

GUIDE

How to create a social media strategy

A 5-step guide to developing your social media presence



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What we'll teach you

This guide highlights the five steps you need to create a social media strategy for your business.

Nearly [one third of the global population](#) are active social media users. Social media presents businesses with the opportunity to earn customer trust, showcase expertise, and meet potential customers. But businesses that lack a clear social media strategy struggle to get the customer engagement levels, insight, and sales they're looking for.



1. **Establish SMART social media goals**
2. **Audit your social media presence**
3. **Introduce a content strategy**
4. **Measure your progress**
5. **Adjust your strategy**

To get the most out of your social media efforts, your strategy should include the following:

- Determine which sites are most beneficial to post to and when to post to them
- Decide how large you want your social media presence to be
- Identify the right metrics to use to measure your progress towards social media goals
- Consider how to engage current and potential customers online

Create SMART social media goals

All business planning should start with defining clear goals, and social media is no exception. One of the biggest reasons why social media strategies fail is because goals aren't aligned with core business values. For long term success on social media, choose goals based on traffic, leads, and sales.

Start by writing down at least three social media goals that relate to or support your business objectives. SMART goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time based. Some examples are to increase brand awareness in key markets or to convert 30% of prospects to sales through social media. You'll notice that these social media goals don't revolve around vanity metrics such as Likes or Retweets.

Audit your current social footprint

To understand your current use and get to know what works with your audience, conduct an audit of your social media presence. Who is connecting with your business on social media, which social networks and content does your audience prefer, and what is your competition doing?

Conduct an inventory of your social media presence

If you already have brand representation on social media, do an inventory search for officially sanctioned and unauthorized pages representing your business. Take note of the number of followers, quality and quantity of activity or engagement, and whether all links work within each social profile. Delete or report any rogue or spammy accounts and consider amalgamating accounts if your business has sprawling social presence.

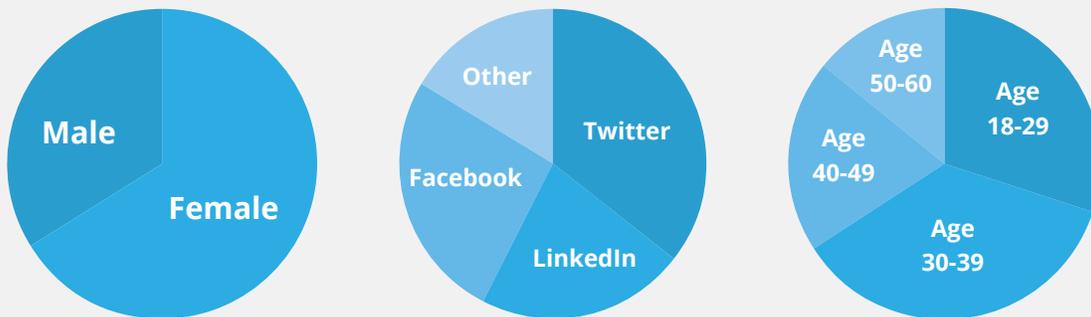
Social Media Site	URL	Followers	Last Activity Date
1.			
2.			

Get to know your customer

If your business isn't currently represented on social media, your first step is to decide which sites are most beneficial for your business. This is a great time to connect with internal stakeholders and other teams

to discover how you can better support them through social media. Invite customers to complete a quick survey (with incentive) to understand their demographic and preferred content and social media channels.

Example of survey response



Understand your competitive landscape

Investigate what your top competitors or industry influencers are doing on social media. Do they have a large social media footprint? What content resonates the most with their followers? Do an analysis of their strengths and weaknesses and let that inform your social media strategy.

	Social profile	Strengths	Weaknesses
Competitor #1.			
My business			

Develop your content strategy

Now that you've solidified your goals and have an understanding of your target audience, it's time to determine what content will help you reach both. A [comprehensive content strategy](#) should include:

- Types of content you will post and promote
- Frequency of sharing
- Engagement plan
- Target audience for each type of content
- Content execution plan
- Content promotion plan

[Create an editorial calendar](#) as a part of your content strategy. This should map your social media goals, target audience, and campaigns against a weekly or monthly calendar. Think about what content you can share across various channels that will support your business objectives.

Your content strategy may also involve creating posts in advance to be posted later. Use Hootsuite to schedule posts to whichever social profiles you'd like. Remember to put your scheduled posts on your editorial calendar so you don't forget about them.

