



Social Media Best Practices

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Introduction

Social media marketing is changing constantly, and for each channel, there are clear guidelines and best practices. You don't need to be on EVERY social media channel, only those you can commit to using on a regular basis.

FIVE KEYS TO SUCCESS

1

CONSISTENCY

- **Social media feels casual, but for business, it isn't.** These are tech companies with sophisticated algorithms that follow rules that have a big impact on your business' success.
- This means knowing that you can't post once this week and eight times next

week, you can't always use the same content on Facebook that you would on Instagram, and you can't schedule monthly posts of the same flyer for your business.

- You must choose the channels you have the time to invest in, make a plan and stick to it to make sure you're not getting punished by the algorithm.

A consistent posting frequency will help you in the algorithm and in your planning. Ex:

- Instagram (cross-post to Facebook): Post 3x / wk
- Instagram Stories: Post 2-3x / wk

Once consistency is achieved, then you can amp up the cadence if needed.

2

BALANCE OF CONTENT

- The **variety of content** you post is what keeps people interested. It's important to have content pillars (think of them like sections in the newspaper) and create a balance with this content. While it is appropriate to post about discounts or sales, it will get really old if that's all you post about.
- **For example, a family-owned car service company in New Jersey might have these pillars: Discounts/Sales, Car Talk, Weddings, New York/New Jersey Appreciation, Behind the Scenes/Family Business.**

3

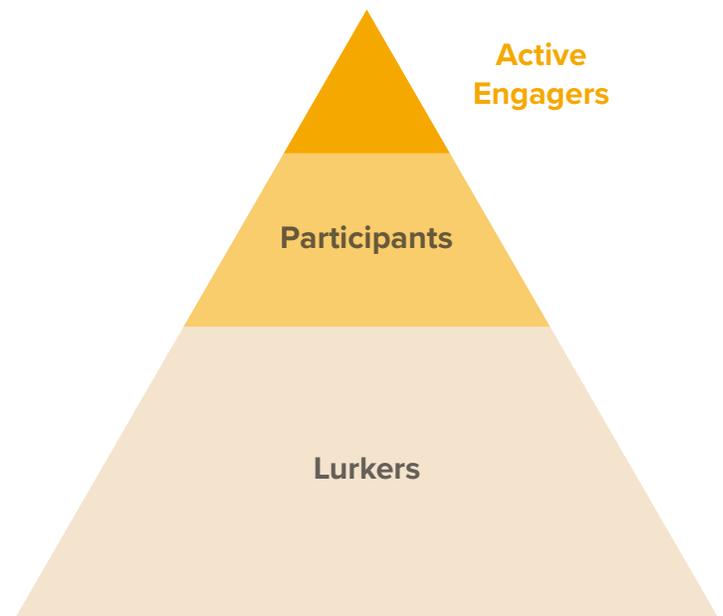
KNOW YOUR VALUE - AKA WHY THEY FOLLOW YOU

- The majority of people who follow/like/'fan' a page for a simple reason - **because they like that brand!** They are typically people who are more engaged and have made a purchase before. They want to know more about you and your story... but, don't get too caught up in that. **56% of people** say they follow a brand to know about sales and discounts ([source](#)). You can get insights to WHY people follow you from messages and comments - and give them what they want while staying true to your brand.

4

TRIANGLE RULE: LURKER, FOLLOWER, LIKER, COMMENTER, FAN

- **It's not enough for someone to just follow you, they have to engage with you, too.** (This is why paying for people to like your page is a bad idea!)
- 90% of people are lurkers (meaning they will never like/comment), 9% are participants (meaning they will 'like' a post), and only 1% will actively engage by commenting or creating new posts.
- Your goal is to get your lurkers to be **participants**, and your



participants to be **actively engaged**. This will develop a deeper relationship with them, while also improving the algorithm for your pages.

- The best way to do this is to **ask your community questions!** People also are more likely to ‘like’ content that is some kind of news or announcement (different than the status quo).

