



Own the Social Sphere

Your ultimate guide to social media

Connections that matter

No matter your industry, connecting with your audience is central to building your brand, running your business, and having a well-rounded marketing strategy. It's not just what you say but who you're saying it to, as well as where, how, and when.

Social media is a chance for you to make the connections that will help you thrive in your business and as a marketer. By focusing on how to develop content that clicks, you'll find your business will flourish with your following.

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Conducting a Social Media Audit

A social media audit allows you to assess your current social media channels and see how they are performing against your business goals. By evaluating your social media accounts, you can easily identify what is working well, what needs improvement, and what can be eliminated.

Use this worksheet to audit your current social media accounts. Gain insights about how your social media strategy is currently working and get an idea of what you can improve on for the future. Tip: Make a fresh copy for each channel you currently use.

Platform:

Most Recent Post Date:

Total # of Published Posts:

Goals:

1.

2.

3.

Hashtags:

KPIs:

1.

2.

3.

Notes:

Followers

Impressions

Engagement change*

Top performing
content types

Top 5 best
performing posts

Likes

Reach

Follower change*

1.

1.

2.

2.

3.

3.

Shares

CTR

Were goals achieved?

4.

4.

Yes

No

5.

5.

*Change since last audit

**See page ## for a metrics glossary

Questions to Ask Yourself:

1. What type of content is achieving my performance goals? (video posts? reels? stories?)
2. If your goals were not achieved, why do you think that is?
3. What type of content has the highest engagement?
4. Are the posts/content getting the same response on each platform?
5. Does certain content perform better on one platform than others?
6. Is one platform performing better?
7. How have your follower and engagement metrics changed over time? Have they gone up or down?
8. Are your posts aligned with your brand voice? If not, are the posts aligned with your brand voice performing well?

Auditing Your Competitor's Accounts

Auditing your competition is a great way to stay on top of trends and target potential customers. In auditing your competitors' accounts you'll want to pay attention to:



Account followers
(Total followers and influential accounts followed)



Post Engagement
(High and low)



Hashtags Used
(Pay attention to the top hashtags used)



How Often They Publish



Content
(Type and messaging of top performing pieces)

Competitor:

Platform:

Total Account Followers

Influential Accounts Followed

1.

2.

3.

Post Frequency

Engagement rate

Audience growth*

Hashtags used

Most recent post date

Total # of published posts

Top 5 best performing posts

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Platform:

Total Account Followers

Influential Accounts Followed

1.

2.

3.

Post Frequency

Engagement rate

Audience growth*

Hashtags used

Most recent post date

Total # of published posts

Top 5 best performing posts

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Platform:

Total Account Followers

Influential Accounts Followed

1.

2.

3.

Post Frequency

Engagement rate

Audience growth*

Hashtags used

Most recent post date

Total # of published posts

Top 5 best performing posts

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Know Your Audience

Marketing means nothing without an audience. You want your messages, designs, and videos to be seen and, more importantly, to be seen by the right people — those who are primed to engage with your content and take an interest in your business. These people are your target audience.

Social media marketing is no different. Finding the right target audience is key to building a successful presence in the social sphere.

Determining your target audience

To understand who your target audience is on, you'll need to take the time to research, refine, and repeat.

1 Research

Data is everything when it comes to developing a quality target audience. You'll want to make some educated guesses about who your social media target audience will be based on your current customer base, but then you're going to have to back them up by collecting the appropriate data as you test and refine your audience target.

2 Demographic data

The first step to determining your target audience is to take a deep dive into the demographics of your current customers. Think about the people who are purchasing your products or booking your services.



Some demographics you'll want to pay attention to are: age, income, gender, location, job/career.

3 Search out your audience

As you recognize what your customer base looks like, you'll have a good understanding of the type of users to gear your content towards online. The first step is to find where your audience is hanging out online. Remember that your audience might not be present on every platform.

4 Find your competition

Use your competition as fuel for your social media marketing efforts. Find competitors within your industry and see what kinds of content they are posting and who their audience is.

