

Social Media Marketing

Quick-Start Guide



*How to Use Social Media
to Grow Your Business*

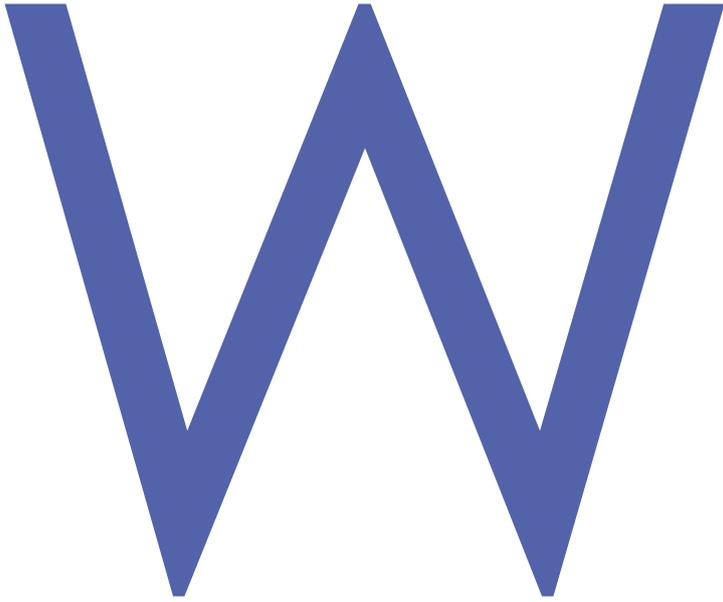
 *Simplification
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elcome to the Social Media Marketing Quickstart Guide! Whether you're new to social media or just interested in finding out a little more about a particular platform, this guide should help close some of your knowledge gaps. As an entrepreneur or small business owner, you know how valuable and essential social media is as part of your marketing strategy. This guide will offer some valuable tips, no matter what your skill level is, for improving your social presence.



What is Social Media?

Social Media is the collection of internet-based applications that allow people to create, share or exchange ideas, photos and videos via virtual communities and networks. Social media allows for community based input, interaction, content sharing and collaboration. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and Instagram are just a few examples of social media platforms.

Social Media Marketing consists of utilizing social media platforms or networks to create a community of followers, offering valuable information to the community, building relationships and creating trust, with the end result of driving traffic to the company website or storefront to increase sales.

Who uses Social Media?

If Facebook were a country, it would be the **world's 3rd largest country**



1 in 5 young adults use twitter daily



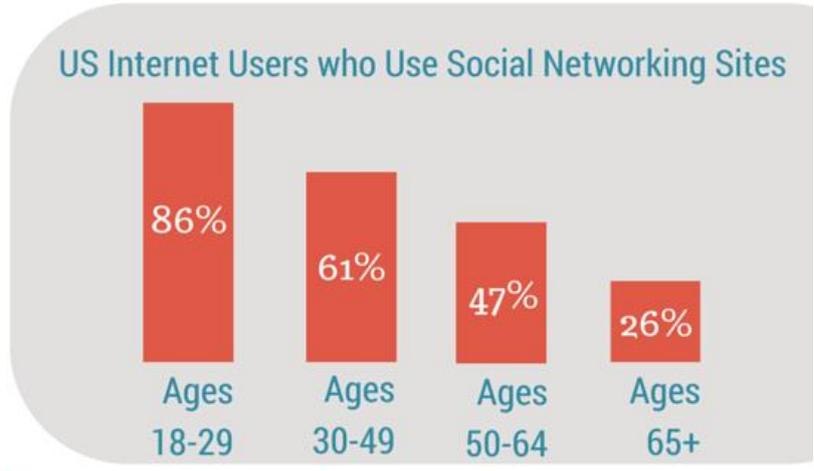
74% of smartphone users use their phone for location-specific information



of businesses are on Twitter, 71% are on Facebook.



Instagram is currently the fastest growing social network



9 billion photos are uploaded to Facebook monthly



Of brand likes come from advertisements

Sources: <http://recode.net/2015/01/09/instagram-is-the-fastest-growing-major-social-network/>
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/09/01/growth-social-media-infographic_n_945256.html

Why Should Your Company Use Social Media?

Whatever size your business, it is clear that your customers are online. People are interacting with friends, family, colleagues and other brands in search of information, recommendations and entertainment. Your competition is most likely utilizing social media, so why shouldn't you?

Facebook has 1.4 billion
active users

Twitter has 288 million
active users

Google+ has 300 million
active users

Instagram has 300 million
active users

*As of March, 2015, via Statista.com

The 3 most important reasons small businesses should include social media as part of the marketing plan:

- Connecting with potential and existing customers
 - Visibility and brand recognition
 - Brand promotion

Facebook is a free social networking service which allows registered users to create a personal profile with photos, personal interests, and contact information. Users may share status updates, create and join interest groups, and become “fans” of business pages.



