

How to Use Social to Communicate Key Business Objectives

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People of all ages use social media for personal and professional purposes.

Reasons are: staying in touch with friends, gathering information, shopping, entertainment, news sources, etc.

Americans now spend more than 2 hours a day on social and consistently use social first to get live information updates. As of January 2020, 79% of the US population has a social media profile.

Why Does Social Work for Businesses?

It builds brand awareness.

Using social for brand awareness allows your brand to stay top of mind among your target audience. Positioning your brand as a thought leader, educator, or informant in the industry can greatly help your brand's presence. This indicated how many people on social know you exist and understand what kinds of products and services you offer.

It builds engagement.

Directing traffic to your website is an important step to develop your search rankings in Google, creating positive sentiment surrounding your brand and educating your audience to take the actions that you desire.

You get engaged with.

Constantly look for ways to positively interact with your audience. When you resolve problems promptly this improves your business' reputation and establishes trust with your audience. Having a large reach with low engagement is a bad sign because it shows that you don't have a marketing message or content that resonates. Reaching millions of people means nothing if they aren't interested in what you have to offer.

Obtain audience/consumer insights.

Your audience is active on social. Survey customers and learn about audience insights (brand perception). Spot trends to help make an effective social strategy/content calendar.

Opportunity to brand yourself.

Give your brand personality and/or a theme. Traditional advertising is losing focus and social influence is taking over. Humanize a brand, remove the robotic sales approach.

Grow your audience.

Considered a vanity metric, if you're not growing on social, you're likely not following best practices, like posting regularly, posting at the right times, using hashtags, etc.

How to Make Your Social Strategy

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Choosing the right channels

Investigate your audience, choose a platform, set meaningful goals, create a content calendar, manage your community.

What channels work for your content?

- Sharing lots of links? Twitter and Facebook.
- Have frequent updates or company news? LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and/or Instagram Stories.
- Video content? Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram.
- Visuals and pictures? Instagram or Pinterest.
- Heavily branded content? Instagram.
- Need leads? LinkedIn.

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Set meaningful goals

Goals help keep your strategy accountable, they guide your budget and help you pay attention to data.

SMART Goals:

- Specific: Your goals should be clear, simple, and defined.
- Measurable: You want a goal that has more than one metric to track.
- Attainable: Is this possible to achieve within your resources?
- Realistic: This is about getting real with yourself and ensuring what you're trying to achieve is worthwhile to you or not.
- Time-sensitive: Every goal needs a time frame, whether it's one year or several months.

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Content creation

- Create compelling visuals with tools like Canva or Photoshop, incorporate user generated content and interactive content, be aware of time sensitive content, and consider more digital content (video - long form and short form productions are continuing to dominate the social space.)
- Try to stick to a theme with compelling visuals and stick to content that is easily built out on a calendar.

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Community management

- You can't always expect customers to operate on "your time." Likewise, it's crucial to be able to reach and respond to followers in a timely manner.
- Post at the best times for engagement.
- Respond to inquiries and shout-outs ASAP.

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Assess results and optimize

Look at the metrics and your goals on a weekly or monthly cadence to assess what is and isn't working. Adapt to your strategy accordingly.

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Publishing

Utilize paid softwares like Hootsuite and Sprout Social, or free tools like Twitter scheduler and Facebook Creator Studio, to publish and schedule posts while also curating reports and tracking metrics, social listening, community management, and compiling competitor analysis.

Glossary

Algorithm: In the context of social media, an algorithm is how a social platform determines which content to display at any given time to a particular user. Social networks are notoriously secretive about how their algorithms work, but in general, they use clues based on a user's social relationships and interactions to determine which content that user will find most appealing.

Analytics: An umbrella term used to describe both social analysis tools and the information those tools provide. Most social networks include their own analytics tools to help businesses analyze how well their posts are doing for metrics such as reach, engagement, and follower growth.

Brand awareness: A social media metric that captures how likely people are to be aware of your brand. You can measure brand awareness for any given period by tracking the amount of attention your brand gets online in the form of mentions and engagement. The more people are talking about you online, the greater your brand awareness.