5 Repeat and refine

It's important to remember that your audience will grow and change as your business does. Keep your finger on the pulse of what's happening in your social sphere by repeating the cycle every quarter and refine your target audience(s) when necessary.

Know Your Audience (cont.)

How to Attract Followers

Getting people to notice your business takes work and attracting followers can seem like a tough challenge. But fear not, we've got you covered with some top-tier tips and tricks to help you pique potential customers' interest and see your follower count skyrocket.

1 Start with your base

When you first create your social media accounts, start with your base to attract followers. This includes your friends, family, and current clients. Ask your base to follow your accounts and spread the word about your business.

2 How to grow beyond your existing base

Once you've tapped into your stores of loyal fans, it's time to figure out new ways to grow your social following. Hashtagging, following relevant accounts, and sharing links to your other marketing and social channels will help you to expand your social reach.

3 Hashtagging

Hashtags are a great resource for getting your content seen by potential customers. Tag your content with no more than ten relevant and/or trending hashtags to make sure your content is easy to discover.



Sources like [WhatTheTrend \(@WTT\)](#) will teach you [how to find hashtags](#).

4 Follow relevant accounts

Following user accounts and business accounts relevant to your brand can help you grow your presence and expose your content to new customers. Just be sure to follow credible accounts, don't purchase followers, and don't follow a ton of accounts in one visit (you'll end up looking like a bot).

5 Cross-channel CTAs

Encourage customers to follow your social media accounts by adding clickable links or QR codes to your email marketing, print materials, and website.

Target Audience

It's not enough to craft quality content. You have to make sure that your content is seen by the people who are primed to engage with and invest in your business. Use this worksheet to outline your target audience(s) for each platform you intend to use.

1. Who is your target audience:

ex: Students and local young families who like good coffee and pastries

2. What is their age:

3. Gender:

4. Audience goals:

ex: To get caffeinated, be a part of a tight-knit community, to eat really good food

5. Values:

ex: Supporting the local community, work-life balance, intellectualism

6. Social Media Platform(s):

ex: Instagram/Facebook

Select the Perfect Channel

The world of social media is vast and varied. Different channels attract different users, host different types of content, and have different standards about what posts appear at the top of your feed. Use the data below to help you select the perfect channel for your business.

Facebook

Demographics

Average Age: 25-34

Gender: 44% female, 56% male
(no other genders measured)

Time spent per day: 31 minutes

Content Types

- Sharing events
- Webinars
- Company updates

Instagram

Demographics

Average Age: 18-24

Gender: 48% female, 52% male
(no other genders measured)

Time spent per day: 33 minutes

Content Types

- Memes
- Video content and reels
- Event showcase and promotion, bite-sized content, hints and tips

LinkedIn

Demographics

Average Age: 25-34

Gender: 44% female, 56% male
(no other genders measured)

Time spent per day: 69% of users access the network daily

Content Types

- Blog
- Podcasts
- Company announcements

YouTube

Demographics

Average Age: 25-34

Gender: 46% female, 54% male
(no other genders measured)

Time spent per day: 49 minutes

Content Types

- Product demos
- Customer testimonials
- Event recaps
- Q&As
- Business ads

Select the Perfect Channel (cont.)

Pinterest

Demographics

Average Age: 25-34

Gender: 76% female, 17% male,
7% unspecified

Time spent per day: 14.2 minutes

Content Types

- Product-centric posts
- Ideas to inspire product use
- Mood boards

X

Demographics

Average Age: 25-34

Gender: 37% female, 63% male
(no other genders measured)

