

Social Media 101

Platform Summaries

There are a lot of different platforms used for Social Media and while they all seem similar, they each have a different purpose. This section kind of goes over the differences and summarizes the uses of them. Before even considering posting on social media and such first identify which platforms you're going to be using and then make sure your profile is updated and informative. Whether it's your bio, your followings, your birthday, whatever it is make sure it is current and gives viewers information about you you're willing to share. More detailed statistics and information as well as specific usage of the platforms can be found at the bottom of this document. The social media platforms covered are:



Twitter

Twitter is good for news and getting the word out there. It's used for everything from personal information, business coordination, memes, and political information. The 280-word count is beneficial because it gives you the opportunity to create an almost "Click-Bait" writing style within your own tweets. You give them a taste and then link to your website. It's much more difficult to do on platforms like Facebook because having a (seemingly) unlimited amount of writing space and people won't click on the link because they expect all of the information to be there. If it isn't they're more likely to look for answers in the comments than in the actual link/article. One great way to use Twitter is through hashtags and replying to large tweets. This means if you want to tell Donald Trump why you don't like him while providing a unique reason, a respectful message, and keep it short you're going to get people who like and retweet your post.

	1 - Not at all	2 - Not really	3 - They can	4 - Usually	5 - Very Much
Are hashtags useful?					
Good for event information?					
Good for article/ website ads?					
Do long posts get a lot of attention?					
Do videos do well on this platform?					
Large user base?					
Organic growth?					
Good for use <u>at</u> an event?					
Good for use <u>after</u> an event?					

Instagram

Instagram, as I'm sure you've heard, is (basically) Twitter for people who can't read; to put it cynically. I personally think Instagram has the worst user interface and is a disgrace to social media, but a LOT of people use it, so it's difficult to ignore the opportunities it provides. Instagram is good for all kinds of images, especially artistic ones. Whether you see art as a good selfie, a canvas post, or a short video of music or an event it's good to post something that people will look at and double tap (like). Typically, those who use Instagram use it as a time-passer and not as a business mechanism, there are still a lot of business opportunities that can be found on it. One of the biggest difficulties with Instagram is it doesn't have a lot of Organic Growth, meaning it's difficult to gain a larger following without sliding a 5-dollar bill to a hipster page. Without Facebook's attachment to this platform, it would have 0 organic growth at all (arguably), but because Facebook is attached it gives you the opportunity to gain a following based on people you connect with on Facebook.

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Facebook

Facebook is the most well-known social media platform, it's also known to many old mothers not well versed in social media as "My-Face". Facebook has a very good user-interface. The only problem with it is that it is trying very hard to be the center of social media, the all-in-one experience. This means it is a very crowded social media platform, but there is still a lot of benefits and opportunities to using it. It's good for memes, business information, getting out event information (this could mean creating an event on Facebook or just advertising it), and for every type of media. Videos tend to do a lot better on Facebook which is why you see a lot of Instagram-esque pages posting pictures that are videos and super annoying. But Facebook is good for more personal communication and it does have some organic growth due to the widely-used sharing feature. It's also great for community feedback just because of the reaction feature as well.

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Tumblr

Tumblr is a unique social media platform. It's good for anonymous use but that doesn't mean it's not good for growing your business. It has a very wide variety of content as well, from porn, fan art, and community followings, to a strong LGBT community, and a lot younger people on there in comparison to other platforms. Hashtags are very important on this platform because it's really the only way to get started. And on top of that you can put 6,000 hashtags, and it won't take away from your post. While posting more than 3 hashtags on Twitter might seem a bit much to some people because it's shown directly in the post rather than a separate bar as it is with Tumblr. Getting a following is rather difficult for businesses but it is possible, the main user base is individualized and builds a community around a company or organization (think TV show, movie, celebrity, a movement, book, etc.). Advertising websites and other forms of media on this platform isn't a bad idea either, especially if you target the right audience.