- Business page
- Events
- Groups

Businesses may create a **business page** with photos, contact information, hours of operation, a map showing the location (for a business with a storefront), and videos. Managers of business pages may share status updates, comment on other business pages, interact with customers, and share relevant content from other sources. To create a business page:

<https://www.facebook.com/business/learn/set-up-facebook-page>

Businesses may create an **event** page highlighting an upcoming occasion. Events may be created by anyone and may be public or private. Events may be promoted through Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/help/210413455658361>

Groups are user-created and may be organized around any topic or event. Members may share photos, updates or documents and message other members. For more information:

<https://www.facebook.com/help/162866443847527/>



Everything you post on Facebook is considered **content**. You'll want your content to be interesting and relevant to your target audience. The News Feed on Facebook is the constantly updating lists of stories in the middle of your home page. Facebook's News Feed algorithm takes into account how users interact with the content you post. The stories that show in your followers' News Feed are influenced by their connections and activity on Facebook. The algorithm determines which stories will appear in the News Feed. The number of comments and likes a post receives and what kind of story it is (ex: photo, video, status update) can also make it more likely to appear in your followers' News Feed.

Posts with images tend to get more engagement. Humorous posts and posts that show the human side of a business also tend to receive more engagement.

Be sure to **track what time** of day your fans are most active and plan on posting status updates during those times. Use Facebook insights to determine the best time to post and also look at the types of posts that get the most engagement from your audience.

One of the goals for using Facebook to promote your business is to **build relationships**. If fans (potential and current customers) are interacting with your page and posts, you should take the time to engage with them. Quick response times will build your customer service reputation.

In utilizing social media, you are **building a community** of followers. If your audience's experience is a good one on Facebook, the community will thrive and grow. A thriving and growing community of engaged fans will lead to brand loyalty and customer advocacy. Concentrate on what your fans want to see and you will succeed.





Don't be a spammer! Do not send mass event invites, messages and invitations to like your brand pages from your personal account. No one likes to be spammed.

Responses: Respond to comments and questions in a timely manner. Users expect responses through social media much more quickly than traditional methods like email. Don't let your followers feel like you've forgotten them or let them think that their comment or question is unimportant.

Tag People: If you want to call out another public Facebook page or user, use @Name to directly link to their Facebook page, which also notifies them that you're talking about them. Put an @ and then type their name.

Messages: People can send your page private messages. Most of these messages will be customer service-related, so make sure to check them and respond in a timely manner.

Notifications: Will show you the most recent comments, likes, and shares of your status updates. You can use this information to track engagement.

A couple of businesses who use Facebook well:

Target <https://www.facebook.com/target>

People engage at a much higher rate on Facebook with images, links, video, current media content, etc. Target captivates followers with bright, professional images. Their team is quick to respond to users' comments and questions.

ESPN <https://www.facebook.com/ESPN>

With up-to-the-minute updates on the latest sporting events, ESPN keeps their followers informed and entertained. Followers like and share content frequently.

Twitter is a free social networking microblogging service that allows registered members to broadcast short posts called *tweets*. Registration is required to post, to follow others or to be followed. A tweet is a text-based post of up to 140 characters users send and read.

Some users choose to live-tweet their day, but most choose to primarily share relevant content that appeals to their target market.



- Create a Brand profile
- Informational tweets
- Twitter Lists
- Twitter Chats

Create a brand profile and handle which reflects your brand's guidelines. Your bio should be concise, include your website url and possibly include relevant hashtags to your brand. Include an accurate location.

<https://business.twitter.com/?lang=en&location=na>

Tweet about promotions, upcoming events, share information, start or respond to a discussion, or favorite others' tweets.

Twitter lists are **targeted lists** of users to enable you to reach industry influencers or join in conversations related to your niche.

Participate in Twitter chats relevant to the interests of your current and potential customers.



Identify the **types of users** in which you're interested in establishing connections and engaging. By understanding why a particular demographic uses the site, you will be able to tailor tweets to reach your target audience.

Determine the type of **voice** your tweets will have. You only have 140 characters to communicate your thoughts so every character counts. Be consistent with your voice as this will help build your brand and trust with your customer.

Follow **the 80/20 rule**: promote your company's services or products no more than 20 percent of the time. Don't be boring! Strive to be interesting to your audience.

Establish a consistent presence on Twitter but always add value with your tweets. **Ask yourself if you would want to see the information** if you were a follower.

Due to the condensed format and quick pace of Twitter, respond to comments and questions **as quickly as possible**. Users expect responses through social media much more quickly than traditional methods like email. Don't let your followers feel like you've forgotten them or let them think that their comment or question is unimportant.