Time spent per day: 34 minutes

Content Types

- Timely updates
- Brand awareness content
- Customer testimonials

Threads

Demographics

Average Age: 29% ages 25-34,
20% 18-24

Gender: 57% men / 43% women

Time spent per day: 3 minutes

Content Types

- Text
- Videos
- Polls

Bluesky

Demographics

Average Age: 35% - 18-24,
27.67% 25-34

Gender: 60% men, 40% women

Time spent per day: 9 minutes

Content Types

- Text
- Videos
- Images

Engage More With Social

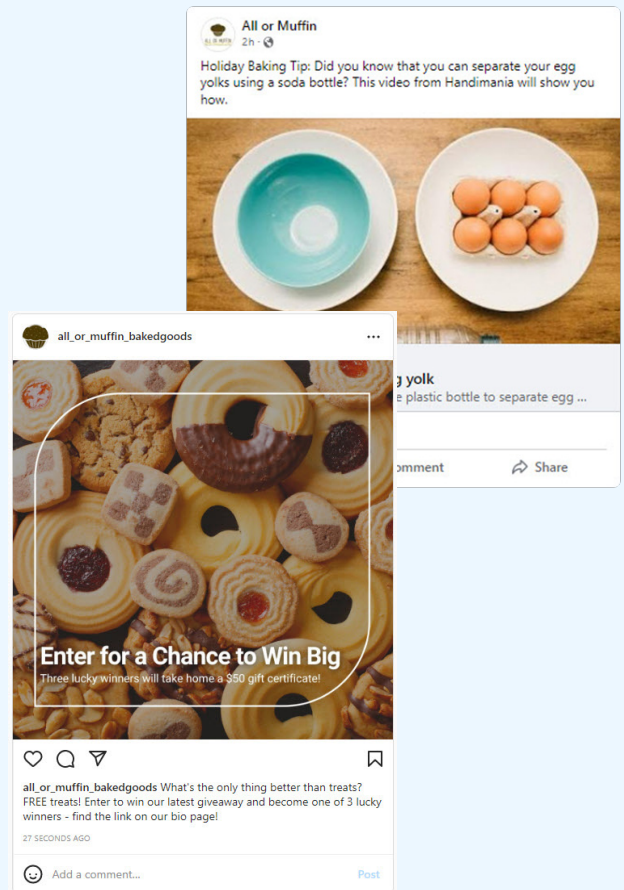
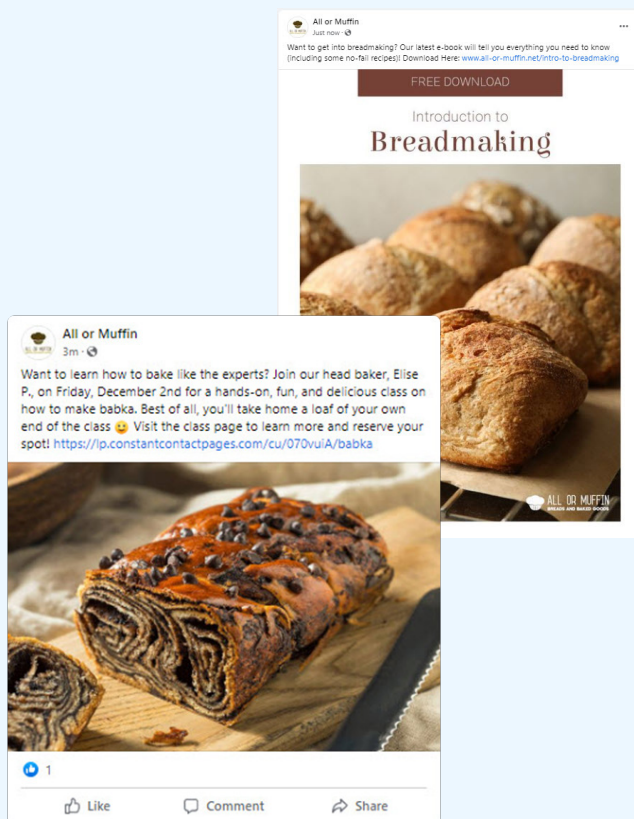
Social media plays a major role in reaching a larger audience. By producing various kinds of social content, you can reach more people and easily achieve your business goals. Incorporating each content type into your social feed allows you to maintain an engaged audience throughout the year. Below are some ideas to help you get started.

Drive Awareness

Increases familiarity with your business, product, or service and can increase your social following.