5

DEVELOP YOUR BRAND VOICE

- Every brand has a voice - you may not realize this, but you already know this! Sometimes a brand’s voice is obvious through a spokesperson (like the Geico Gecko) or owner (like Papa John), but other times it’s just an identifiable “vibe” (like knowing the difference between how a McDonalds commercial feels compared to a Starbucks). Creating a brand “voice” is what allows you to really engage with your customers, so you can build loyalty. It’s the difference between a flyer that says “50% off for Veteran’s Day” and telling your customers that you’re a veteran-owned business doing a giveaway for veterans.
- Many small businesses can default to the “voice” of their owner, whether they are the designer of a clothing brand or the owner of a family business. But it’s still valuable to sit down and think about what the “voice” of your brand is. Consider these questions:
 - ✓ Who do I want people to envision speaking for my brand? Are they young? Old? A peer? A student? A professor? A mom? A designer? Their friend? A team of people?
 - ✓ What values do I want my brand to exude? Experience? Fun? Trustworthiness?

- ✓ How does my brand voice deal with conflict?
- ✓ What are some phrases or words would my brand NEVER say?

Channel Breakdown - know what each social media channel is best for, and how to use them

THE BIG TWO

FACEBOOK

- Who should use it?
 - **Facebook is important for almost all businesses**, even if only to serve as a secondary “homepage” for your business with basic information about location, hours and contact. Some businesses now think of it as a phonebook listing.
- How often should I post?
 - At least 2-3x a week

- What kind of content should I post?
 - Facebook is the most flexible in TYPE of posts, and needs to have the best mix - you can post videos (but always give them subtitles - most people will watch video on Facebook without sound!), links, photos, comments or questions!
 - Pay attention to your blend of content here - make sure that whatever TYPE of post you're doing, it's a **nice blend of promotional and "fun" brand content.**
- Other important factors:
 - Make sure to check your messages and respond to them in a timely fashion - this is very important not just to your customers, but to Facebook as well.
 - Responding to public comments from potential customers both makes your business look responsive, AND greatly increases the reach and engagement on your posts.
 - If you have a very active ongoing customer base (ex: repeat customers, tech items that need customer service, or if your customers are likely to share/discuss things they make with your products such as food or crafts), setting up a Facebook Group is one of the best ways to keep in touch on social media.
 - Facebook lends itself to **building a strong, loyal customer base through community** - but doing so does require the investment of time to monitor comments and posts.





INSTAGRAM

- Who should use it?
 - **Most brands**, particularly those that create a tangible product that lends itself to photography. Some service brands are able to build strong presences on Instagram as well by making their Instagram brand about the lifestyle and people on their team.
- How often should I post?
 - At least 2-3 times a week in posts, AND 2-3 times a week with more informal content in Stories.
- What kind of content should I post?
 - Here it will all be about photos and videos - remember, most brands will only be able to have ONE link on Instagram, and that's on their bio page. **You need to be so engaging that people take the extra step to click to your homepage.**
 - Stories are where you can be most informal and give the best view into your business. You can do behind-the-scenes photos and video, polls, post product guides to your highlights, or just speak directly to your customer in video!
 - As with Facebook, **pay attention to your blend of content - mix it up.**
- Other important factors:
 - **Don't use stock images for Instagram** - even if you aren't the world's best photographer, images that FEEL like your brand will be better than stock images.

Content strategy

Instagram is changing rapidly, first with stories eclipsing feeds and now with reels taking over both! IGTV is also gaining in popularity and lives are becoming more and more common. Adopting a 4x4 or 5x5 approach for Instagram is the best way to ensure you are connecting with all of your followers.

The 4x4 strategy is easy; essentially, pick a topic for the week and then do a mix of sharing formats for that topic eg. a post, a live, a story and a reel all on the same topic. Then do the same mix, or a different one on a new topic the following week. If the target is a younger audience, stories, lives and reels are the way to get their attention.

Hashtags

Hashtag exposure on Instagram is better than on Facebook but not quite as good as Twitter. Currently, the maximum number of hashtags per post is 30. It's important to vary your hashtags post by post, as Instagram punishes and even blocks you as "spam" for repeating the same hashtags on multiple posts.

Likes, shares and saves

While you may think that Instagram is all about the likes, they're actually of lowest importance for your feed ranking. Your feed ranking determines how often you show up on a follower's Instagram feed. Saves are the best, think of them as a "super like." A save means that your post was so valuable, that a follower kept it to return to later. Highly informative posts

are great for saves as well as witty quotes, memes or clever captions. Shares rate above likes for your feed ranking and below saves. Highly likable, viral content will help generate shares. Develop some infographic-like posts to get those sweet, sweet saves.