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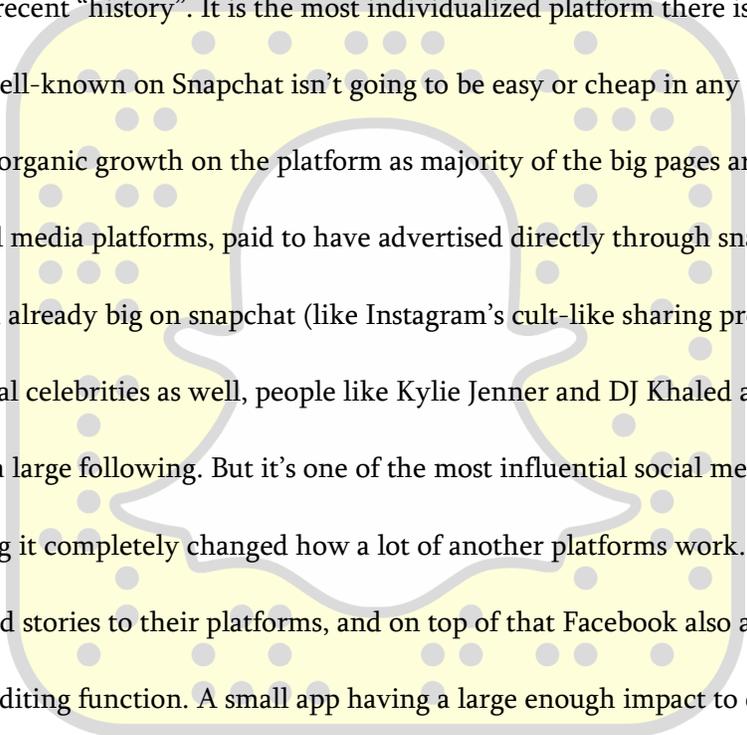
LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a great social media platform, the only issue with it is it is a business platform and nothing else. This means if you're looking to start a meme page, this isn't the place to do it. But because it's a business platform, getting your business started on the web or you started as an individual is a lot more straightforward on this platform. And while it isn't very good for daily updates on your personal life or even during an event, it is great for the before and after of an event, especially the after. Because at an event you can meet with people and then connect with them on LinkedIn and turn that 2 or 3 in a 1. It's good for getting the word out and spreading a message, because a lot of what you post will interest people you're connected with. This is something that LinkedIn has over Facebook because Facebook is where you friend everyone you know, even from high school. But LinkedIn is typically for people you know on a professional level. You're less likely to connect with someone from High School just because you knew them.

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Snapchat

Snapchat is probably one of the weirdest, least understood, and yet most influential social media platforms in recent “history”. It is the most individualized platform there is, which means that getting a business well-known on Snapchat isn’t going to be easy or cheap in any sense of the word. There is little to no organic growth on the platform as majority of the big pages are advertised through other social media platforms, paid to have advertised directly through snapchat, or covered by a media platform already big on snapchat (like Instagram’s cult-like sharing process). It’s very catering to individual celebrities as well, people like Kylie Jenner and DJ Khaled are constantly on Snapchat and have a large following. But it’s one of the most influential social media because once Snapchat became big it completely changed how a lot of another platforms work. Instagram and Facebook both added stories to their platforms, and on top of that Facebook also added a function like Snapchat’s picture editing function. A small app having a large enough impact to essentially push two of the largest social media platforms to adapt is a big deal. Vine did this to Instagram and forced the hipster-friendly platform to start allowing videos as well (RIP Vine).



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Hashtags are probably the most common similarity across social media. They are used (in some way or another) on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Tumblr, Medium, and even Pinterest.

They're a formula for organic growth, but even in places like Instagram that uses them a lot it doesn't necessarily mean you'll gain a lot of followers on them. This section will discuss what they are and

#hashtag how to use them.

If you don't know what hashtags are, they were originally called tic-tac-toe boards or the pound symbol. Now social media has adopted it into a way of collecting posts into one topic.

When you search a hashtag on Twitter for example, you'll see the number of posts with that specific hashtag and it could be in the hundreds or the thousands, or not at all. There are 3 ways you can really use a hashtag.

1. Use a hashtag that is either trending or already has a lot of posts in it, this will mean that more people will be searching it. The downside is that there is a much larger chance your post will "get lost at sea".
2. Use a hashtag that exists but not a huge amount of people are using. Huge amount is subjective but it's easy to determine based on the platform. If you type a hashtag and 100,000 people or 70,000 people have used it, that's a big hashtag. But if you search one and it says 2,000 or even 15,000, that's a relatively smaller one in comparison. You are less likely to get lost in the flood of things but at the same time there are going to be less people searching for that specific hashtag.
3. Lastly, create your own hashtag or use one that only a few dozen or a few hundred posts have. The benefit of this is you are probably not going to have your post flooded. But the downside is not many people are going to be using/searching for this hashtag. It's really good to use at events

and for large groupings where you can get a lot of people posting about the event with that hashtag.

Each social media platform uses hashtags in a similar way, but the way the user applies them to their post varies depending on the application. Instagram, for example, allows users to use dozens of hashtags without taking away from the post's integrity. This is because the text under an image allows you to enter bullet points and separate the caption from the hashtags. Which allows you to spam as many hashtags as you want and people seeing your post may not know how many you're using. Tumblr works in a similar way hides the hashtags through a lighter font and it's common to find posts with 20+ hashtags on it.