Goal: Educate and boost public awareness

- Q&A interviews
- Questions
- Fill-in-the-blanks
- Behind-the-scenes photos/videos
- Tips and tricks
- Content promotion (blogs, etc.)
- News/trending topics
- Company info
- Giveaways
- Contests
 - Enter-to-win
 - Share-to-win

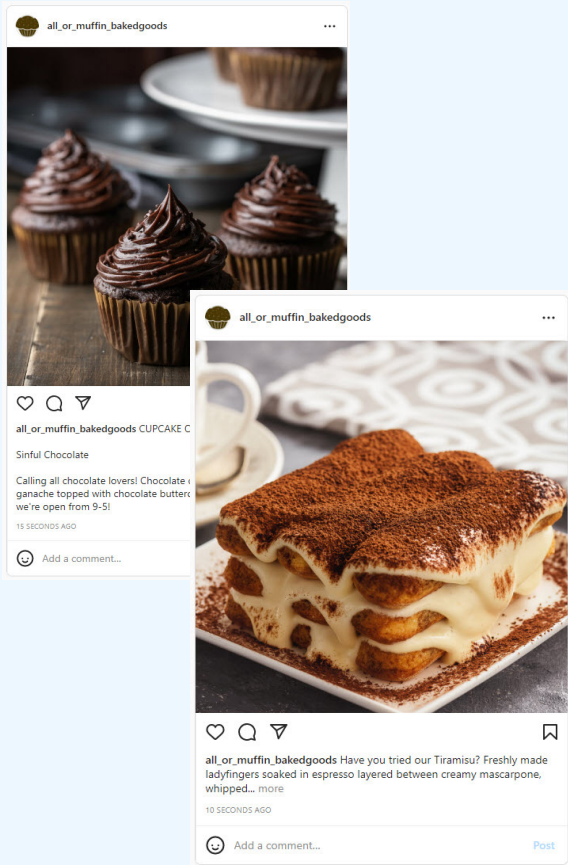


Grow Contacts

Invites customers/prospects to connect with you via email through sign-up forms or other lead-generation pieces.

Goal: Educate and boost public awareness

- Contests
- Enter-to-Win
- Downloadable content
- Email opt-in
- Event RSVPs



Promote Product/Service

Alerts customers and prospects to a product launch, service expansion, brand initiative, or promotion.

Goal: Increase revenue or acquire new customers

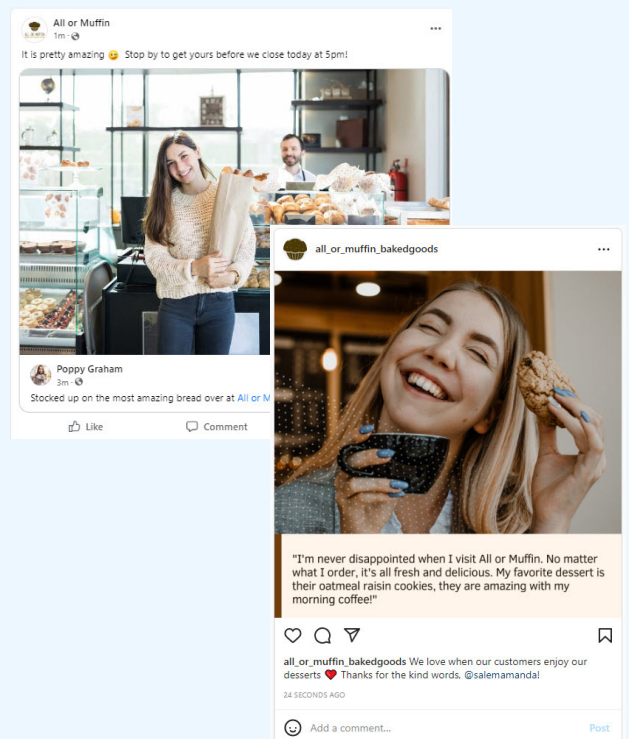
- Ads
- Promotions and sales
- Product features (images/video)
- Customer testimonials
- Product teasers/previews
- Tutorials
- Fundraising kickoffs

Customer Advocacy

The digital version of word-of-mouth advertising.