Example of editorial calendar

	PUBLISH DAY	VENUE	MEDIA	CATEGORY	TAGS	AUTHOR	TOPIC / TITLE	ASSETS NEEDED	REPACKAGED & REMERCHANDISED
3	example	Blog	Case study	Direct Marketing	Email marketing	Fiala	How Stamatz helped XX College improve recruitment quotas 3 straight semesters with sequenced mail drops.	Write post, images, cite results.	Serves as one section of a "why choose Stamatz" video to be planned and produced.
4	example	LinkedIn Group	Q&A	Brand Marketing	Image	Smith	How well defined is your university's crisis communications plan?	Prep talking points for Q&A discussion.	Gather intelligence from Q&A discussion. Develop content for concentrated tutorials for small groups (fee based).
5	example	YouTube	Video	Digital Marketing	Mobile media	Davis	Demonstrate mobile-ready and non-mobile web sites. Include statistics of mobile use by target demo and best-practice usability requirements.	Variety of mobile phones, pre-select appropriate web sites, statistics.	Add video to Facebook.
6	example	Scrd	Report	Marketing Research	Research report	Brook	Recent findings of year-over-year retention rates for 2 institutions implementing a Stamatz strategic plan. (redact names if necessary.)	PDF with text, graphics, images	Write eNewsletter article, share with LinkedIn Group.
7	example	Facebook	Poll	Social Media	Community	Smith	What role does the institution have in fostering community-mindedness among enrollees? What ways is your university building community?	Facebook poll application	Link within eNewsletter to Survey-Monkey survey. Collect data; use to create a new report.
8	example	Slideshare	Powerpoint	Digital Marketing	Writing for the web	Benson	Presentation on eye tracking, readability, user-centeredness, tone, voice, etc.	Powerpoint with text, graphics, images	Concentrated tutorials for small groups (fee based).
9	example	Select from list of strategic sites	Post	Blog Commenting	NA	Retating 3 people	Comment on industry and trade blogs, providing Stamatz' POV on relevant topics.	NA	NA
10	example	Twitter	Storyt	Digital Marketing	Storytelling	Curvill	How to use Storyt to help your prospects experience campus life.	Image, intro text, prep questions	Blog post and/or webinar
11	example	Blog	Post	Social Media	Facebook, Twitter	Smith	Examine recent study that reviews use of Twitter and Facebook by professors in the classroom.	Access to study, write post, include link to Survey-Monkey poll allowing readers the opportunity to weigh in.	If enough poll results are received, write mini-report and publish to Facebook and Twitter, eNewsletter.
12	example	Blog	Podcast	Digital Marketing	Web analytics	Dodson	Review 3 most common GA set-up errors that can cost you valuable insight.	Research topic, sketch out script, practice and record. Use Burberry or other plug-in to add to WordPress.	Share via LinkedIn Group and Twitter.
13									

Track your social media success

Before you get into a content rhythm, check your analytics often to see how your social campaign or content is performing. Most likely, your audience prefers a variety of original content combined with relevant, trending posts.

Hootsuite offers advanced analytics and reporting so that you can easily find out who's reading, responding to, and sharing your content. Facebook Insights shares insights into your Facebook audience and content, while Google Analytics shows you who's viewing and engaging with your web pages. Remember to match your analytics up with your goals to ensure you're on the right track to success.

Tweak your social media strategy

With a general understanding of what resonates with your audience and supports your objectives, you can start to adjust your social media strategy accordingly. Re-write your content strategy based on your analysis and update goals as you've met them. Tweaking your strategy should be an ongoing process. Use analytics and feedback to guide you through updates.

My New Social Media Strategy

The following worked well to reach my goal of

1. _____
2. _____

The following did not work so well:

1. _____
2. _____

My goal for the next period is

In order to reach that goal, I will make these changes in my social media strategy:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Hootsuite helps you stay organized and save time while you audit your social media presence, manage your content strategy, and measure your progress.

[Learn more about Hootsuite Enterprise](#)



[Get Started Now](#)

About Hootsuite Enterprise

Partner with Hootsuite to accelerate your social transformation



Hootsuite Enterprise empowers organizations to execute business strategies for the social media era. As the world's most widely used social relationship platform, Hootsuite Enterprise enables global businesses to scale social media activities across multiple teams, departments, and business units. Our versatile platform supports a thriving ecosystem of technology integrations, allowing businesses to extend social media into existing systems and programs.

We help organizations create deeper relationships with customers and draw meaningful insights from social media data. Innovating since day one, we continue to help businesses pioneer the social media landscape and accelerate their success through education and professional services.

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