Twitter on the other hand uses hashtags in a more traditional sense. You are limited to the number of hashtags you can use because it can be annoying if you have an entire post of hashtags, a good rule of thumb is to keep the number of hashtags below 5, and closer to 3 if possible. Because the hashtags are consistently visible to readers, unlike Instagram where you can "hide" them.

Other platforms like Facebook have attempted to apply hashtags to their formula. Facebook does have hashtags, but based on my personal experience I have never met or seen someone that uses hashtags on Facebook. So it's not necessarily a waste, hashtags just won't have the impact they would on other sites like Twitter, Instagram, etc.

Trending

The term “trending” is well-known by definition, but in terms of social media many people have difficulties understanding how it correlates with the internet and posts. Trending can be referred to a post, a meme, or a hashtag. Commonly you’ll see on the news a trending hashtag on Twitter. But just because it is trending right now doesn’t mean it will be tomorrow or even in an hour. Trending refers to something that is posted about a lot in a short period of time. So, if there are 100,000 posts about #Bananas and 25,000 posts about #Oranges, the Bananas hashtag is obviously more popular but that doesn’t mean it’s trending. Let’s say all the #Oranges post were posted this week, but Bananas has had a steady 5,000 per week over the last 20 weeks, then Oranges would be the trending hashtag because more have been posted about in a short period of recent time.

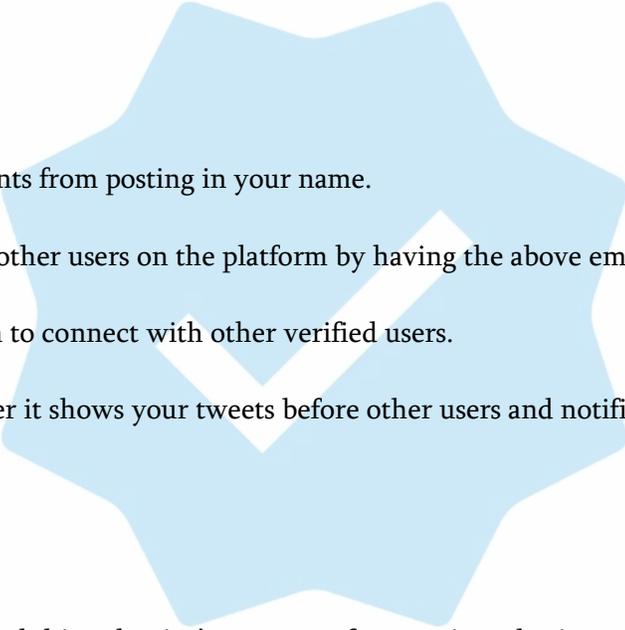
Multiple things can be trending, but rarely does it go past 10 trending items at a time. When one thing gets big in terms of trending (especially in the political scene), news platforms will start to pick it up and write articles about it. So, while you may get lost in the sea, saying something about the hashtag (if it pertains to your business, cause, or message) isn’t a bad thing because there is a chance a lot of people will see it and follow you, like the post, or repost it. Twitter is infamous for its trending hashtags and that is typically the platform news sources will use to provide examples. And remember that anything you post publicly on twitter is public information, so these news sources will screenshot your tweet if they want to show it off.

Public Information

It's common knowledge, but it's still something that should be discussed. What you post on the internet is and—most likely—will always be there. As mentioned in the section before what you post on non-private accounts is public knowledge. There is even an MLA citation for it. News sources will take screenshots of your tweet if need be and employers will look at your profiles (even if they're not supposed to or say that they won't). Even further down than that people who want to discredit you will go through every single one of your posts and find something to contradict what you're saying or prove that you can't be trusted. People do this on Twitter a lot to prove Donald Trump's hypocrisy. And whether or not it's something you said then and believed but are against now (due to change of opinion), people will see it as you being bought out, inconsistent, or a bandwagoner. So, it's extremely important to understand that what you post is always going to be there, even if you delete it there is a chance someone else already took a screenshot.

Verified

Being Verified is something that really got going on Twitter that you'll now see every now and then on Facebook, Instagram, and other social media platforms. It's a cool thing that many people use to verify their identity. You have to submit and ask for verification from the platforms, but it does have a lot of benefits.

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1. It prevents fake accounts from posting in your name.
 2. It sets you apart from other users on the platform by having the above emoji next to your name.
 3. It gives you the option to connect with other verified users.
 4. Specifically, for Twitter it shows your tweets before other users and notifies the OP before other users.