Goal: Educate and boost public awareness

- Customer stories/quotes
- Polls/voting
- User-generated content
- Product reviews



TRY IT YOURSELF



Social Media Goal Planning

Use this worksheet to develop social media goals. Set your goal and outline the actions or posts that will help you achieve your goals.

Goal 1:

Actions/posts

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Goal 2:

Actions/posts

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Goal 3:

Actions/posts

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Example:

Goal 1:

Increase brand awareness

Actions/posts

- 1. Baking tips carousel
- 2. Coffee art pictures
- 3. History of our company video
- 4. Coffee brewing techniques reel
- 5.

Goal 2:

Increase follower count

Actions/posts

- 1. Favorite coffee photo contest
- 2. Product giveaway
- 3. Coffee roasting 101 event
- 4.
- 5.

Goal 3:

Increase sales

Actions/posts

- 1. Coffee sale promotion post
- 2. New drinks highlight posts
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Create Content that Clicks

Once you know where to post, it's time to figure out what you want to say and when you want people to see your message.

Develop a content calendar

The first place to start is with your content calendar. As you plan out content, ensure to account for consistency in posting, but include various content types to keep your audience engaged. It's okay to have spaces in your content calendar. Social media is a fast and evolving marketing channel; there's always room for doing things on the fly. Leave room for current trends while maintaining a regular schedule.

Repurposing content

As you watch your content flourish on the web, take note of the pieces that can be repurposed for future use. Remember, there is no use in reinventing the wheel — when content works, it works.

Here are some ideas on how to repurpose your content:

- 1 Turn blog post content into an Instagram carousel
- 2 Create an infographic or checklist from a popular guide or ebook
- 3 Take a step-by-step guide and turn it into a video
- 4 Share your email newsletter to your feed

The Keys to Content Success

The good news is you're not in your social media journey alone.

Copywriting: What you say matters, so it's essential to think about the kind of stories your audience wants to hear, and what you want them to know about your business. To help you get off the blank page, consider playing around with [AI technology](#) — just remember that the content and creativity is ultimately up to you.

Imagery: Photography, video, and design help people to see what your brand is all about. Original images are best to help you show off the personality of your brand. Still, if you don't have access to high-quality original images, there are some free and paid stock image websites, like [Unsplash](#), [Shutterstock](#), [Pexels](#), and [Adobe Stock](#).

Scheduling: Consider investing in [social media scheduling software](#) to save time and resources. Scheduling allows you to plan out content in advance and gives you a better bird's eye view of what kinds of posts you've got planned across channels.

Content Calendar

Use the worksheet below to plan out your social media content for the month.

[illegible]

Social Campaign Planning

Use this worksheet to help you develop a social media campaign. Enter your goal and outline the posts you'll create to achieve it.

Campaign Goal:

	Post 1	Post 2	Post 3
Content Type			
Caption/Message			
Call to action			
Links			
Post Date			
Design Ideas			
Social Channels			
Hashtags/Keywords			

Example:

Campaign Goal: Increase event signups

	Post 1	Post 2	Post 3
Content Type	Static design	Video reel	Image carousel
Caption/Message	Get ready to get your bake on! Our strudel class is coming up soon. Save your spot today.	This apple strudel can be yours, made with your own two hands when you sign up for our strudel class. Only a few spots left!	This is your last chance to sign up for Bakeshop's apple strudel making class. We hope to see you there!
Call to action	Sign up	Claim your space	Huzzah for strudel
Links	signup.bit.ly	signup.bit.ly	signup.bit.ly
Post Date	X/X/XXXX	X/X/XXXX	X/X/XXXX
Design Ideas	Static image of people in the Bakeshop culinary lab	Montage of strudel making, dough stretching, etc.	Image carousel of stills from previous video
Social Channels	Instagram, Facebook	Instagram, Facebook	Instagram
Hashtags/Keywords	#BakeshopStrudel	#BakeshopStrudel	#BakeshopStrudel

Social Platform Size Guide

Use the information below to present your content in the best way possible on various social platforms.