Captions

You may have noticed a general trend of Instagram captions increasing in length. The strategy here is to hook followers with a clever, attention-grabbing image and then convert them in the caption. Using spacing, bullet points or emojis will help make your caption easy-to-read and scannable.

FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM CONTENT TOPIC CATEGORIES

Social Media Content Series	
Brand-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loyalty/word of mouth: Share a story, review, or experience • Office behind the scenes • Team bios and introductions • Our story, values videos
Promotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dispensary partnerships • Sale or discount • New products
Lifestyle/Just For Fun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just-for-fun: Memes and jokes • News and updates about the medical marijuana world (regulations, etc.) • Witty quotes

OTHER OPTIONS

LINKEDIN

- Who should use it?
 - **Mostly B2B, some B2C** | Primarily those who work in HR or recruiting, tech companies, and other white collar professions where networking is important to sales.
- How often should I post?
 - At least once a week, but more dependent on news in your industry.
- What kind of content should I post?
 - **Anything that establishes you as an EXPERT in your field** - LinkedIn is not just about WHO you know, but WHAT you know. This means that you can get away with a bare minimum of just sharing your business' takes on important blogs and industry news, or your own business' blogs and updates on projects.

PINTEREST

- Who should use it?
 - B2C Direct | **Brands typically in high-visual appeal sectors** (ex: beauty, food, interior design) that have a long conversion window - in other words, products that people are likely to spend a lot of time thinking about before converting.
- How often should I post?
 - You don't have to post frequently to Pinterest, but you do need to build up curated areas of interest and regularly update them - say once a month.
- What kind of content should I post?
 - Curate boards relevant to your business, with an eye toward **inspiration**

and long-term planning. This could be individual images that people would pin to their wedding inspiration or home organization boards, or blogs that offer tips relevant to your business.

TWITTER

- Who should use it?
 - B2B or B2C | **Comedy, fashion, politics, sports, and television thrive in conversation on Twitter.** HOWEVER, Twitter is not a strong play for most small businesses - it requires too much effort and maintenance for a low return on investment. If your business is already on Twitter or interested in Twitter, we can help you review your presence and create a tailored plan.

TIKTOK

- Who should use it?
 - B2C or Specialized B2B | **Young, visual brands that can feel organic and native on TikTok.** Like Twitter, TikTok requires a high level of personal investment, but it can yield high engagement returns for the right brands. If your business is already on TikTok or interested in TikTok, we can help you review your presence and create a tailored plan.

IMAGE SIZE GUIDE

It's key to make sure your images are the right size for the channel you're posting them on - this way, it looks professional and nothing gets cut off.

Image size dimensions change regularly. You can go to [Buffer's Ideal Social Media Image Guide](#) or [SproutSocial's Guide to Social Media Image Sizes](#) to find always up-to-date information.

KNOW YOUR HASHTAGS

Your branded/owned hashtags are the **things you want people to associate you with**, and to be able to search for you by.

These could include your brand name, any major taglines, and very specific hashtags related to your products.

Non-branded hashtags are the top hashtags for your industry, which you should be able to find by searching social media for your industry, and by looking at non-branded hashtags used by other popular brands in your industry.

Top Branded Hashtags		

Top Non-Branded Hashtags

KNOW YOUR INDUSTRY

Keep your friends close, and your enemies closer. Keeping an eye out on what people are doing in your industry can inspire and inform your social media strategy.

Top Industry Accounts

DAILY SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT TASKS

For every channel your brand maintains a presence on, expect to do a daily check of the following. A daily 30 minute spot on your calendar should be all you need.

- ✓ Check notifications and “Like” or reply to any new comment or post, asking a question if appropriate. This helps keep people engaged!
- ✓ Search for tags of your brand, or use of your hashtags
- ✓ Like 15 new/recent posts
- ✓ Comment if appropriate
- ✓ Follow 1-2 customers or engaged users
- ✓ Like 15 posts from accounts your brand follows
- ✓ Follow and comment on 3 new accounts (either in your industry or your community/audience)

To get started, please contact Angela at...



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