Verification is a cool thing that isn't necessary for growing a business or personal account, but it does help. It's also important to understand that there are no (at least for Twitter) follower requirements to become verified. The lowest number of followers a verified user account on Twitter has is 4. It's a good idea to have more than 50 or 100 just for convenience and such, but don't mark off the possibility of being verified because of your follower count.

-ing vs. -er

One of the most common questions regarding social media is, “Does it matter how many people I’m following.” Yes and no, is the least simple yet simplest way of answering the question. We must look at it in a relative sense rather than an absolute one.

Relative: How many followers you have in comparison to how many you are following.

Absolute: The number of followers you have.

Your Follower to Following ratio should be a minimum of 3:1. Meaning if you are following 3,000 people, you should have at the very least 9,000 followers to generate the most attention and success. If you have a higher following count than follower, you’re less likely to get positive attention and feedback and more likely to fall behind other accounts.

The accounts you follow makes a statement about you and your company. If you’re following an organization like PETA, you don’t have to interact with them ever. But by following them at all you’re—in a sense whether you do or don’t—saying that you support them and their cause. So, if you’re entirely against something like the DNC, don’t follow the DNC because if you do people may interpret otherwise.

There really isn’t a secret to the ratio and one of the most plaguing things about it is the idea of “Follow-Back” tweets and accounts. It’s essentially a way of building up a base around an account by stating you’ll follow back anybody who follows you. Which is a pretty cool idea in a sense, if I follow someone they’ll follow me back and I’ll go up in follower count. Which sometimes it really isn’t a bad thing, but you don’t want all of the people you’re following to be bots, follow-back accounts, and spam. Whether or not you mean to, when you follow someone you make a statement.

The overall lesson you should pull from this section is that you want to have a positive Followers to Following ratio. It can be anywhere from 1,000:1 to 3:1, it just needs to be positive.

Common Terms

Common Terms and definitions you should be aware of can be found in a comprehensive list here: <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/social-media-terms>. I did not create, edit, or alter the information here at all and all author information can be found on the page as well. This link goes over everything and not everything listed is necessary to do well on social media. If you use social media on a regular basis you should already be versed enough in the terminology and not need this link.

Platforms - Details & Statistics

I listed a few articles below that go over a lot of details and statistics of the social media platforms that are useful in understanding how they work and the best way to use them is. It's important to note that I did not create or contribute any information to the links listed below and I am not affiliated with any of the companies or authors.

Twitter

[Social Media Today – 10 Twitter Secrets You Should Know \[Infographic\]](#)

[Kiplinger – 6 Things You Must Know About Twitter](#)

[The Muse – 20 Essential Twitter Rules You've Probably Never Heard](#)

Instagram

[Inc – 21 Things Every Brand Should Know About Instagram](#)

[Sprout Social - 18 Stats Every Instagramer Should Know](#)

[HootSuite – Instagram Statistics](#)

Facebook

[InfoToday – Facebook 101: Ten Things You Need to Know About Facebook](#)

[N.E.A. – 10 Things You Should Know About Facebook](#)

[AdLibbing – 6 Things You Should Know About Facebook’s New Algorithm](#)

Tumblr

[Complex – 10 Things You Didn’t Know About Tumblr](#)

[MakeUseOf – How to Use Tumblr: 10 Useful Tumblr Tips for Beginners](#)

LinkedIn

[Hootsuite – The Ultimate List of LinkedIn Statistics That Matter to Your Business](#)

[Foundation Inc. – 45 Eye-Opening LinkedIn Stats Every B2B Marketer Needs to Know](#)

[Business LinkedIn – 10 Surprising Stats You Didn’t Know about Marketing on LinkedIn](#)

Snapchat

[MediaKix – The Top 10 Snapchat Statistics You Need to Know](#)

[Hootsuite – The Top Snapchat Statistics You Need to Know for Business](#)

End Notes

Lastly make sure you're not just promoting yourself, promote your message, your product, your business, and most importantly other people. Everyone else on Social Media is trying to do the same thing you are: get followers, get popular, and make money. So, they'll appreciate it when you give them a pat on the back and they might do the same for you. And it makes your page look less like an advertisement page and more personalized. Social media is still something people are trying to fully understand, and it is heavily influence and built by people's opinions and perspectives. There is no equation for guaranteed success on social media.

People often treat the internet as an uncharted realm that completely rewrites the rules of marketing. In a way, it's true. The internet and social media has altered how often you are able to advertise to a specific demographic and it gives you more options to do so. But the internet is just an extension of every other form of marketing. Yes, there are some differences, but the overall advice I can give is don't do something on the internet you wouldn't do on another platform. Whether that be TV, Radio, Billboards. In the end they're not all that different from one another. The internet is a very big thing, but that is no reason to be intimidated by it.