Facebook

- **Profile photos:** Must be at least 170 x 170 pixels.
- **Cover photos:** Appear at 820 x 312 pixels.
- **Post images:** Have a recommended size of 1080 x 1080 pixels.



Instagram

- **Profile images:** Appear on your homepage at 110 x 110 pixels.
- **Image thumbnails:** Appear on your profile at 1012 x 1350 pixels. Square photos are 1080 x 1080 pixels and rectangular photos should have a 4:5 aspect ratio.
- **Story and Reels:** Should use a resolution of 1080 x 1920 pixels or an aspect ratio of 9:16. Reels appear on your profile at 1080 x 1440 pixels



Pinterest

- **Profile images:** Appear at 165 x 165 pixels on the homepage.
- **Board cover photos:** Appear at 222 x 150 pixels.
- **Pins (portrait):** Appear at 735 x 1102 pixels.



LinkedIn

- **Company logo image:** Should be 300 x 300 pixels.
- **Company business banner:** Size is recommended at 1128 x 191 pixels.
- **Post images:** Recommended size of 1200 x 1200 pixels.



YouTube

- **Channel profile image:** Should be 800 x 800 pixels.
- **Custom thumbnail images:** Should be 1280 x 720 pixels.
- **Cover photo:** Minimum size of 2560 x 1440 pixels with an aspect ratio of 16:9.
- **Shorts videos:** A recommended resolution of 1080 x 1920 pixels with a 9:16 aspect ratio.



X

- **Profile images:** Should be 400 x 400 pixels.
- **Banner images:** Should be 1500 x 500 pixels.
- **Video size:** Recommended resolution is 1600 x 900 pixels.
- **Post images:** Should be 1600 x 900 pixels.



Threads

- **Profile images:** Should be 110 x 110 pixels.
- **Video size:** Videos look best at 1080 pixels or 16:9 or 1:1 aspect ratios.
- **Post images:** Should be 1080x 1080 pixels or a 1:1 aspect ratio.



Bluesky

- **Profile images:** Should be 400 x 400 pixels.
- **Banner images:** Should be 1500 x 500 pixels.
- **Video size:** Recommended resolution is 1600 x 900 pixels.
- **Post images:** Should be 1080 x 1080 pixels.

How Often Should You Post on Social?

Social media is a great way to share important news, products, and updates with your followers, but how often should you be posting? Here are some guidelines to help you create a consistent and effective social schedule.



Facebook

Three to seven times a week



YouTube

Two to three videos per week



Pinterest

One to five posts per day



X

One to three posts per day



Instagram

Feed: No more than one time per day (treat Reels as part of your feed)

Stories: Three to 10 stories per day



LinkedIn

Three to five posts a week



Threads

Three to five posts a week

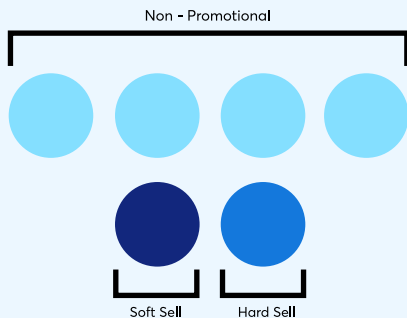


Bluesky

Three to five posts a week

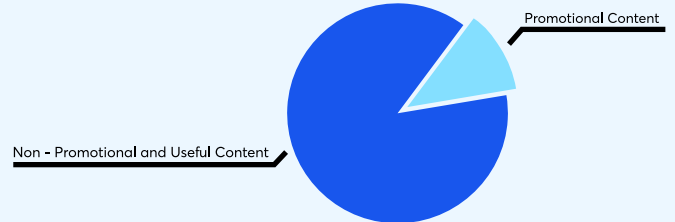
Content Mix Guidelines

Selecting the right content mix ratio can help you increase engagement and learn what post types resonate with your audience. Here are various content mix guidelines used by social media experts to get you started. Choose one to experiment with and use whatever works best for your business.