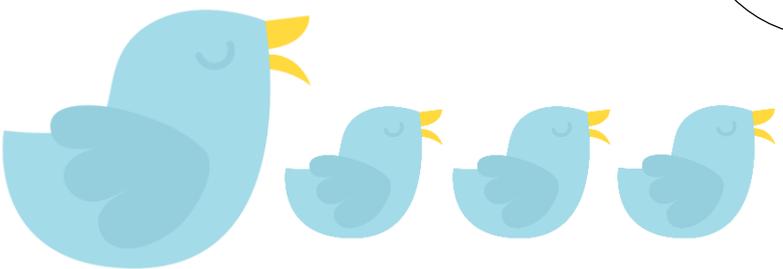
Want to see some businesses that use Twitter well? Check out these examples!

Whole Foods <https://twitter.com/WholeFoods>

Whole Foods reaches out and engages their fans with enticing photos and videos about current store specials, relevant content and recipes. Whole Foods focuses not only on their stores, but also about food in general.

Jet Blue Airways <https://twitter.com/JetBlue>

In addition to posting rich content via photos and videos, travel deals and human interest stories, JetBlue uses Twitter as a customer service platform. The team monitors and responds to customer questions, compliments and complaints.





Hashtags allow people to follow conversations. Hashtags are meant to explain what your tweet contains or to show you are following part of a conversation or event. #hashtags can also be used to search for a particular topic and all of the tweets about that topic.

Don't be a spammer! Don't use irrelevant hashtags just to draw attention to your brand. Keep your tweets relevant, helpful and spam-free.

Direct messages (DMs) may be used to obtain private information. Usually you can only DM people who follow you.

Automated DMs are considered spam and are not recommended. **Auto messages** are not a good way to build relationships.



When you **start a tweet with an @username**, only people who are following that account will see your tweet.

Retweets (RT) are a great way to share your followers' content and say you like what they're tweeting.

If you are **talking about someone on Twitter**, use their @username. It lets your community know you're talking about them and it's polite. This also encourages retweets by the people you've mentioned and further engagement.

Google+ is a social networking site considered a “social layer” across many of Google’s own properties. It encompasses circles, hangouts, mail and more. Status updates posted on Google+ are indexed by the search engine. Google is in the process of changing the way Google+ is setup, so check back for details as the changes occur.



- Pages
- Circles
- Hangouts
- Collections

Create a **business page** with photos, contact information, hours of operation, a map showing the location (for a business with a storefront), and videos. Managers of pages may share status updates, use your Google+ page to +1 (similar to a Facebook “like”) and comment on other Google+ pages, interact with customers, and share relevant content from other sources. For more information: <https://plus.google.com/pages/create>

Categorize followers of your Google+ page in **Circles**. By putting followers in circles, you are able to share content specific to different groups of people. For example, share pictures of your kids with family members or share content specific to your business or industry to your professional network.

Hangouts allow users to connect with another with voice and video and may be public or invite-only.

Google+ **Collections** allows you to categorize your updates by topic, which helps your followers quickly find updates for the topics they’re interested in.



As with all social media platforms, adding value to your followers' experience is key. Google+ allows you to target who gets to see what content, so use circles to your advantage.

When you establish a presence on Google+, build relationships there and get endorsements on the content that you share through Google+, **you increase your Google search ranking.**

Add your hours, address, and phone number to your Google+ page so this information is the first information customers see when they search your business. Make sure these are up-to-date to provide your followers with the correct information.



The ideal length of a Google+ **headline** for maximum engagement is 60 characters.

Tag people who created or originally shared the content so that they see your post. This encourages interaction.

Post valuable content on **community pages**. Get involved and expand your circles!

Cross post interesting and trending topics from Facebook and Twitter to Google+. You can also write long messages and posts on Google+ and then Tweet the link.



This is a **continuation of your branding**. Use keywords you want to be associated with, and put some time into your about section. Really get your message across by portraying yourself well, since your Google+ profile is one of the first things a customer will see when they Google search your business.



If you want to call out another Google+ page or profile, directly link to their Google+ page by putting a **+** and then typing their name. This is similar to the @ on Twitter.

Engage with your followers. Respond to comments and questions in a timely manner and get involved with the conversation. As with all social media platforms, users expect responses through social media much more quickly than traditional methods like email. Don't let your followers feel like you've forgotten them or let them think that their comment or question is unimportant.

Excellent Google+ examples include:

Red Bull <https://plus.google.com/u/0/+RedBull/posts>

Red Bull doesn't post updates about the product itself, instead the brand focuses on appealing to the interests of the Red Bull community and Red Bull drinkers. This is a great example of marketing a brand horizontally and how to engage with consumers.

