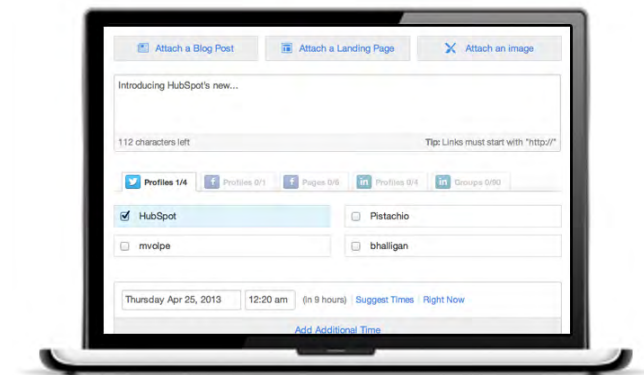
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# How helpful was this ebook?

**Not at all  
helpful**

**Somewhat  
unhelpful**

**Neutral**

**Somewhat  
helpful**

**Very helpful**