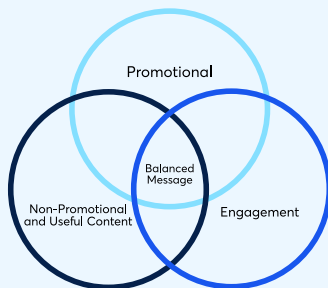
4-1-1 approach

For every six postings you publish, four should be non-promotional content, one should be a soft sell (think event invite), and one a hard sell (buy now).



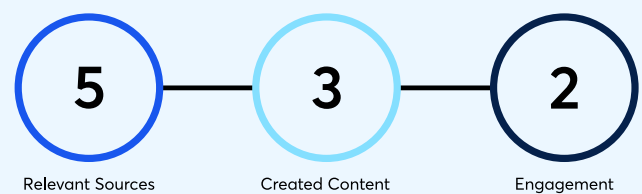
80/20 rule

Out of all the posts you publish, 80% of posts should contain non-promotional and useful content and 20% should contain promotional content.



The rule of thirds

Not to be confused with photography composition rules, the rule of third says 1/3 of your posts should be promotional, 1/3 should be non-promotional and useful, and 1/3 should engage with your audience.



5-3-2 approach

For every ten posts you publish, five should be posts from other relevant sources, three should be content you've created (promotional or otherwise), and two should engage your audience and humanise your brand.

Social Media Best Practices

You've set your goals, you've found your target audience, and you're ready for your company to shine on social media. As you craft content and revisit your social media strategy, make sure to check in with these best practices.



Go where your audience is



Post consistently



Schedule your content



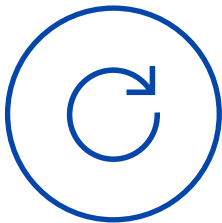
Engage with your audience regularly
(daily if possible)



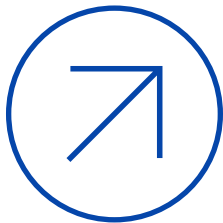
Curate content from credible sources



Follow community and content guidelines



Repurpose content



Stay on top of trending content and topics



Check in on your competition



Reevaluate your strategy regularly

Keep Your Content Visible

Shadow Banning: Even the name sounds scary, but fear not! We're here to give you the low-down on the social media practice and teach you how to avoid it.

Shadow Banning refers to the actions taken by social media platforms to limit the visibility of a post or user's content. Usually, bans are the result of violating community or content guidelines. Here's how to keep your content in the (visible) loop:

- Don't purchase likes or followers
- Don't post graphic content (violence, nudity, illegal drugs, illicit activities)
- Don't use too many hashtags or banned/irrelevant hashtags
- Don't spam other accounts
- Don't act like a bot

Social Strategy

To help you plan out your social media strategy take some time to go through this worksheet and identify your industry, audience, content, goals, and tactics.

1. What is my industry?

6. How often will you post in a week?

2. What content mix am I going to use?

4-1-1

80/20

The rule of thirds

5-3-2 approach

7. How often will you check your audience's engagement?

3. Why are you using each social media channel?

8. In what manner will you respond to your audience?

LinkedIn:

Instagram:

Facebook:

Youtube:

Pinterest:

Threads:

Bluesky:

9. In what manner will you respond to others' content?

4. What is your overall aim for using social media?

10. Trending hashtags to watch:

5. What campaign goal are you trying to achieve?

Engagement Includes:

- Likes
- Comments
- Shares
- Mentions

Social Strategy (example)

To help you plan out your social media strategy take some time to go through this worksheet and identify your industry, audience, content, goals, and tactics.

1. What is my industry?

baking/food service

2. What content mix am I going to use?

X 4-1-1
80/20
The rule of thirds
5-3-2 approach

3. Why are you using each social media channel?

LinkedIn: Press, connection to other businesses

Instagram: Main channel, show off product, attract followers

Facebook: Show off product, event management

Youtube: No presence

Pinterest: No presence

Threads: No presence

Bluesky: No presence

4. What is your overall aim for using social media?

Attract customers, schedule and promote events, build brand recognition and credibility through helpful tips, etc.