Click-through rate (CTR): A measure of how many people who view a social post, ad, or other piece of content click through to read more, buy, or take some other action. It's a useful metric because it measures how effectively your social content drives people to your owned web properties.

Conversion: This occurs when a social media user or visitor to your website takes a specific, desired action. Making a purchase is often the desired conversion, but it is not the only one. Other conversion examples include lead-generation actions like opting into a newsletter, registering for a webinar, or downloading a whitepaper.

Cost-per-click (CPC): A metric for how much each click costs in a pay-per-click advertising campaign. Cost-per-click and pay-per-click are sometimes used interchangeably, but they're actually two sides of the same coin. Pay-per-click is the type of ad model, and cost-per-click is the fee per click.

Dashboard: A social media dashboard is a tool that allows marketers and social media managers to manage all of their social platforms from one screen. A dashboard allows its users to schedule, post, view, and respond to both organic and paid social posts, and to create analytics reports. A dashboard is also an important tool for social listening.

Direct message (DM): A private message sent through a social platform. By default, DMs from non-followers are blocked or filtered into a secondary inbox. However, brands who wish to use DMs to interact with customers can change their settings to receive DMs from anyone.

Engagement: Any form of interaction with your brand on social media. Likes, comments, and shares are all forms of engagement.

Engagement rate: A measure of how many people interact with your social media content. There are several ways to calculate engagement rate, but all aim to calculate what percentage of people who were exposed to a post chose to engage with it in some way.

Evergreen content: Content designed to last for the long term. It's not tied to any specific event or promotion, and can bring traffic to your website for years to come.

Feed: An updated list of all the new content posted by the accounts a user follows on social media. Rather than being purely chronological, most social media feeds are controlled by an algorithm.

Followers: Are people who have liked (or "followed") your accounts on social media.

Handle: Your handle is your username on social media.

Hashtag: A word or phrase preceded by the "#" sign. Hashtags are used on social media to tag posts as part of a larger conversation (such as #HootChat) or topic (such as #Superbowl).

Impressions: A metric that counts how many times an ad or promoted post is fetched from the server and displayed on a social network. It is not a measure of how many people have seen the ad.

Influencer: A social media user with a significant audience who can drive awareness about a trend, topic, company, or product. From a marketer's perspective, the ideal influencer is also a passionate brand advocate.

Key performance indicator (KPI): A metric tracked over time to determine progress towards a valuable business goal. Social media KPIs might include audience growth rate, amplification rate, and customer satisfaction score.

Mention: The act of tagging a user in a social media message.

Metric: A quantitative measure of social media success. Put simply, it is a figure based on real numbers and can be tracked and measured over time. Vanity metrics include ego-boosting engagement statistics like comments, shares, and likes. Other metrics, like conversion rate, can help prove social return on investment.

Platform: A social network or a component of a social network.

Reach: Refers to the total number of people who have been exposed to a social post or ad. This metric does not necessarily indicate that all of these people have actually seen your content. They could have scrolled right past it, for instance. Reach simply indicates that the content appeared in the user's social feed at least once.

Retargeting: An online advertising strategy that aims to re-engage website visitors who left a site without converting. Retargeting starts with a small tracking tag embedded in your website's code. You can then target these prospects on other websites, including social networks.

Scheduling: Involves planning social media updates and content ahead of time using a social media management platform or other publishing tool.

Sentiment: A way of describing the way people feel about your brand on social media. Rather than just measuring the number of posts or engagements related to your brand, it captures the feelings and attitude contained in those posts.

Social listening: Begins with finding and assessing what is being said about a company, topic, brand, or person on social media channels. Then, the social team takes action based on what the analysis reveals. Taking action could be as simple as responding to a happy customer or as major as revising the brand strategy.

Targeting: The practice of selecting a specific audience for social ads to maximize conversions. Social networks offer many targeting options based on factors like demographics, location, and interests.

User-generated content (UGC): Content created by the regular people on social media, rather than brands. Brands collect that content through contests, branded hashtags, or simply reaching out to ask permission. When brands reshare that content with their own followers, they're implementing a UGC campaign.

Viral: To go viral on social media is to have a particular post bring in an unusually large number of engagements. An exceptional number of shares is the clearest sign of going viral, as your post spreads across the internet like a virus.