The content is exciting and varied.

Capri Laguna <https://plus.google.com/u/0/116899342941711619603/posts>

Capri Laguna posts captivating content about the area surrounding the hotel and Laguna Beach. The brand uses the new Google+ option, Collections, to organize content for customers at the different stages of the customer cycle: potential customers, current customers, and former customers.

Instagram is a fun and popular photo and video sharing app. Use your mobile phone to take a photo, then choose a filter to transform the image and share with followers.



- Visual Content
- Profile
- Hashtags

Instagram is a social media platform to provide your audience with unique **visual content**, while encouraging community engagement. Instagram allows users to share photos and videos to other networks like Facebook, Twitter, and Foursquare.

Create a **profile** for your brand on Instagram and populate with content that builds an engaged community. For more information: <https://business.instagram.com/>

Use **hashtags to make it easier for people who don't follow you to find your content**. Choose hashtags that relate to your product or service and are actively searched for and used on Instagram.



Keep **hashtags** short and related to your content. Our recommendation is to use 16-17 relevant hashtags in a post. You can also add more tags in the comments, but no more than 30 on any one post is allowed.

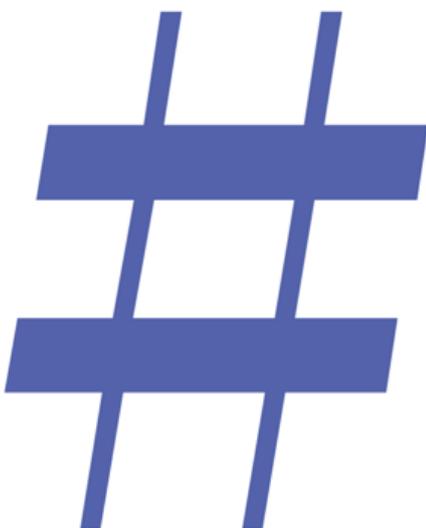
Instagram has preset **filters** to make images more attractive. You can use these to brighten, darken, contrast, and create a focal point on the image. You can also use the settings to customize your filters, crop, and rotate images.

Trends show images featuring the color red are liked more frequently than those that feature another dominant color. Peak Instagram times are early in the morning and late in the evening.

Beware of regramming, where you use another person or company's post. Copyright issues come into play since you are using someone else's images and original content, which cannot directly share and link back to the original post.

Videos can be between 3-15 seconds. Make it count!

Create hashtags you want customers to use, advertising using certain taglines that identify your brand. This allows followers and potential followers to search those hashtags and see what your brand is all about.



Hashtags should be a word or short phrase, and easily searchable. Choosing a username and creating hashtags that directly relate to your business make it easier for your brand to spread its message and for customers to identify you. Examples could be:

#SimplificationServices #QuickStartGuide
#ebook #SocialMedia



Create a theme for your content and be consistent. Tell an interesting story about your brand through your images and captions.

Spread out your posts throughout the day. Strive to be interesting to your audience.

Engage with your followers. Just as on other social media platforms, comment, follow back, and respond in order to build your online community.



Follow the

80/20 rule:

Promote your company's services or products no more than 20 percent of the time.



To see some examples of successful Instagram feeds, check out:

Sharpie <https://instagram.com/sharpie>

In order to connect with the teen market, the brand **pays attention to what motivates and inspires them**. Sharpie **showcases drawings and product shots generated in-house**. The brand also **communicates with their teen fans**. The brand comments on photos tagged with #Sharpie and responds to comments on their own photos.

Whitehall Lane Winery <https://instagram.com/whitehalllane>

Whitehall Lane, a 20-year-old Napa Valley winery, is regulated by the federal Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau and is limited to how they can promote the brand on social media. They cannot run contests that give away wine, and they must monitor user-generated content for anything that might promote irresponsible drinking. Whitehall Lane **likes Instagram photos** of complementary brands that promote tourism in Napa Valley. The winery focuses on engagement with current fans by rewarding them informally by liking their photos on Instagram. As a result, fans share Whitehall Lane content.

Social media is a place for building a community of followers and engaging genuinely with potential and current customers. Social Media marketing levels the playing field allowing small businesses to compete with larger companies.

At [Simplification Services](#), we help small business owners and entrepreneurs:

- Decide which Social Media will attract their ideal client
- Save time and frustration by handling this piece of marketing for them
- Gain more local visibility helping their business to be found easily

Our Social Media Packages include:

- Setup of your accounts and profiles on various social networking sites
- Social Media Management of your accounts based on the schedule of your choosing
- Training, as needed
- Monthly reports

Contact us today to find out how we may help you grow your business online through social media marketing!

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