5. What campaign goal are you trying to achieve?

Increase monthly follower count, increase revenue from pre-order sales, increase event attendance

6. How often will you post in a week?

3-4 per week on Instagram, 2 per week to Facebook, 1 a week on LinkedIn

7. How often will you check your audience's engagement?

Daily on Instagram, twice a week on Facebook, once a week on LinkedIn

8. In what manner will you respond to your audience?

Quickly, with a casual, friendly tone that is eager to answer questions and deals with concerns generously

9. In what manner will you respond to others' content?

In a supportful way! We love to engage with fellow local businesses and the community.

10. Trending hashtags to watch:

#bakeshop #bakeshopsmithfield #smithfieldeats #VAeats #smithfieldVA #localbakeries #nytcooking #bonappetit

Engagement Includes:

- Likes
- Shares
- Comments
- Mentions

Social media metrics to watch

Here are some important reporting metrics for social media.

1. Reach

What it is: Measures the total number of unique users who have seen your social media content.

Benefit(s): Reach helps businesses understand their social media posts' overall visibility and potential audience size.

2. Impressions

What it is: Impressions represent the total number of times your social media content has been displayed, including repeat views by the same user.

Benefit(s): Measuring reach helps businesses gauge their posts' overall exposure.

3. Engagement

What it is: Engagement metrics include likes, comments, shares, and clicks on your social media posts.

Benefit(s): They indicate how well your content resonates with your audience and the level of interaction it generates.

4. Follower growth

What it is: The rate at which your social media followers increase over time.

Benefit(s): Tracking the growth of your social media followers over time helps businesses assess the effectiveness of their content strategy and audience-building efforts.

5. Click-through rate (CTR)

What it is: CTR measures the percentage of users who click on a link or call to action in your social media posts.

Benefit(s): It helps businesses evaluate the effectiveness of their content in driving traffic to their website or landing pages.

6. Conversion rate

What it is: Conversion rate measures the percentage of social media users who completed a desired action, such as making a purchase, signing up for a newsletter, or filling out a form.

Benefit(s): It helps businesses assess the effectiveness of their social media campaigns in driving desired outcomes.

7. Sentiment analysis

What it is: Sentiment analysis involves monitoring and analyzing the sentiment (positive, negative, or neutral) of social media mentions or comments related to your brand.

Benefit(s): It helps businesses understand the overall attitude towards their brand and identify areas for improvement or potential issues.

8. Social media referral traffic

What it is: This metric tracks the traffic your website receives from social media platforms.

Benefit(s): It helps businesses understand the impact of their social media efforts on website traffic and user engagement.

Measure Social Impact

Use this worksheet to measure your monthly social media impact. Enter the goal(s) you had for the month, the platforms you used, and your success metrics to help you determine what worked and what could be improved for the future.

Goal:

	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3
Platform			
Impressions			
Reach			
Likes			
Comments			
Shares			
Click-through-rate (CTR)			

What worked:

What could be improved:

Example:

Goal: Increase email subscribers by 3%

	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3
Platform	Instagram	Instagram	Instagram
Impressions	11k	11.3k	10k
Reach	14k	15.3k	13.3k
Likes	4,300	4,700	4,400
Comments	787	794	750
Shares	239	250	340
Click-through-rate (CTR)	1.2%	1.5%	1.3%

What worked: Shares increased over time

What could be improved: Click-through-rate decreased over time, consider testing different calls to action.

Conclusion: What You Can Do to Get Started

Now that you have all the knowledge you need to optimize your social media presence, it's time to get started by auditing your own social media presence and setting the goals that you want to achieve with future campaigns. Use the worksheets provided in this guide to help you along your way to owning the social sphere.

Constant Contact's social media tools allow you to reach new audiences and grow your business. Post and engage with your social channels in one integrated, streamlined location.

Get the free trial